Case Study

Kapi'olani Community College

Digital Course Solution Is a Powerful Data Tracking Tool

When the Kapi'olani Community College was up for accreditation renewal, the school asked Professor Steve Singer to put together a report on student learning outcomes for the Computer Literacy and Applications course. Thankfully, all of the instructors taught the course using the SimNet learning platform. Singer requested as much data as he could get from McGraw Hill, the makers of SimNet. Because SimNet had saved detailed information on student performance in the course, McGraw Hill was able to give him everything he needed, in a format that allowed him to write his report. The school received their accreditation renewal in February, 2013.

Digital Product in Use: SimNet
Course Name: Computer Literacy and Applications
Course Type: Traditional
Credit Hours: 3
Instructor Name: Steven Singer
Course Enrollment: 500/year
Case Study Term: 2012 - 2013

Institution Profile

Kapi'olani Community College is part of the University of Hawaii system, which is made up of 10 campuses on four islands. It is home to over 50,000 students and offers 616 programs, including 123 bachelor's degrees, 92 master's degrees, and 53 doctoral degrees.

Course Description:

The Computing Literacy and Applications course is designed to introduce students to computers and their role in the information world. The goal of the course is for students to be able to use computer applications to communicate effectively in the work environment. The course covers spreadsheets, word processing, presentations, communications, and databases.

Course Grade:

- 60% of the final grade is based on Microsoft Office applications
- 40% of the final grade is based on computer issues and concepts

Implementation of SimNet:

Kapi'olani Community College offers numerous sections of their Computing Literacy and Applications course. Each instructor teaches and grades the course differently, but all of the students' homework assignments and exams are given through SimNet.

> "SimNet is easy to setup, easy to administer, easy for faculty to use, easy for students to use, and effective for students to use to learn."
>
> - Professor Steven Singer

Challenges:

When the college's assessment office needed to submit an accreditation renewal report, they wanted Professor Singer to turn in an assessment of the Computing Literacy and Applications course. He asked the instructors of the course for student data, but because each instructor used different homework assignments and exams, their data was incompatible. Singer needed to find a way to turn the information into a workable set of data.

Solution:

Instead of reworking the data the instructors gave him, Singer decided to get creative. He knew that all sections of the course used the SimNet learning platform, and he wondered if McGraw Hill--the makers of SimNet--would be able to provide him with the data he needed in a unified format.

McGraw Hill gave Singer exactly what he requested. They provided him with data that covered all of the homework and exams students of the course had turned in over the past five years. The data included

information from about 2,500 students, totaling 50,000 data points. Singer says, "By sorting the data and creating subtotals, assessment scores for the same student learning outcomes could be aggregated and seen."

This allowed him to compile a report that he submitted to the assessment office at the college. They were very satisfied with the results, and the college received accreditation for six years, the maximum allowed by the accrediting commission."Overall," Singer says, "the assessment office at my college was very satisfied with my approach and especially liked the fact that I had several years of data and the data was objective."

Conclusion

Because the college used the SimNet learning platform, Professor Singer was able to access and deliver exactly what the assessment office was looking for. Singer says, "The sheer quantity of data coupled with a roughly objective assessment system (rather than instructor biased methodologies) was exactly what I needed." In short, Professor Singer's job would have been much more difficult, time consuming, and prone to error without SimNet's data tracking features.