



**O**uriginal  
Case Study  
**Delaware  
Technical  
Community  
College**

Ouriginal's Plagiarism Prevention  
Software Promotes Student  
Originality at Delaware Technical  
Community College



## The Challenge

For fifteen years, Delaware Technical Community College relied on one of the world's largest educational technology companies to provide its learning management system (LMS). For plagiarism checking and prevention, faculty used a tool embedded within the LMS. But that plagiarism prevention tool wasn't very stable and often went down when the system was busy. When the cost of the LMS started creeping up, while support and service went down, Delaware Tech knew it was time to replace its LMS provider, and ultimately its associated plagiarism prevention tool.

With this challenge came an opportunity not only to find a more reliable and affordable LMS, but also to look for a better product that could help instructors check for text originality and prevent plagiarism.



“Many people found the solution easy to use”  
Sara Carter

Delaware Tech faculty needed a tool that could support the process of checking students' essays for originality. Institutional budgets were reduced annually and therefore IT needed to reduce costs. They also needed a solution that was reliable and scalable across the Delaware Tech system.

Delaware Technical Community College is often a gateway to higher education for its underserved students, with many transferring to four-

## Delaware Technical Community College

Delaware Technical Community College provides high-quality educational programs that are flexible and affordable. With four convenient locations and a student population of 14,000, Delaware Technical Community College provides opportunities for Delaware's residents to earn associate degrees, complete workforce training, attend developmental and general education courses and participate in courses designed to enhance and enrich the lives of attendees.

year institutions. Many other students attend to complete two-year degrees that let them launch their careers. Oftentimes, the first course students need to take when they arrive at Delaware Tech is English 101. It's here that teachers can help their students learn how to write original essays.

Delaware Tech uses plagiarism prevention software to promote original thinking and teach them how to properly use academic and scholarly sources. The end goal is to provide students with skills they'll need for higher-level classes, especially those who desire to go on to a four-year program.

**Sara Carter**, Acting Director of Instructional Design and Technology at Delaware Technical Community College, says the switch to a new LMS drove the search for a new tool, which is still needed to support the college's goal of teaching better writing skills, while supporting institutional effectiveness and quality. But this also provided an opportunity to replace their prior plagiarism tool that was "slow at certain highpeak times" with something reliable.

With a student population of 14,000, instructors needed a more robust, fully automated solution to save time. Instructors want to spend their time teaching, not managing workflow on a plagiarism prevention tool.



## Searching for a solution

The need to replace its LMS also compelled the school to look for a new plagiarism prevention tool.

For this product, Delaware Tech was looking at three primary criteria:

- It must fit within the school’s budget
- It must be reliable and reduce downtime
- It must be able to integrate into their new Brightspace LMS

With collaboration among academic leaders and IT leaders, a comprehensive market research effort for both a new LMS and a better plagiarism prevention tool that could integrate with it began. The research team evaluated several products for originality checking, including two of the leading products on the market.

Delaware Tech found that Ouriginal met all their criteria: affordability, technical service level and integration within the new LMS. Ouriginal has an extensible, robust API that enables it to integrate easily with all commercial and proprietary LMS products on the market. It also has an excellent reputation for reliability and is easy to use.

## LMS and Plagiarism Prevention Migration Strategy

In the meantime, Delaware Tech had selected D2L’s Brightspace as its LMS and started its migration to a new platform. Once Delaware Tech completed most of its migration to its new LMS, it conducted pilot testing with Ouriginal prior to launching it college-wide.

Delaware Tech found that Ouriginal not only easily integrated with Brightspace, but enabled cost savings for the campuses. The feedback on Ouriginal from faculty and students has been very positive, particularly about its reliability, training and customer support.

Carter says Eric Gibbs, president of Ouriginal North America, “personally came to our D2L

Showcase conference to kick the year off and provided faculty with training.”

Additional professional development was provided to faculty and IT staff both on campus and through online sessions. Carter said Delaware Tech chose Ouriginal for its functionality and affordability, but faculty, students and IT have all easily adopted it: *“Many people find it easy to use. We haven’t had a lot of questions about it, so that is usually a good sign!”*

## The Ouriginal Analysis Report

Most importantly, Delaware Tech says, the **Original Analysis Report**, is in depth, easy to interpret, and ultimately meets the needs of the faculty and saves time.

The student experience with Ouriginal starts when they submit a document for text similarity. Ouriginal’s process examines any citations, paraphrasing and other forms of substitution. It then delivers the originality report to the instructor and student.



*The Analysis Report*

Delaware Tech finds the report is well presented and logically laid out, making it easy to use and meet their mission of preparing students to think and write originally. Ouriginal’s CPO, Peter Witsap, says the Ouriginal text-matching algorithm gets better at finding similarities through machine learning. The more documents it’s fed, the better it gets at searching for text similarities. With 20 years of inputs and over 5,000 clients, Ouriginal’s



substantial database of source material makes it extremely accurate.

## The writing styles test

Delaware Tech especially likes Ouriginal's ability to search for writing styles. Sudden changes or inconsistency in the level of expertise, vocabulary, grammar, punctuation or sentence structure can signal plagiarism.

According to Witsap, the "hope is that teachers use the tool to help students write original essays using sources effectively."

## Easy integration with a new LMS

Delaware Tech also found that Ouriginal integrates easily with its new LMS. As a simple plugin for D2L's Brightspace, the technical team found the integration to be straightforward and fast with an LTI connection.

*"Once we were able to set up the connection, it was easy to provide faculty with the training necessary to start using the tool immediately,"*

*says Carter. "We actually implemented it in week three of the semester and did so with very few hiccups on both the front and back ends."*

## Affordability

The best part of selecting Ouriginal as its plagiarism prevention tool has been the cost savings realized within the technology and academic budgets. The leading product in the marketplace, which Delaware Tech initially evaluated, came in at almost four times the cost. It's rare that a new purchase comes in under budget, but that's exactly what happened for Delaware Technical Community College.

Meanwhile, they received better reliability and a more robust report. IT staff were happy, the budget office was happy and instructors are better meeting the needs of the students.

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*Written by Pam Baker and McGuire Editorial Content Marketing Agency.*