



NEWS RELEASE

# American Public University System Partners with University Professional & Continuing Education Association to Evaluate MOOC Impact on Higher Education

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## **Joins Select UPCEA Members Collaborating through American Council on Education Grant from Gates Foundation**

CHARLES TOWN, W.Va.--(BUSINESS WIRE)--Apr. 8, 2013-- [American Public University System](#) (APUS) today announced that it will partner with the University Professional & Continuing Education Association (UPCEA), the University of Illinois - Springfield and several other UPCEA member institutions to examine the potential of massive open online courses (MOOCs) and how MOOCs could integrate into traditional degree completion programs.

The UPCEA pilot program, funded through an American Council on Education (ACE) grant from the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, will help determine how students succeed at higher education institutions after having received credit for a MOOC, according to Dr. Jennifer Stephens-Helm, vice president, institutional research & assessment, for APUS.

"APUS is honored to participate in this important cross-institutional effort to identify to what extent MOOCs reach low-income, young adult and older adult learners, and whether MOOCs may aid in degree or certificate completion," said Stephens-Helm, who will oversee APUS's efforts as part of the consortium. "Our prior experience in collaborating on such similar initiatives as [Next Generation Learning Challenges](#) and the [Predictive Analytics Reporting Framework](#) will help us assess and share meaningful data to expand student access and improve learning outcomes."

The UPCEA project's long-term objective is to work with APUS and other participating institutions to apply credit for successful completion of MOOCs qualified by the industry- standard ACE College Credit Recommendation Service. The University of Illinois - Springfield Center for Online Learning, Research

and Service will examine the pedagogy and practices employed by each institution, including Central Michigan University, Kaplan University, Regis University, SUNY - Empire State, University of Maryland – University College and Western Carolina University, in addition to APUS. Anonymized data will be collected on the demographics, academic background/ performance, and related information about the students granted MOOC credit.

The initial research phase will focus on developing a taxonomic pedagogy for various types of MOOCs, including quantitative, humanities, professional and others. This approach will better enable tracking the characteristics, persistence and related qualities of students as they progress at APUS and other participating institutions. The project ultimately seeks to leverage this baseline data to help enlighten the design and implementation of future studies in credit for MOOCs.

### **About American Public University System**

[American Public University System](#), winner of the Sloan Consortium’s 2009 Ralph E. Gomory Award for Quality Online Education and two-time recipient of Sloan’s Effective Practices Award, offers 87 online degree programs through [American Public University](#) and [American Military University](#). APUS’s relevant curriculum, affordability and flexibility help more than 100,000 working adults worldwide pursue degrees in subjects ranging from homeland security to management and liberal arts. For further information, visit <http://www.apus.edu/>

Source: American Public University System (APUS)

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