

Customer Success Story:

University of Maryland Eastern Shore



Higher Education | Foreign Language Blended Instruction



Supporting Critical-Need Languages

Challenge

The University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES) wanted a language-learning solution in support of funding from a Title III grant to teach critical-need languages for UMES students and the community at large. The university needed a solution that would support a state-of-the-art classroom to deliver on the university's mission. There were two areas of focus that the university needed a language-learning solution to support. First, to provide foreign-language instruction opportunities for UMES students and to support faculty and staff participating in overseas projects. Second, the university needed a program to launch noncredit classes, such as Spanish for law enforcement and medical professionals as well as a summer youth program, in order to meet the language-learning needs in the region which generated revenue for the program. UMES sought a solution that could not only build language skills and proficiency but would provide an engaging and motivating environment for learners in order to respond to the nation's call for more speakers of critical-need languages.

Implementation

UMES implemented the Rosetta Stone® solution with the launch of the Foreign Language Instructional Center (FLIC), a Title III program. With Rosetta Stone® Language Lessons Version 3 (formerly Rosetta Course®), FLIC has the ability to offer Arabic, Chinese, Spanish, French, Hindi, and Russian. Through implementing the Sony Virtuoso™ instructional software in a dedicated language-technology classroom, the Rosetta Stone solution was used in a blended-learning environment for UMES students to obtain foreign-language credit. Students were required to use the solution to build skills and confidence to speak in their new language. Through the Sony Virtuoso™ software, instructors can monitor every student using the program which provided the teacher areas of focus for classroom instruction. In addition, the FLIC offered 8-hour noncredit courses for workforce communication for medical and law enforcement professionals. The Rosetta Stone solution assisted in the building of core language skills and complemented blended classroom instruction around workforce scenarios.

Benefits

The following benefits were realized due to implementation of the Rosetta Stone solution since 2011:

- The number of foreign languages available to student learners has more than doubled and community learners have access to new modes of instruction.
- Instructors report higher grade point averages and increased language proficiency levels in the blended-learning format as compared to traditional classroom instruction.



UNIVERSITY of MARYLAND
EASTERN SHORE

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Tammy Gharbi, M.Ed,
Program Coordinator
University of Maryland Eastern
Shore Foreign Language
Instructional Center

Success through Technology

Through Title III funding, UMES implemented a state-of-the-art language classroom that utilized the Rosetta Stone® solution. The key advantage of a dedicated environment was that it allowed the learner to shut out all distractions and focus on only language learning. Through the synergy of technology in the classroom, students utilized the program during class time and received direct classroom instruction from UMES faculty. The Sony Virtuoso™ instructional software provided the optics for instructors to monitor learner progress in a "real-time" setting while students were using the Rosetta Stone solution. This enabled the instructors to listen and record learners which provided the means to assess and provide feedback through the learner's headphones while using the Rosetta Stone program. The instructors gathered information to customize daily instruction in the course based on these assessments. When students left the Rosetta Stone environment, instructors could then create activities such as organizing dialogue groups, reinforcing points of grammar in whole-group instruction, or administering a quiz based on observations gained during the use of the program.

Building Confidence to Speak

The proprietary speech-recognition technology of the Rosetta Stone solution gave UMES learners the opportunity to build oral communication skills during every class period. Instructors were able to monitor speaking activities of all twenty students at a time through Sony Virtuoso. UMES saw this as an added benefit in comparison to the traditional language-learning environment. "It has been said that, in a typical week, some foreign-language students might only have about seven minutes of talking, seven minutes of utterances," stated Tammy Gharbi, program coordinator of the UMES Foreign Language Instructional Center. When 20 students can talk at once, it enables the instructor to increase the amount of time each student spends actually speaking the language. Moreover, in the classroom that FLIC created, learners could build the confidence to speak their new language utilizing the Rosetta Stone solution which provided a non-intimidating environment encouraging participation. Through the Sony Virtuoso instructional software, the instructor could choose to provide formal and informal assessments of speaking skills either listening to all students collectively or focusing on a subset of that group for individual or small group instruction.

Implementing for Success

UMES, in partnering with the US Department of Education, was able to secure Title III funding that allowed them to institutionalize more language instruction, including implementing the Rosetta Stone solution in both credit and noncredit course offerings in a state-of-the-art language classroom. Through utilizing the program, the university has expanded credit course offerings, after initially providing only instruction in Spanish and French, to make available the critical-need languages of Arabic, Chinese, Russian, and soon Hindi. In addition, the school created a noncredit workshop focusing on communication skills for medical and law enforcement professionals. Through community outreach efforts, the university has been able to build communication skills of professionals that adds significant value in the workplace in response to area continuing-education needs. UMES implemented a blended-learning approach in utilizing the Rosetta Stone solution. Students are able to progress at their own pace, building out language and language structures in an all-skills environment. As Tammy Gharbi states, "Rosetta Stone has been an integral part of our blended-learning format. We know that it engages our students across all levels, and gives our faculty more options for individualized instruction in the classroom." Learner progress was monitored and managed through Administrator Tools (formerly Rosetta Stone Manager™), as well as through the Sony Virtuoso™ instructional software.

Realizing Benefits

UMES has experienced many benefits with the implementation of the Rosetta Stone solution. First, the university has been able to more than double its foreign-language course choices and give UMES students access to critical-need languages and thus access to important career opportunities. Through Title III funding, UMES was able to acquire the technology and environment to boost the study of critical-need languages. UMES was also able to launch noncredit courses for workforce Spanish and for a summer language program for youth which generated additional revenue for the program and responded to area needs. Second, instructors utilizing the solution consistently report higher grade point averages and language proficiency levels in comparison to learners in a traditional classroom environment. UMES has seen an increase in the sustained interest of learners who study in the classroom that FLIC created. In addition, learner motivation, engagement, and enthusiasm for language learning has increased significantly among students in the blended-learning environment.



About UMES

University of Maryland Eastern Shore (UMES), an Historically Black 1890 Land-Grant institution, emphasizes baccalaureate and graduate programs in the liberal arts, health professions, sciences, and teacher education. UMES is committed to providing access to high-quality values-based educational experience, especially to individuals who are first-generation college students of all races, while emphasizing multicultural diversity and international perspectives. The University serves the education and research needs of businesses, industries, government and non-government organizations.

 www.umes.edu

About Rosetta Stone

Rosetta Stone is a global leader in technology-driven language and learning solutions for individuals, classrooms, and entire organizations.

Our scalable, interactive solutions have been used by over 12,000 businesses, 9,000 public sector organizations, and 22,000 education institutions worldwide, and by millions of learners in over 150 countries.

 Education