

Course Design

EDUCATOR TESTIMONIAL GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF BUSINESS

COURSE: School of Business, Master of Business Administration, Master of Science in Information Systems Technology, Master of Science

SUMMARY: The George Washington University, School of Business (GWSB) created a suite of online programmes with Pearson for 3 of their Masters programmes. Students can participate online, face-to-face, or in hybrid learning environments. They take courses from the same faculty and earn the same degrees.

What challenge or problem did you want Pearson's course design services to solve?

The shrinking Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.) market and increased competition both globally and locally for both M.B.A. and specialized master's programs, means that universities have to work harder to attract students. The GWSB was also facing lower student engagement, a lack of local, current events in the classroom, and a lack of faculty collaboration in course development. Their part-time students were struggling to feel connected to the academic learning community outside the classroom.

The GWSB wanted to improve student satisfaction by offering more convenient, engaging programs that helped develop their students' abilities to succeed in a global marketplace. Only a small cluster of lecturers had online teaching expertise. Faculty members across the programs wanted to present learning in more readily digestible and engaging ways. They were unsure where to begin.

How did you work with Pearson to develop your course?

In partnership with Pearson, the GWSB created a suite of online programmes within a new Digital Community. The programmes were Master of Business Administration (M.B.A.), Master of Science in Information Systems Technology (M.S.I.S.T.), and Master of Science in Project Management (M.S.P.M.). Students can participate online, face-to-face, or in hybrid learning environments. Students are admitted using the same admissions process as the school's traditional programs. They take courses from the same faculty and earn the same degrees.

To help take the Digital Community from vision to reality, Pearson matched appropriate instructional designers with GWSB's faculty members to help transform their successful on the ground teaching strategies into meaningful and collaborative online learning experiences. Both Curriculum and lead Educational Consultants provided the initial framework for the model, as well as the expertise needed to make the technical and learning components of the Digital Community meaningful and flow seamlessly for an engaging student experience. The instructional designers worked with faculty members to ensure instructionally-sound alignment of course objectives and outcomes with filmed sessions. The teams collaborated on assessments, projects, and discussion questions. They also identified appropriate integration of rich, engaging media, including Pearson digital assets, and integrated synchronous sessions into the courses to complement the creative videos and enhance this engaging and unique learning experience.

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What benefits have you seen from using Pearson's course design services?

The GWSB's Digital Community programmes have a unique look and feel to them, in large part because of the partnership with Pearson. Each Digital Community course is offered in Blackboard. A custom, multimedia player (embedded into the VLE) synchronizes short, episodic videos with transcripts, PowerPoint presentations, multimedia supportive content, and assignments organized into weekly sessions. The videos place distance students into small group discussions with faculty members.

Our new interface allows students to get that integrated learning experience right there in the learning moment, not artificially. They don't have to go looking for it, we bring it to them. Going forward, the GWSB faculty members are thinking deeply about how to create greater customization in these courses at the discussion level and at the individual student level.