

INSTRUCTOR:

Malcolm Howe,
Niagara College, ON

Digital Success Stories

Connect with SmartBook[®]

INSTRUCTOR PROFILE:

Malcolm Howe is a Professor and Coordinator for the Business Administration: Marketing program at Niagara College. He has taught at Niagara College for the past 23 years. Areas of focus include introductory marketing, marketing research and marketing strategy. He is a graduate of the Ivey School of Business (MBA) and Brock University (Honours Economics). Aside from teaching, he has done consulting work in Market Research and Strategic Planning.

COURSE NAME:

Introduction to Marketing

COURSE TYPE:

Flipped classroom utilizing SmartBook resources to get students reading outside of class time

ANNUAL COURSE ENROLMENT:

400

TEXT IN USE:

Kerin 4ce *Marketing: The Core*

DATE:

November 30, 2015



To learn more about
Connect + SmartBook contact us at:

- iSupport@mheducation.com
- 1-866-270-5118

PRIOR EXPERIENCE

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

“ Without the Connect and SmartBook applications, it had become very difficult to engage students in the material and ensure topical coverage. The digital technologies allow me to push the reading (and simple quizzes) onto the students in “out of class” time and then use our class time to discuss the material at a higher (application) level.

What were the main reasons you selected Connect with SmartBook?

“ The first approach was a hopeful experiment. I did have great trust in my Learning Solutions Consultant, and that helped in making the leap. I was excited by the prospect of eliminating multiple choice questions as our form of testing. In order to do that, however, I felt I needed a way to push students to do the required reading to master the basic material and the marketing terminology.

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

“ The technology has simply gotten better. As an instructor, the integration with Blackboard is fantastic. It is also easy to set assignment lengths and/or choose topics covered.

EXPERIENCE USING Connect with SmartBook

What McGraw-Hill Education learning technology are you using in your course?

How long have you used it?

“ I am using Connect and SmartBook in a first and second year marketing course. I have used these technologies (or their precursors) for several years.

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

“ As discussed above, I give students weekly chapter assignments. In total, the assignments are worth 20% of their grade. I set firm deadlines and explain this in detail as it really is a necessary learning outcome that students develop the ability to work towards deadlines.

20% of a student’s final grade is based upon their weekly Smartbook assignments. Typically, it is 12 assignments with a value of 2% each. In that way, a student can miss a week and still earn the full 20%. I also give students weekly “in class” assignments. They are practical application of the theory from the chapter. I normally assign them through Blackboard but they aren’t from the text. The “in class” assignments make up another 20% of a student’s final grade. There really are a lot of points on the board for a student getting engaged in the process. Both the mid-term and final tests are worth 20% each. The final 20% is for a small group presentation that happens over the last two weeks of the term. The first time through with SmartBook, I assigned the entire chapter at the maximum length. I had some of the keen students suggest it was just too much in some weeks. This time through I adjusted it so that the max. time spent on the assignments would be about 1.5 hours per week. Of course, some students

choose to redo the assignments multiple times until they get a perfect score. Again though, I feel that is fine so long as it gets them a solid base on the relevant topic before we apply it in class.

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

“ Students who purchase Connect have higher grades. The only exception I have seen is with some foreign students where their language skills are not yet at the level required. Their Connect grades may not correlate to test grades in some situations. In nearly all other situations, however, grades have increased even with a higher level of testing (utilizing short answer, mini-case style tests).

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 McGraw Hill Education support was exceptional. The first class visit is a huge help. Getting the relevant to students direct from the Learning Solution Consultant has been important. I recommend that all other instructors take advantage of this resource if possible. I haven’t had tech issues in the last two years. When I did, the support over the phone was very good.

OUTCOMES & RESULTS

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

“ Students who buy into the process and complete the weekly online assignments get higher grades. The mode in many sections is now 80% with. There are exceptions, and students who do not buy in do have problems. That is not really a fault in the technology but more the change in approach.

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

“ I had three sections of students (106 in total) taking the Intro Marketing course. I ran correlations between their performance on in-class activities, Connect assignments, and mid-term and final tests. The test used are short answer “mini cases” that ask students to think and provide answers with reasoning to back them up.

INSTITUTION PROFILE:

Niagara College is a College of Applied Arts and Technology in the Niagara region of Southern Ontario, with a population of 9,000 full time students. The college offers over 100 post-secondary diploma, baccalaureate degrees and advanced level programs.



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The overall correlation between students’ performance on the Connect assignments and the final grade was 76%. Given that the Connect component made up only 20% of the final mark, it is pretty easy to infer that students who were successful with the Connect components saw a strong, positive impact on their overall grade.

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

“ It allows me to focus my in-class time on applications, discussions and methods that take the theory and make it real. Instead of focusing on topical coverage, I can focus on how the topic relates to current business practice.

What are your students telling you about Connect with SmartBook?

“ Most students like the resource and feel it helps them achieve the grades they want. Students who don’t engage in the process are typically less happy.

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?

“ It is essential, in my opinion, to put significant grades to the online assignments. If they are important, students need to see grades attached. It is also important to explain to students that College is NOT the place to save money by refusing to buy resources. When presented with the cost of tuition, supplies and the opportunity cost of their time, the book and other resources are cheap.

It is also important for instructors to explain why they use the technology and what they hope to gain from its use. When presented with the rationale, most students appreciate the approach.

Utilize the rep support especially at the beginning of the course. Getting it right the first time helps pre-empt any student complaints. I never extend deadlines on the online assignments but do give students extra optional assignments they can use to make sure they earn the full 20%.

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

“ It allows us to use our scarce class time most effectively.