



Arizona State University

Pearson Provides ASU with Comprehensive Student Services for a Pioneering “Third Way” Model

Situation

Arizona State University (ASU) is a New American University that takes responsibility for the greatest challenges, locally and globally, that we face as a society. They include educational attainment, individual and community opportunity, the environment and health, scientific and technological progress, social justice, and human worth.

Online education is fundamental to ASU's vision and impact as a New American University. Ranked among the top 100 universities in the world, ASU is providing the knowledge, discovery and creativity necessary to help solve these challenges and build a better future.

ASU currently offers more than 30 degrees entirely online, each designed and instructed by its renowned faculty. Many degree programs are offered by nationally ranked colleges, such as the new Bachelor in Applied Science in Health Science with the College of Nursing and Health Innovation.

Challenge

There are as many as 45 million adults nationwide, or roughly 1-in-7, with some college credits from post-secondary education, but no degree to show for it. This explains, in part, why the United States has fallen to 12th internationally in percentage of population with college degrees. Compounding the situation, the nation's unemployment rate - 9.8 percent as of December 2010 - means that it is twice as difficult for an adult without a college degree to find employment.

Research shows that a college degree is a key differentiator for success in the 21st century marketplace. However for most adults, the traditional classroom is no longer a realistic option. Family, work or other life circumstances make the possibility of finishing their college degree on-campus unlikely. Online learning creates new and unprecedented opportunities for these individuals.

Working adults with a college degree earn \$300,000 more in their lifetime, or roughly \$15,000 more per year, according to U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics data.

“When it comes to online learning, there is a direct correlation between quality services and student success. Online learning is very demanding...the more support students receive, the better their learning outcomes and overall experience will be.”

Philip Regier,
Executive Vice Provost and Dean of ASU Online

Solution

As a New American University, ASU is rising to meet these challenges by serving non-traditional students with high-quality online degree programs that are rigorous, engaging and affordable. Specifically, ASU partnered with Pearson to enhance and expand its online learning services and resources, contributing to a superior student experience that results in high graduation rates.

Pearson, a trusted advisor to leading higher education institutions, is providing ASU with a comprehensive set of services. They include the implementation of Pearson LearningStudio, a next generation learning management system, Pearson LearningStudio Assessment and Analytics, and Learning Outcome Manager.

Pearson LearningStudio's assessment and analytics applications assist with monitoring and analyzing trends in student performance, and tracking the achievement of learning objectives and goals. These tools will enhance ASU's ability to maximize student retention, identify and support at-risk students, improve overall learning outcomes, achieve high graduation rates, and positively impact local and global challenges.

In addition, Pearson is providing enrollment services for ASU undergraduate online degree programs, to include engagement, retention and student support. Pearson is also providing prospect generation services and admission services to better connect with and engage students at every stage of the enrollment process.

Why Pearson? The “Third Way”

The partnership between ASU and Pearson represents a new education delivery model for fully online programs in which Pearson blends the operational and commercial capabilities of a for-profit business with the academic ethos, curriculum and faculty at one of the nation’s leading public universities.

If the traditional, on-ground college experience was considered the “First Way,” then distance and online offerings with inadequate or non-existent student services would constitute the “Second Way.” By contrast, the “Third Way” involves a breadth and depth of meaningful services and resources for online students that result in learning outcomes that are as good if not better than the classroom.

In 2010, the Arizona Board of Regents charged ASU with growing from 3,000 to 30,000 online students by 2020. To fulfill this goal, ASU selected Pearson as a partner because the company offers a viable “Third Way” alternative that is unmatched in the industry today.

At Pearson, it has been our observation that “high-scale” and “high-intensity” is propelling the education market toward a third way in online learning. This includes the ability to scale significantly, improve content, and effectively use analytics, as well as provide extensive student services, and comprehensive enrollment and retention counseling, thereby providing students with a “best of both worlds” – for-profit and not-for-profit – approach to education.

Here’s an actual scenario of how a non-traditional student benefits from the “Third Way” model.

Elizabeth Hernandez is a public dispatch officer with the Ventura County (California) Sheriff’s Department. She is earning her Bachelor of Science in Criminology and Criminal Justice, while working full time in a profession that she loves.

Elizabeth got her first job in criminal justice as a cadet while attending community college. She took on as many shifts and assignments as her supervisors would allow, which led to recognition and promotions at work. Her success at work translated into even longer hours and atypical schedules, making it difficult for Elizabeth to continue pursuing her degree in an on-ground program. Elizabeth knew that in order to continue to climb in her career, she would need her college degree.

She selected ASU because, in her words, “ASU not only provided me with the flexibility that I needed to continue to work in a job that I love, it is also helping me to relate what I am learning to my work. I’ve felt welcomed and supported from the moment that I applied, and I know that ASU will support me throughout my career. I am so proud to be a Sun Devil!”

Conclusion

The “Third Way” proves that for many students online learning can be more effective than the classroom. This pioneering model will enable thousands of students to earn their degree from one of the leading public universities in the country while fulfilling other responsibilities at work and home.

By partnering, ASU and Pearson will be able to apply real-time assessment and analytics data to the measurement and evaluation of student performance. The result will be thousands of student success and graduation stories.

“We’re playing a unique and critical role in managing the growth of ASU’s online programs, engaging potential students and helping to retain them once they are enrolled.”

Matt Leavy,
CEO, Pearson eCollege