

INSTRUCTOR:

Twyla Verhelst,  
Saskatchewan Polytechnic

## Digital Success Stories

### Connect with SmartBook<sup>®</sup>

#### INSTITUTION PROFILE:

Saskatchewan Polytechnic is Saskatchewan's primary public institution for post-secondary technical education and skills training, offering over 150 programs in applied/visual media, aviation, basic education, and business. It operates campuses in Moose Jaw, Prince Albert, Regina, and Saskatoon, with a population of 13,000 full time students.

#### COURSE NAME:

Economics (ECON 100);  
Personal Finance (FIN 100)

#### COURSE TYPE:

Flipped class

#### ANNUAL COURSE ENROLMENT:

350 (ECON 100) and 100 (FIN 100)

#### TEXT IN USE:

McConnell 13ce *Microeconomics* +  
*Macroeconomics* (custom) and Kapoor  
6ce *Personal Finance*

#### DATE:

November 27, 2015



To learn more about  
Connect + SmartBook contact us at:

- [iSupport@mheducation.com](mailto:iSupport@mheducation.com)
- 1-866-270-5118

#### PRIOR EXPERIENCE

Describe the points of frustration you faced before selecting Connect with SmartBook.

“ Some students (increasingly so) find it difficult to learn by reading a traditional textbook. Some cannot afford a traditional textbook. Distributing, marking and returning numerous quizzes is time consuming and ineffective. The volume of paper gets unmanageable at times. Class time can be used for much more valuable activities. Most students live on their mobile devices. If they can access course-related material easily and quickly, they will do it (as opposed to lugging around a textbook and paper).

What were the main reasons you selected Connect with SmartBook?

“ I looked at several different publisher offerings for online learning platforms and eBooks and found McGraw Hill Education's to be the most intuitive and easiest to use. Additionally, the support that we've received from our Learning Solutions Consultant and others at McGraw Hill Education has been outstanding.

Compared to other learning technology that you've used, what do you like most about Connect with SmartBook? Please explain why.

“ It is visually pleasing, easy to navigate, intuitive, and user-friendly. There are many excellent online help resources and tutorials. Our Learning Solutions Consultant is always available to answer questions, and the digital support team that works behind the scenes always responds in a timely manner.

#### EXPERIENCE USING Connect with SmartBook

What McGraw-Hill Education learning technology are you using in your course?  
How long have you used it?

“ I have been using Connect and SmartBook in two separate courses (Economics, and Personal Finance) for over two years.

Describe how you are currently using Connect with SmartBook in your course, and what percentage of your course grades do you assign?

“ I create about a 20 minute SmartBook “assignment” for each chapter. I open these up at the outset of class and have a deadline date of a day before the midterm or final exam. Students are assigned a mark out of 5 for completion/non completion of SmartBook Assignments for the semester, is worth 5% of course mark. I strongly encourage them to do the assignments as we go along and then just to do the “recharge” while studying, but some don't do all of the assignments until the end. That's why I put the due date that late to give them all a chance to do them at some point.

I create a 20 question multiple choice quizzes for each chapter. They are awarded a mark out of 10 for the average of these quizzes with a non-completed quiz getting a mark of zero ie, A quiz is worth 10% of course mark. These all have open and due dates corresponding to when we will cover the material in class. For example if Chapter 1 will be covered on June 15-19, then the quiz will open June 15 and close June 22. That way they HAVE to keep up and not leave them until the end. I always set the quizzes up so that they have access to their eBooks directly from quiz questions.

**What benefits have you seen from requiring Connect with SmartBook rather than making it recommended or optional?**

“ If these resources were optional, I would guess that they would be used by only about 5% of the students. And the students who really need it would not voluntarily utilize the resources. When it is required, everyone benefits.

**How easy or hard was it to implement Connect with SmartBook in your course? Please describe what process you took to get started, including leveraging McGraw-Hill Education’s support.**

“ The initial set up took some time, but the support received from our Learning Solution Consultant was great. She came to campus several times to assist. She then returned to do instructional sessions with students on the first day of classes as well. At the time, I guess I felt like it was lot of work, but looking back, it was time extremely well-spent.

Now, it runs behind the scenes without me having to give it a second thought.

**How is Connect with SmartBook different than other learning technology that you’ve used?**

“ Simple, intuitive, lots of online and in person help available. Easy to upload files, attach links, etc.

## OUTCOMES & RESULTS

**What changes are you seeing in student outcomes as a result of requiring the Connect with SmartBook in your course?**

“ It’s a “flipped classroom effect” where students are forced to keep up with their reading to do the Online Quizzes so they understand a lot more when I talk about ideas in class. So there is much less time spent with me explaining basic concepts and more time with them asking questions that go beyond what we traditionally had time in class for in the past.

**What data have you tracked or collected to show how effective Connect with SmartBook has been for you?**

“ There are many sections of these courses running, and taught by many different instructors. My section averages are consistently higher than those where instructors don’t require Connect and SmartBook. And within my own sections of the courses, there is a clear and direct correlation between student grades and time spent on Connect with SmartBook.

**How has using Connect with SmartBook changed the way you teach your course?**

“ I have much more time for in class discussions because so much less time is taken up by quizzing and testing. I throw lots of extra links and resources onto Connect for students who want extra information and current applications of many of the concepts we cover in class.

**What are your students telling you about Connect with SmartBook?**

“ I would estimate that 90% of students LOVE Connect and SmartBook. Of the remainder, 5% just don’t want to put ANY effort into the course, 5% don’t like on-line learning. The latter 5% is decreasing year over year.

## BEST PRACTICES & TIPS

**What advice would you suggest to your colleagues or instructors who are incorporating Connect with SmartBook in their courses for the first time?**

“ Do it! You will never regret incorporating these resources into your course. Spend the time required to really get to know the products and set it up properly from the outset. Use the McGraw Hill resources available to you.

**What is the single biggest reason you would recommend Connect with SmartBook?**

“ It is how students like to learn....and it makes MY life much easier :)



Because learning changes everything.™