



# Louisiana Community and Technical College System

Joe D. May, Ph.D., President

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SOLUTIONS

*LCTCSOnline means we can now offer to a larger number of individuals in a more convenient way the opportunity to take courses, earn a degree, and have better quality of life.*

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The Louisiana Community and Technical College System (LCTCS) is one of the newest community college systems in the United States. It comprises 7 community colleges, 2 technical community colleges, and 38 technical colleges. Since 1999, driven by the vision of accessible educational opportunities at affordable prices for all citizens of Louisiana, the system has offered high-quality programs and services that prepare students either to transfer to four-year colleges and universities or to graduate with the knowledge and skills to improve their lives, careers, and communities.

In partnership with Pearson, LCTCS expanded that vision. In January 2009, LCTCS unveiled LCTCSOnline, one of the first initiatives in the country to offer customized online access to college, a one-stop choice of courses from any of the system's campuses, and access to course work through the BlackBerry Curve.

"The top barriers for students in obtaining their degrees are geographic access, cost of higher education, and scheduling conflicts due to commitments such as employment and child care. Through our expanded online program, we have addressed all of those issues," says LCTCS president Joe D. May. "We believe that the ability to do course work via cell phone will be a major draw for individuals. Of the 4.2 million people who make up our state's population, 25 percent have Internet access and 68 percent have cell phones."

Many LCTCS students are working adults who want to acquire more skills for better job opportunities but who don't have the time or flexibility to attend traditional classes. This groundbreaking partnership gives Louisiana's working adults the most flexible and reliable learning option available—whether it's via a desktop, laptop, or mobile device. Students from across the 47 college campuses in the Louisiana system learn from common LCTCS courses, all of them featuring Pearson's customized online courses, digital learning objects, and textbooks. In addition, the platform and the services are offered and managed by Pearson eCollege, a top provider of eLearning solutions and services in the United States and, increasingly, around the world.

LCTCS needed a partner that could meet all of its needs very quickly. Pearson was uniquely able to combine leading content (including print, digital, and online learning solutions) with CourseConnect (the company's suite of state-of-the-art, online courses) and thereby take the project from concept to completion in just nine months.

Pearson worked closely with LCTCS faculty to develop tailor-made solutions that would meet the specific needs of LCTCS students. In addition to a library of online interactive learning modules, original material from Louisiana instructors, and a variety of rich media from Pearson's world-class content collections, students have the financial option of purchasing traditional textbooks through the LCTCSOnline portal or downloading less-expensive, eBooks. Behind the scenes, Pearson's eCollege manages the day-to-day technical aspects of the program, including the hardware, software, and round-the-clock help desk support, thereby freeing LCTCS to focus solely on educating students.

"This initiative embodies the type of thinking we need as we work toward our goal of 10,000 additional graduates by 2015," says Commissioner of Higher Education Sally Clausen. "Our community and technical college system is a critical component of economic development in this state, sending thousands of better-prepared graduates into the workforce each year. Adding the flexibility of online learning will enable even more students to realize their dreams of graduating and finding success in life."

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