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ANALYTICS PLATFORM LETS INSTRUCTORS MONITOR STUDENTS' USE OF COURSE MATERIALS



California-based CourseSmart now offers new insight into the school homework process by giving instructors a way to monitor pupils' use of electronic course materials.

There's no doubt technology can be a useful tool in education, whether to help [analyze classroom data](#) or simply to make sure students [attend](#). Whereas most such efforts focus on the classroom, however, California-based [CourseSmart](#) now offers new insight into the homework process by giving instructors a way to monitor pupils' use of electronic course materials. CourseSmart is the world's largest provider of digital course materials, it says, and in early November it launched a beta pilot to test CourseSmart Analytics, its new solution for measuring students' engagement with e-textbooks. At the heart of the new offering is CourseSmart Engagement Score Technology, a proprietary algorithm that evaluates standard usage data such as page views, time spent on a textbook, and notes and highlights taken by a student, and assimilates them into an overall assessment of students' engagement with the material. Not only can faculty then identify "at risk" students based on engagement with assigned course materials and correlate that data with overall student performance, but provosts, deans, course designers and others can easily assess the usefulness of adopted digital titles to ensure course materials are being used effectively. A convenient dashboard presents the data within an institution's learning management system (LMS) or online portal. The beta version CourseSmart Analytics is currently available in the Desire2Learn Learning Environment, Blackboard Learn Platform, Moodle, Sakai and Canvas learning management system. Texas A&M University at San Antonio, Villanova University and Rasmussen College are the first three schools that have signed on for the initial beta program, which will expand later this year, CourseSmart says. Widespread product availability is due in 2013. Educational entrepreneurs: one to get involved in? Spotted by: Murray Orange

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