Success Story

Syracuse University



Challenge

Professor Jane Burrell faced challenges in managing a large class. She needed a tool that integrated seamlessly with Blackboard and Canvas and improved student engagement while efficiently handling grading and personalized feedback.

Solution

Connect Nutrition with Why Nutrition?
NutritionCalc Plus

Result

Professor Burrell found that Connect Nutrition significantly streamlined her grading process, enhanced student learning through Adaptive Learning assignments, and encouraged positive personal changes while seamlessly integrating with her Learning Management Systems (LMS).

Teaching Tip

Use your McGraw Hill Learning Specialists! They are so helpful and friendly. The Customer Support Instructor line is always available to help me figure out any challenges I have.



Jane Burrell,
MS, RD, CDN

Professor
Syracuse University
Syracuse, New York

The Challenge

Professor Burrell faced several challenges managing a large class, providing personalized feedback, and maintaining student engagement. The need for seamless integration with platforms like Blackboard and Canvas and finding a tool that could efficiently handle grading and assignments at scale was crucial. "The new autograded diet analysis assignments have enabled me to assign personalized diet analysis assignments to a large class," Burrell noted, highlighting the necessity of tools that streamline grading and support tailored learning experiences.

The Solution

Professor Burrell implemented Connect Nutrition with three primary goals:

- Enable students to apply new skills and receive timely feedback.
- Provide numerous low-stakes assignments that build confidence and competency.
- Incorporate diet analysis assignments that do not require individualized grading in a large class with limited TA support.

She successfully achieved all three objectives. "I have autograded weekly homework assignments so that students receive immediate feedback," Burrell explained, emphasizing how this approach allows students to understand their mistakes and reinforce new concepts. The immediacy of feedback is crucial in large classes, where personalized attention is often limited.

Professor Burrell integrated many low-stakes assignments into her course to further build student confidence and competency. "The weekly homework assignments are based on current content, are untimed, and provide feedback upon submission," she noted. In addition to these assignments, she also offers weekly Adaptive Learning assignments as extra credit. "These assignments are available to every student, not only to improve their grades, but also to give them more exposure to the content at their own pace," Burrell added. This approach ensures that students can reinforce their understanding without the pressure of high-stakes testing, fostering a more supportive learning environment.

One of the most innovative aspects of Professor Burrell's implementation is diet analysis assignments, designed to be impactful and manageable within a large class setting. "I was able to create a five-part diet analysis assignment for students to compare their dietary intake to recommendations specific to them," she explained. These assignments are facilitated by the AssessMyDiet tool in Connect, which includes a mix of multiple-choice questions and intelligent response questions. The benefit of this approach is two-fold: students receive personalized insights into their dietary habits, and Burrell can efficiently manage the grading process without overwhelming her limited TA support. As a result, Connect has become an integral part of her course structure, seamlessly integrated with Blackboard and Canvas to provide a cohesive learning experience for her students.

At Syracuse University, adopting the Inclusive Access model has significantly streamlined the process of providing course materials, especially in large classes where students often need help purchasing the correct resources. Professor Burrell found that the initial implementation faced some resistance, but this quickly dissipated after students experienced the benefits firsthand. "It is a paradigm shift," Professor Burrell stated, noting that every student now has access to the necessary texts and tools from day one, eliminating delays and allowing the course to start smoothly. This seamless access has improved the teaching experience and ensured that students are better equipped to succeed from the outset, with digital resources proving more cost-effective and accessible than traditional print options.



The Results

Professor Burrell's adoption of Connect has dramatically improved her efficiency in managing and grading large classes, particularly with the seamless integration into her LMS gradebooks. **"Connect has been a game changer for grading,"** she explained, noting how the platform has not only streamlined her grading process, but also allowed her to share recommendations directly with her Connect Support Specialist. One of the most significant improvements has been the addition of a TA role within Connect, which she is eager to implement. "This will allow my TA to review student assignments and adjust grades as needed," Burrell added, highlighting how this feature will free up her time to focus on more critical teaching tasks.

Beyond the logistical benefits, Connect has also enhanced the learning experience for her students, particularly through the Adaptive Learning assignments. These assignments have helped students identify and focus on areas that need improvement, leading to more effective study habits. "The Adaptive Learning assignments are a great tool for students who tell you they study a lot but are not getting the grades they think they should have. If students have done the readings, Adaptive Learning assignments can be brief; if they are guessing, it will take much longer, " Burrell shared. Moreover, the impact of Connect extends beyond academics, as many students who participate in the AssessmentMyDiet or Diet Analysis assignments have reported making positive changes to their eating habits. As Burrell noted, "The students who use the Adaptive Learning assignments tell me that they work, and students enjoy tracking their eating habits," underscoring Connect Nutrition's role in fostering academic and personal growth.

Student Quotes

> I didn't do the adaptive learnings during the first half of the course, but I did take advantage of them for the second half, and I regret not doing this earlier. They made the homework questions much easier to do because the concepts often lined up with each other."

> I think the most valuable part of this course that helped my overall learning experience was the adaptive learning extra credit, and the homework has helped me have a better understanding of the concepts."

> The adaptive learning assignments and homework helped me a lot with studying for the exams, also, just showing up for class."

