



# Expanding a Small University's Offerings

A case study of Ohio University at Lancaster and Tutor.com, with contributions from Debra Smith, Assistant Professor of Health Technology at Ohio University, Lancaster | 2012

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Situated on 113 acres, the Ohio University Lancaster Campus serves students from throughout central Ohio. The campus offers the academic foundation of a university education, the convenience of a small campus setting, the affordability of state-assisted tuition and relevant education for today's competitive job market. A variety of associate and bachelor degree programs can be completed on the Lancaster Campus. Ohio University also offers more than 250 majors which students can begin in Lancaster and finish at the main campus in Athens, at another regional campus or online.

### Institution Snapshot

- **Enrollment:** About 2,200 students
- **Institution Type:** 4-Year College
- **Tutor.com Partner Since:** 2011
- **24/7 Subjects:** Math, Science, English, Writing
- Students access Tutor.com from the on-campus tutoring center and remotely from anywhere with an Internet connection

### THE CHALLENGE: LACK OF ACCESS TO TUTORS

According to Debra Smith, Assistant Professor, Health Technology, faculty identified the need for tutoring on the Lancaster campus at a meeting in 2009. Using peer tutors was a challenge because OUL is primarily a two-year campus. Once students reach the level where they might become tutors, they transfer to the main campus in Athens. The campus was not funded to implement a Learning Center with tutors, so faculty needed to provide tutoring as well as teaching.

“Being a full-time mom, employee, and student, most of my homework happens during naps and at bed-times. **[Tutor.com] is a wonderful convenience.**” — Ohio University Lancaster Student



### THE SOLUTION: A THREE-PRONGED APPROACH TO MEET STUDENT NEEDS

In 2010, OUL introduced Tutor Tracks to better meet students' needs for help beyond the classroom.

Designed by Dr. Giorgi Shonia, Assistant Professor of Mathematics, with the support of an 1804 Undergraduate Fund grant, Tutor Tracks is a collaborative web-based solution offering a three pronged approach to tutoring: a database of faculty resources, ability to connect to a live tutor in the Learning Center of OUL when the student is off campus, and the ability to connect to Tutor.com, a national provider of 24/7 tutoring to college students. Smith says that at the time they introduced Tutor Tracks for the 2010-11 academic year, online education wasn't as widespread—or respected—as it is now.

Just two years after they introduced Tutor Tracks online programs have become more prevalent, says Smith. Prestigious schools such as University of Maryland, Virginia Tech, and MIT have implemented online programs and as more schools move their curricula online the stigma attached to online learning will disappear. At OUL things are turning around, too. “We have a math professor who was hesitant at first and has since become our greatest supporter. She finds it saves her time because they don't have to go through homework so heavily and are more comfortable in class,” says Smith.

# 100%

OF STUDENTS SAY THEY ARE GLAD THAT OUL OFFERS TUTOR.COM\*

# 99%

OF OUL STUDENTS WOULD RECOMMEND TUTOR.COM TO A FRIEND.\*

# 96%

OF OUL STUDENTS SAY TUTOR.COM HELPS THEM COMPLETE THEIR ASSIGNMENTS

# 100%

OF OUL STUDENTS SAY TUTOR.COM HELPS THEM IMPROVE THEIR GRADES.\*

\*Compiled from Ohio University Lancaster student post-session surveys during the 2011-2012 academic year.

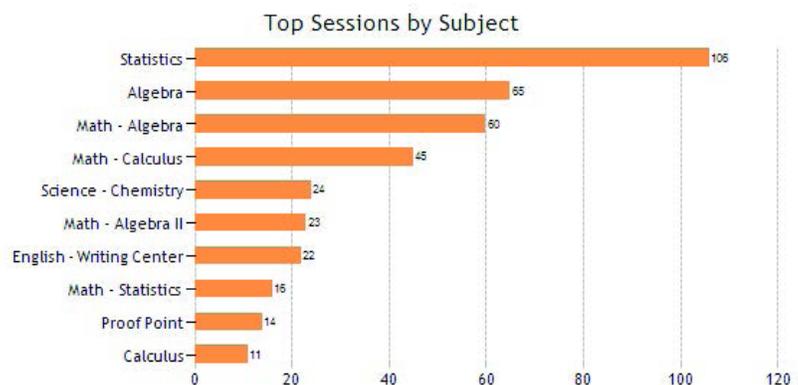
**“Online tutoring isn’t just effective, it’s essential.** This is a tool that can teach people how to learn. It increases confidence in students’ ability to learn. If I don’t know something, but I know how to figure it out, how to get the help I need, **that’s confidence.**”

— Debra Smith, Assistant Professor, Health Technology

## SELECTING AND MEASURING THE SUCCESS OF TUTOR.COM

Smith highlights the reasons why OUL selected Tutor.com over the other three companies they also evaluated:

- The ability to view and save tutoring sessions for later review
- Robust monthly reports providing the data needed to evaluate the program’s effectiveness
- Competitive pricing



Smith says OUL had three primary goals for online tutoring. First, easy access. Second, a system that did not require a lot of instruction to use. And third, it had to be an effective way for students to learn. “I recorded how to log in to Tutor.com, how to access it through Tutor Tracks, and how to use the whiteboard. I posted these recordings on YouTube and linked to them through Tutor Tracks. This proved highly successful—students were using the videos instead of emailing us with questions. This was important because, as faculty, we couldn’t implement a program that would require a significant amount of support from us.” ■

For more information, visit [tutor.com/higher-education](http://tutor.com/higher-education).