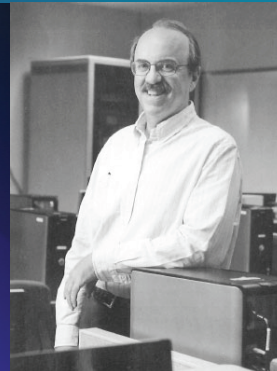




University/Community College Partnership: Ohio

School Impact Story: University of Akron and Lorain Community College

The ICT and networking curricula are hosted by each school's business department in an effort to integrate ICT knowledge and skills with broader industry processes.



The University of Akron (UA) and Lorain County Community

College (LCCC) each delivered networking courses independently for several years.

In 2004, they initiated a partnership to jointly deliver Cisco® Networking Academy® courses. Students may either:

- Spend all four years at UA completing ICT and general education classes; or

- Complete their first three years at LCCC, and finish their final year at UA, even though they matriculate at LCCC.

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LCCC assistant professor



Douglas Huber coordinates the joint UA/LCCC program.

Doug uses role-playing to help the students practice real-world problem solving. One student might play an ICT person, and another might play an administrator with a particular issue to solve.

The ICT person will have to explain how networking configurations can solve the issue. And they have to not only design the solution, but also make it easily accessible and comprehensible to the people who will be using it.

Huber finds that these activities help students prepare for technology environments outside the classroom, and helps

develop 21st century skills like collaboration, critical thinking, and leadership.

The initial knowledge of incoming students varies. Although many students entering the 4-year curriculum own computers for personal use, they may have little technical expertise. Others are already employed in networking jobs, and want to refresh and hone their skills to improve their career options.

“Sometimes a student ‘proficiencies out’ of a particular class, thanks to their prior training. But we still want them to review the basics, see what is new, and build a certain mindset—a certain way of solving problems—along with their networking skills.”

Study groups are formed in each Cisco Networking Academy class to integrate new students with more experienced

students whenever possible, for mentorship, team projects, and exam preparation.

The courses prepare students for industry-recognized ICT and networking certifications.

“I think we are meeting a real niche need. Each of the 8 students who graduated from the program during 2010 has been able to find relevant work. In some instances, they even had jobs before they graduated. We expect this trend to continue as our enrollment grows.”