



**MANAGERIAL
&
CORPORATE
FINANCE
CASE STUDY**

McGraw-Hill

Case Study Facts

Course: Managerial and Corporate Finance, Financial Management (Undergraduate)

Instructor: George Hulene

Digital Product in Use: Connect with SmartBook for *Corporate Finance*, by Hillier

Number of Students: 220-330

George Hulene teaches at the School of Economics, Finance and Accounting at Coventry University, a forward-looking, modern university in England with a proud tradition as a provider of high-quality education and a focus on applied research. A stimulating, diverse and enthusiastic organisation, it is committed to delivering the very best experience for its students, and recently won the University of the Year for Student Experience Award¹. It has also been voted the top modern university for seven consecutive years.

The Story / The Challenge

Various challenges faced George Hulene in 2014 when he began his journey with McGraw-Hill. As he admits himself, his module is a “particularly complex” one, with many interweaving programmes, and a need for content to be updated annually to ensure it mirrors the most up-to-date regulations and industry development. Additionally, the course is made up from students with a hugely disparate background: George’s cohort is usually made up of learners from almost 50 countries. And lastly, there’s access to content to consider. “The module is compulsory for some programmes, and non-compulsory for others,” he explains. Where it’s compulsory, the students are given access to content as part of their course, but where it isn’t required, this isn’t the case. “The reality is that some students don’t have the budget to purchase the text”, comments George, “this is really unfortunate, as some can’t then engage with the text.” What George needed, he says, was something to really “grab their attention.” It wasn’t something George was struggling with alone, with other module leaders also feeling the same way. “We needed something to build and maintain momentum for the eleven weeks of the module, and then the three weeks before the exam, and the exam period too!”

The Solution

Feeling dissatisfied with the product he had historically used, it was then that George first met one of the McGraw-Hill Learning Consultants. Explaining why he wanted to explore different options, George comments that he found there to be key things “missing inside the platform” he had in place. When he was introduced to



Connect is an online platform using adaptive digital technology to deliver a more effective learning experience for both students and educators.

Connect, he recognised immediately it was “ten steps forward” compared to what he was used to using.

He was also pleased with the way the McGraw-Hill representative partnered with him. “She had the power to listen, really listen,” he commented, adding, “What was also incredibly useful was being shown by her what other universities were doing with Connect. This was great in building understanding how powerful the platform really was and how I could take it to another level.”

Easy Set-up

Ease-of-use was something George was also pleased with once he moved to Connect. “I’m stubborn in terms of providing the most up-to-date content to my students,” George explained, “And I like to build my courses from scratch each year², not least because there are so many movements and updates with regulations around Corporate Finance but also because the industry will apply different concepts slightly differently in time. For example, the leasing regulation changed in 2019 and I couldn’t possibly deliver the same content as in previous years.

“The flexibility Connect brings makes it easy to adapt the content year-on-year and it takes me approximately three hours to amend everything in Connect for the entire 11 weeks.”

For me, spending three hours on this which will eventually ensure I deliver a great student experience is simply a no-brainer.”

Course Creation, Implementation and Assessment

In terms of what George has elected his module to look like, and how he believes it has countered the challenges he faced, he has two assessments: one, an in-class test which is one hour long, and the other is an end-of-semester exam which is three hours long. 25% of the final grade is based on the in-class test and 75% is based on exam performance.

George has built in additional testing to his course. The formative tests which he includes were a direct counter to the challenges around engagement. George explained, “In building these tests into the course, I’m essentially giving students the power to see their own strengths and weaknesses. Connect really helped with this—it helped me tremendously.” He added further,

“Some students struggle to see where their weaknesses are within certain modules so Connect really helps with that.”

The simple act of asking you how sure you are about your answer (within SmartBook), George believes, has revolutionised how his students think about their knowledge. And this, for George, is an area where Connect has helped a great deal.

Changes to Learning Style

In addition to including formative testing in his course, Connect has also enabled George to ‘flip’ his classroom. Now, his learners are set pre-reading to do ahead of class and then spend their time together in person discussing ideas in groups and solving problems together. He said feelings are mixed to this approach. Some students “just want their lecture notes given to them” whilst other students love the system as “it gives them a chance to test themselves and learn something more.”

Conclusion

Taking stock of the situation, George believes it’s engagement that has been the biggest benefit of Connect to him and his learners. Indeed, his student satisfaction rate is currently at 97% with students asking for “more and more” of the technology George has blended into his course.

“You give ownership of learning to students, and when they have ownership, it’s natural to be more engaged. That’s the greatest thing Connect has done for me.”

²Creating a new course each year means that comparing course data year on year would not be fair, and we have omitted a comparison of this in here on account of those changes in course set-up.

Did you know?

SmartBook 2.0 is here now! And the “revolutionary” questions tapping into students’ certainty around questions has been updated to be even more powerful.

There’s a demo online [here](#) for you to explore SmartBook 2.0.

For more information on Connect and SmartBook, please visit mheducation.co.uk

We are a learning science company that is driven by a vision to help unlock the full potential of each learner.

At McGraw-Hill, we believe our contribution to creating a brighter future lies with our deep understanding of how learning happens and how the mind develops. Based on this, we develop methods to make the learning process more effective, and we apply all of this to creating digital and print solutions that empower educators and propel learners on a path toward success.