



## CASE STUDY NEW MEXICO JUNIOR COLLEGE

# Digital Course Solution Improves Student Success

Prior to implementing *Connect Music*, Professor Ponce had used reading assignments, interactive chapter activities, and CDs in her online course, but her students lacked a sense of total engagement with the material. She felt that by increasing student access to listening opportunities, she could better engage them in the course. *Connect Music* provided streaming music to her students, and now her students spend a good deal more of their time on concept application and active listening. As a result, she has seen an increase in the number of students earning an A in the course.

### Institution Profile

New Mexico Junior College, located in Hobbs, New Mexico, serves an annual enrollment of 2,500 students, offering associate's degrees in science, applied science and arts, and several certificate programs in vocational trade areas. There are over 640 courses of study offered annually through NMJC's two instructional sectors, Arts and Sciences and Business and Technology.

### Implementation

#### Course Description:

This course explores the ideas of music in society and its cultural relevance. The course fulfills the Humanities requirement for non-music majors in an associate degree program. Students discuss the elements of sound and music, and stylistically explore four major periods in Western art and music.

#### Course Grade:

- 45% of the final grade based on tests within *Connect Music*
- 45% of the final grade based on listening assignments and quizzes within *Connect Music*
- 10% of the final grade based on written assignments within Blackboard Learn

#### Digital Product in Use:

*Connect® Music*

#### Course Name:

Music Appreciation

#### Course Type:

Online

#### Credit Hours:

Three

#### Textbook in Use:

*Music: An Appreciation, Brief* by Kaimen, 7e

#### Instructor Name:

Carolyn Ponce

#### Enrollment:

200/year (instructor total)  
700/year (university total)

#### Case Study Term:

Fall 2010

*"Connect Music has added the 'wrap-up' assessments that were missing from my courses, and it has allowed me to have more time for activities.*

*Now, with Connect Music, I am sure that my students are listening to the music."*

*- Professor Carolyn Ponce*

## Implementation of McGraw-Hill *Connect*

Professor Ponce uses *Connect Music* in conjunction with Blackboard. Each week, she assigns listening activities with streaming music which consist of two to four listening guides and 10-15 multiple choice listening identification questions. These assignments teach by giving students a visual representation of what happens in each piece of music. The musical scores move while playing and allow students to follow along as they listen. Previously, Professor Ponce had to develop her own quizzes and tests, which presented a challenge and took up a lot of her time. “Finally having online multiple choice listening identification questions is great. I love that!” she says.

## Results Achieved

Professor Ponce was able to monitor how her students interacted with pieces, and she found that *Connect Music* provided them with simplified access to the music. As a result, students spent significantly more time actively listening and applying the concepts. Overall, she says that her students now spend 90 minutes per week on the material, where they previously spent only 50 minutes (see Figure 1).

By having her students complete *Connect Music* quizzes and tests online, Professor Ponce now has much more time to develop activities, and her students have more opportunities to listen to the music she teaches. “With the streaming music,” she says, “my students have access to their listening whenever they are on the computer. They can easily navigate and listen to different sections of a piece without worrying about which track they are on.” She also finds that her students enjoy using *Connect Music*. “They can easily find their assignments, and they find the instant feedback very helpful. They also love the readability of the *Connect Plus* eBook. They say it’s better than paper. I even use the sticky notes within the eBook to give notes to my students.”

Ponce also finds the *Connect Music* reports helpful. She uses them to evaluate individual student performance so that she can implement early intervention as needed, and to evaluate individual assignments to understand what students are struggling with and determine if adjustments to her lecture content are appropriate.

Regarding overall results, Professor Ponce found that her students had more consistent grades throughout the semester. “My students who worked hard received higher grades using *Connect Music*,” she says. “I had more A’s in the class than when I taught it without *Connect*.” (see Figure 2). She also saw a slight decrease in the number of students who failed the course.

Figure 1 - Time Students Spend on Concept Application/Active Listening

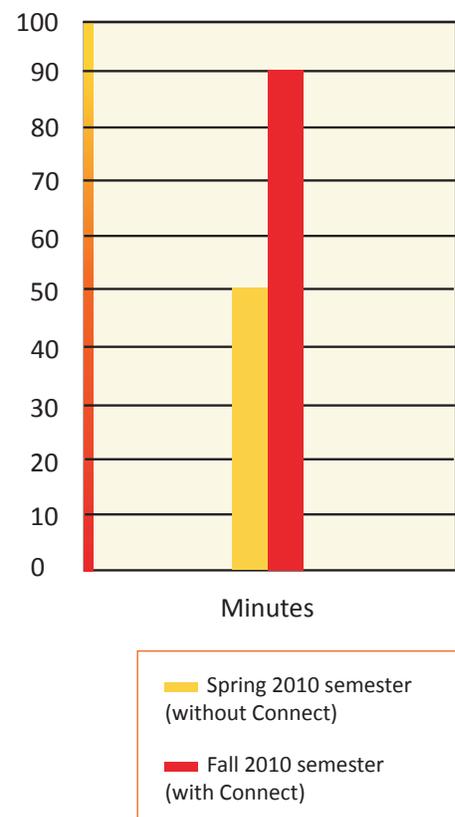
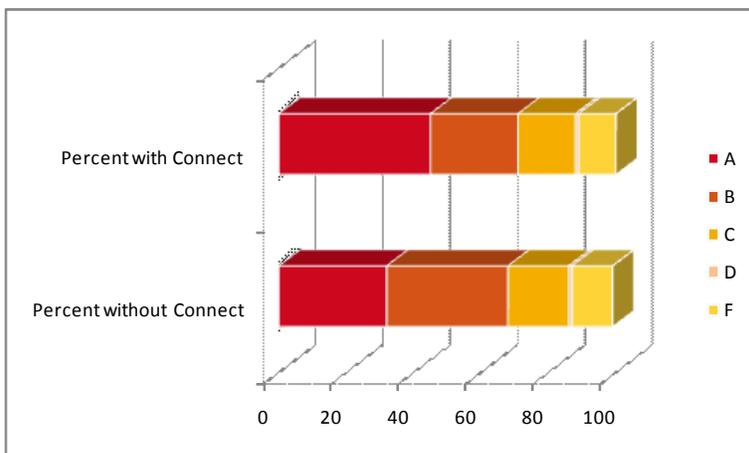


Figure 2 - Class Grade Distribution



## Conclusion

With *Connect Music*, Professor Ponce's students are much more engaged with the music and course content. "Thank you for *Connect!*" she says. "It is a powerful tool and it does add great value to a course." As a Blackboard user, Professor Ponce is very excited to begin using the McGraw-Hill/Blackboard® total course solution. "The single sign on for my students will enforce the feel of the course as a whole, instead of multiple sites and accounts. Having access to all of the teaching resources within Blackboard will be helpful from the faculty end as well!"