University of Central Arkansas

Case Study

Students' Exam Scores and Grades Improve with McGraw Hill Connect® and SmartBook® 2.0

The Study

Dr. Kevin Casey needed a way to ensure students completed the reading before attempting the assignments. "I believed that a student with a better understanding of the reading would perform better on the homework assignments and summative assessments," explains Dr. Casey.

All professors within the department agree to use the same textbook. "University-wide, all Statistics classes must meet similar objectives so students can choose to take stats anywhere across campus," notes Dr. Casey.

Success would be that students' exam averages would increase when assigning SmartBook® 2.0. "The exams did not change from semester to semester, so they are a good measure of success," added Dr. Casey. Smartbook 2.0 is an adaptive learning solution within McGraw Hill Connect® that provides personalized learning to individual student needs, continually adapting to pinpoint knowledge gaps and focus learning on concepts requiring additional study. Dr. Casey and his colleagues took an academic year to explore textbook options and make their determination.



Study Specifics

School Name:
University of Central Arkansas

Educator:
Dr. Kevin M. Casey

Course Name:
Business Statistics

Program:
McGraw Hill Connect® Business Statistics with *Basic Statistics in Business and Economics*, by Douglas Lind, William Marchal, Samuel Wathen

LMS Integration:
Blackboard

Implementation

Breakdown of Course Grade

- SmartBook 2.0 Readings - 20%
- Connect Homework Assignments - 20%
- Exams - 60%

On average, Dr. Casey assigns two assignments per week in Connect. The SmartBook 2.0 assignment is due a couple of days prior to the Connect homework assignment. The SmartBook 2.0 assignments are set to unlimited time and attempts for students to work through the material in the chapters. "If students want to put in the time and effort, they should always get 100% on SmartBook assignments," stated Dr. Casey.

Dr. Casey uses many algorithmic questions for the Connect homework assignments, allowing students to work towards mastery of the objectives. "I find the algorithmic questions fundamental to the homework," explains Dr. Casey. Dr. Casey allows the students multiple attempts on each homework question. Through Connect, the students receive feedback instantaneously.

Excel assignments within Connect are in a browser-based Excel environment where students can work with larger, more meaningful data sets. "The integrated Excel assignments work the same with both Windows and Apple computers, which was always an issue with the download and upload assignments from the previous platform," says Dr. Casey.

LMS Integration

Dr. Casey deep links all the Connect assignments within module folders set up in Blackboard. "Students use the modules to stay on track and go directly to their assignments through the Connect links in the course." Students are also provided a pacing guide in Blackboard to understand when each assignment is due, and Dr. Casey creates short videos that help students with specific objectives.

Performance Tracking

Dr. Casey compared exam averages from Summer 2021 without Connect and SmartBook 2.0 to Summer 2022 with Connect and SmartBook 2.0. The exam average increased by almost an entire percentage point in the summer of 2022. "Interestingly, a higher percentage of students from the Connect group earned A's, indicating that students that are motivated and willing to put effort into the assignments are seeing better results."

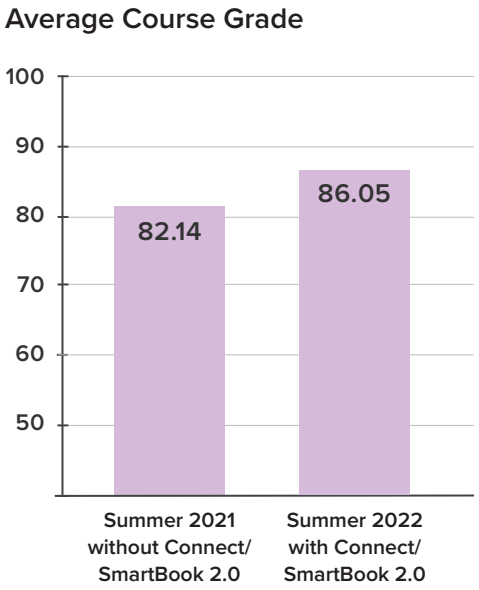


McGraw Hill Connect® and SmartBook® 2.0 help students understand what they know and what they need to continue to work on while giving them the opportunity to work on it."

Dr. Mike Casey

Results

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Conclusion

The University of Central Arkansas Business Statistics faculty, impressed by the significant increment in students' learning outcomes, have collectively adopted Connect and SmartBook 2.0 into all sections of Business Statistics.



Course Description

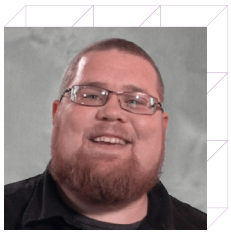
Business Statistics is a required course for all business majors as a part of the business foundation. The mode of instruction is reviewing the ebook and online resources, working the problems, and applying that knowledge to the exams. This course includes an introduction to descriptive statistics, probability theory (theoretical and empirical), discrete and continuous distributions, estimation, and sampling concepts. An emphasis is placed on hypothesis testing, including type I and type II errors.

The Setting

Established in 1969, the College of Business is deeply rooted at the University of Central Arkansas (UCA). With more than 1,500 undergraduate students and 100+ graduate students, the business program is thriving.

As technology and methods advance, the College of Business maintains an innovative curriculum well-suited for businesses today. Students are educated on the values of ethical behavior and integrity, making the college a trusted partner in the business community. As such, UCA's College of Business has one of the most active internship programs in the state. These vital internships allow students the opportunity to gain work experience and network in their career field.

Continuing the legacy of the UCA, the College of Business maintains educational excellence while preparing students for successful careers as leaders in the workplace. UCA business students are among the first in the state to be recruited by major companies, including: Acxiom, BKD LLP, Crews & Associates, Dillard's, HP, J.B. Hunt Transport, and Wal-Mart.



Instructor Bio

Dr. Mike Casey is an Assistant Professor of Management Information Systems and Analytics at the University of Central Arkansas. Dr. Casey teaches Business Computing, Business Statistics, Managing Systems & Technology and Systems Analysis and Design.

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