



Enhancing Student Engagement with Interactive Videos



KALTURA

Wilmington University currently serves more than 19,000 students from its 14 locations throughout Delaware, New Jersey, and Maryland. Face-to-face classes still make up a majority of its student body, but Wilmington added online courses as a way to serve a larger population of adult students. Now, seven years later, online courses make up more than a third of all classes.

The popularity of the online courses made Wilmington the third fastest growing university in the United States, but according to Russ Lichterman, Education Technology Specialist, the classes felt a bit flat. As a result, the university started using video to add a new dimension and further enhance the online curriculum.



Video use quickly grew, mainly through the use of YouTube and Vimeo, but each department was creating and storing their own videos. This made it virtually impossible for Wilmington to manage and brand the content university-wide. “We needed a way to store all the videos in one place and have the ability to cross-publish the content throughout the university structure,” said Lichterman.



Wilmington decided to search for a more comprehensive solution and created a list of the criteria it must meet. “It was very important that the new solution integrate well with Blackboard Learn™,” said Lichterman. “If a solution didn’t have a Blackboard Learn building block, we didn’t consider it.”

After a comprehensive search, Wilmington chose Kaltura. Kaltura provides a market-leading video technology platform that allows faculty to easily create, edit and upload videos with the click of a button. Once videos are uploaded to the cloud-based platform, students and faculty can view the videos from any device in any location.

Wilmington began using Kaltura as part of a pilot program in October 2013. For the first time, the university allowed the entire faculty and student body to use the solution during this test phase. “We set up a training program for power users and usage quickly grew from there,” said Lichterman. “It was great to see that ‘ah ha’ moment when they realized how easy Kaltura is to use.”

Kaltura is now part of the university’s Hot Training Program that certifies faculty to teach online. As part of the training, faculty must create an introduction video. Once they see how easy it is to use, they start using it in other ways – in both online and face-to-face courses.



Sallie Reissman, Senior Director of Online Learning and Education Technology, also teaches an online course entitled, “Food in Culture International”. The first assignment is for students to create a video to introduce themselves to their virtual classmates. “One student was recording her video when a black bear walked right through the shot,” said Reissman. “That video, along with the others, helped the students remember each other and become more engaged.”



Reissman also uses Kaltura to create a video of herself making each dish. “I attach a Swivl camera to an iPad and this allows me to record my movements around the kitchen,” said Reissman. “This gives the students the feeling they are there with me and they can now see all of the nuances that go into each dish.”



Catherine Maguire, Assistant Professor in the College of Health Professions, is finding Kaltura is a major asset in teaching nursing students. Before video, she would lecture or create a PowerPoint™ for her students to follow. Now with Kaltura, she can easily create a video or turn a PowerPoint into a video. Once complete, she loads it right into Blackboard Learn. “The simplicity of use makes Kaltura a good tool,” said Maguire. “It is much easier to use than other solutions and we have never had to call technical support.”

Her students are also using Kaltura to complete health assessments – physicals – on patients. The students must record themselves conducting the health assessment and then upload it into Blackboard. Maguire can then review the video and help students make improvements. “It’s much easier to see if they are doing everything they are supposed to do with the patient, and also how they interact with the patient,” said Maguire. “With Kaltura, I can give the students immediate feedback and then easily input their grade since it is already part of Blackboard.”



When the Kaltura pilot ended in July of 2014, Wilmington purchased the solution university-wide. “At this point, Kaltura is running itself,” said Russ Lichterman. “We only get a handful of support calls a semester regarding Kaltura and most of those deal with Java, which we quickly explain away.”

The use of Kaltura throughout the university has been astounding. Wilmington has seen usage grow exponentially each month and between July 2014 and September 2014, usage doubled. “We are already in talks with Kaltura to expand our storage space in the cloud,” said Lichterman.

This type of growth wouldn’t be possible without student engagement. One student’s feedback said it best, “I especially enjoyed the video presentations included in this class. I am someone that learns better by hearing...rather than reading, so these videos were invaluable tools to help me succeed in class.”

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