

Enhancing Education with Revel: Professor Spotlight

Spotlight on: Daniella Cope



Pennsylvania Highlands Community College (PHCC) is a public, two-year institution located in Johnstown, Pennsylvania. They offer 280 Associates degrees and certificates and currently have an enrollment of approximately 1,200 students, with 62% attending full time. In addition to the traditional college students, PHCC's dual enrollment tops 1,200 high school students.

Daniella Cope, professor at PHCC, has been a long-time user of Pearson products in her General Psychology (PSY 100) and Human Growth and Development (Psych130) courses. As the coordinator for those courses, she has the discretion to choose what materials faculty within her department will teach with and, for approximately 13 years, those courses have been taught exclusively using Pearson products. Initially, they used MyLab Psychology, but four years ago they switched to Revel.

One of the challenges that prompted the switch was the difficulty some students had with acquiring their course materials in the first one or two weeks of the semester. This resulted in students falling behind right at the start of the semester, which was discouraging for both the students and instructor. Revel works with Pearson's Inclusive Access, which made it a natural choice.

Daniella says, "When I made the decision to include (course materials) as part of their tuition, it came with them having instant access to them starting day one. That was a big part of my decision to switch."

In addition to Pearson's Inclusive Access, another factor in the switch was the extra assistance and practice students get through Revel. Since PHCC is a smaller school, students don't have access to tutoring services or extra resources. While the assessments that Revel embeds in the reading are not required, they allow students the opportunity to take advantage of extra practice if they feel like they are struggling.

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Daniella sees several aspects of Revel as especially beneficial for her as an instructor. First, Daniella finds Revel to be easy to use, and she appreciates the customization. She says, “I like the setup and the way I can just drag content that I want to be published, so the students only see what I want them to. The set due dates feature is very user-friendly and has been very beneficial.” Furthermore, she often uses the analytics from the instructor dashboard to inform instruction, especially to identify struggle points for students. “I like the ability to see how much of my class is submitting their assignments and where there’s low activity,” Daniella says. “Those are very helpful. I like being able to identify what is challenging them.”

Regarding her students, she believes the most helpful aspect of Revel is the ability to read through the chapters on their phone, wherever they are and whatever they’re doing. Many also take advantage of the audio feature. The convenience of accessing their assignments and readings on the go is really valuable to her students. “I do believe that ability to read it anywhere and listen to it anywhere has been a big benefit for them,” she says.

Feedback from students indicates that they appreciate Inclusive Access as it “has been a relief to them to get their course materials right away and start the semester prepared.” In addition, students have said that they like the many opportunities Revel offers for them to practice through mini-assessments placed throughout the reading, even though they aren’t required.

Taking advantage of Revel has really freed up Daniella to focus on other aspects of her course, which has been the most impactful part of utilizing the platform. She says, “The biggest benefit is that I can spend more time, more energy, more feedback on the writing of their papers, the writing of discussion boards for the online sections, and engaging in discussion in the classroom.” Furthermore, she does not have to cover all the foundational content in lecture as she knows students are receiving that through the readings and subsequent assessments.

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When asked what advice she would give to a new user of Revel or someone considering adoption, Daniella suggests developing a relationship with your institution’s IT department, as they are helpful when it comes to any login or access issues. In addition, she recommends establishing a partnership with your local Pearson reps as, in her experience, they are incredibly supportive. “They’ve been fantastic in terms of customer support,” she says. “The reaction time is very much appreciated in terms of how quickly the turn around is.”