

Author conversations

On reaching the middle students

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I think the other thing that we haven't talked about yet is how technology benefits those students who probably would have dropped the class, but now technology is helping them stay in the class.

So in accounting we always say, 'If you don't know the first four chapters, then it's going to be a disaster for the rest of the semester.' So we designed a tutorial, accounting cycle tutorial, that helps students who typically struggle in those first four chapters to make it through that content. And they get all that extra help that I can't necessarily give them in class. But they get that through the technology, and it's made all the difference.

You know, when I think about writing the textbook, and how do I want to incorporate the things that I'm doing in my classroom into the textbook, I'm thinking about what type of student am I actually reaching for. I'm actually not thinking about the A student. Because the A student, I mean, really, they could learn accounting on their own. Right? They could learn it with a bad textbook or a great textbook; with a bad professor, with a great professor. I mean, those students get it.

But the students that I'm really hoping that I reach out to are those borderline students. Those students who struggle. The students who work really hard but still can't seem to get it. The students who think, 'I'm taking accounting because it's required, and I don't know why I'm taking this, and I don't want to be an accountant, and I see no relevance to this.' Those are the students that I'm reaching out to.

So we think about the struggling student. You know, so many times I have students come to my office and say, 'You know, Professor Miller, I studied, and I did all the homework, and I still don't understand this.' And that's the student that I want to reach out to. I want to provide them with the tools that will help them finally click. Right? To make the lightbulb go on. That's the student that I want to reach.

And then the other student is that student that thinks that this doesn't have any [relevance]. Accounting doesn't have any [relevance] to what they're going to do in the future. And so when I write the textbook, I think about, 'How can I bring in stories of businesses that have made decisions based upon accounting?'

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