Texas A&M University System transforms learning with scalable, high-quality content and responsive support

Industry
Higher Education

Location
Texas, United States

Size
150,000+ students

Overview

The Texas A&M University System (TAMUS) stands as one of the largest higher education systems in the United States. It serves over 150,000 students across 12 universities, many in rural and underserved Texas regions. In 2023, the system's Colleges of Business identified an urgent skills gap: Employers increasingly seek verifiable proficiency in rapidly evolving areas like data analytics, digital marketing, cloud computing, cybersecurity, and project management—areas evolving faster than traditional curriculum cycles.

Faculty also needed tools to refresh expertise and integrate emerging topics into courses without burdening instructors. In July 2024, TAMUS launched a groundbreaking, multi-campus Coursera Career Academy pilot across five of its universities. This first-of-its-kind coordinated deployment aimed to give students industry-recognized credentials while empowering faculty with agile, cutting-edge content integration. Within a year, the results validated their bold approach.

Outcomes

2,428
unique learners across five campuses

17,665+
learning hours invested

206
Professional Certificates earned

The Challenge

TAMUS recognized that fragmented learning experiences and limited customization options hindered their ability to modernize curricula at scale. Traditional platforms couldn't deliver specialized content in emerging fields like AI and cybersecurity, while the absence of industry-recognized credentials left students without tangible proof of their capabilities in a competitive market.

Faculty managing heavy course loads needed innovative tools for professional development and to seamlessly integrate current industry content. The decentralized system required solutions that could maintain academic integrity while scaling across diverse campuses. By resolving these interconnected challenges, TAMUS could ensure graduates have in-demand, job-ready skills while building sustainable, long-term capability.

The Solution

Turnkey implementation with immediate impact
To address urgent needs, TAMUS deployed a groundbreaking Coursera Career Academy pilot across five campuses. Each institution received 1,000 student licenses with direct learning management system (LMS) integration, enabling faculty to embed micro-credentials from partners like Google, IBM, and Meta into credit-bearing courses at scale.

All five colleges completed integration within 30 days —allowing fall-semester faculty to add Coursera modules immediately. By the end of the 12-month pilot, faculty embedded Coursera Career Academy content into 35 courses across the five business schools, giving students résumé-ready credentials without increasing instructor workloads. The program focused on cutting-edge topics like AI, data science, and cloud computing, with content available in 20+ languages to support diverse learners.

Culture transformation through innovation
West Texas A&M's College of Business achieved 92% engagement among the student population, publishing "Credentialing Corner" leaderboards that fostered competition.

Dr. Mary Liz Brooks, Associate Professor of Digital Business and Communication and the Barbara Petty Professor of Business Communication, designed innovative Special Topics courses where students pursue multiple credentials aligned to career goals. Her newsletter and BuffSpeak podcast demystified micro-credentials for students and parents.

Over two dozen professors earned certificates in AI and data analytics, incorporating current industry perspectives into syllabi. Faculty modernized curricula overnight, with one accounting professor using the IBM Data Science certificate to build an entirely new analytics module.

Coursera's customer success team provided ongoing technical assistance and community facilitation that transformed deployment into movement. This comprehensive support ensured both students and educators received relevant, marketable skills necessary for future success.

The Results

The Coursera Career Academy pilot delivered transformative outcomes, surpassing expectations across all key metrics and earning TAMUS "Rising Star" recognition at Coursera Connect 2025. With 2,428 learners attempting 7,362 courses and projects, the initiative demonstrated remarkable adoption. The 64% completion rate (4,712 courses) significantly exceeded higher-education benchmarks.

Students invested 17,665+ learning hours— equivalent to about 500 three-credit courses—while earning 206 Professional Certificates. The 4.7/5-star satisfaction rating indicated strong perceived relevance and quality.
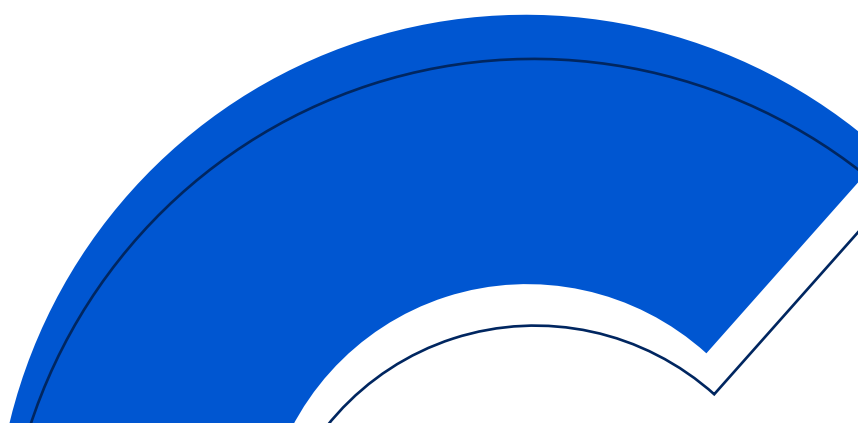
Real-world impact drove student success stories

- Emily R., a marketing major, used her Meta Social Media Marketing credential to secure a summer internship managing a local nonprofit's Instagram strategy.

- Jose M., studying business analytics, completed Google Data Analytics certification and landed a co-op position with a Fortune 500 agribusiness.

- Marketing student Heidi G. reported that Google and HubSpot certificates "introduced me to what I will be doing in my future career."

Faculty transformation proved equally powerful. Professors didn't just teach new content; they embodied it. They quickly modernized their content offerings. This agility has positioned TAMUS at the forefront of educational innovation.

Rapid wins—from 30-day LMS integration to immediate adoption—convinced TAMUS leadership to extend the pilot for a second year and add two more institutions. Coursera Career Academy became the critical driver of system-wide curricular innovation.

Looking forward, TAMUS has proven that strategic partnerships can revolutionize higher education. Their model shows how institutions can rapidly adapt to workforce needs while maintaining academic excellence. Graduates enter the job market with both degrees and industry credentials, prepared for careers requiring continuous adaptation.

Impact Snapshot

7,362
courses and projects attempted

64 %
course completion rate

4.7/5
satisfaction rating

30-day
LMS integration across all campuses

Scale career readiness across your institution

Join leading universities delivering industry-recognized credentials at scale with proven ROI.

Explore Coursera for Campus