

CASE STUDY

East Carolina University

INTRODUCTION

In 1907, East Carolina University (ECU) was founded to alleviate the desperate shortage of teachers in the eastern part of North Carolina. The College of Education continues to supply the nation with some of its best educators, and now it has been joined by programs of high distinction in health care and fine and performing arts.

From modest beginnings as a teacher training school, the university is now an engine of economic development and a hotbed of discovery. Today, ECU is emerging as a top national research university with an enrollment of more than 23,000. East Carolina is a constituent institution of the University of North Carolina and offers

106 bachelor's degree programs, 71 master's degree programs, 4 specialist degree programs, 1 MD program, and 16 doctoral programs in its professional colleges and schools, the Thomas Harriot College of Arts and Sciences, and the Brody School of Medicine.

CHALLENGE

ECU recognized the potential of online learning early on and was among the first schools in the nation to develop and offer a degree completely over the Internet. Since then, the university has created more than 50 degree and certificate programs in health, education, technology, and other areas, and a number of new degrees are under development for online delivery.

ECU was the first university in North Carolina to begin teaching distance education programs. At that time, their approach to distance education was limited to chat rooms, the Blackboard course management system, and entirely text-based online course content. ECU sought an online learning platform that would match their cutting-edge reputation, accommodate PowerPoint presentations, and scale to meet growing demand.

SOLUTION

ECU purchased Mediasite in October 2003, hired Global Classroom Video Producer Emily Jones 4 months later, and then, after just 1 week, the department's Mediasite program was in full swing. Jones now uses Mediasite to produce the



UNIVERSITY CONTACT:

Emily Jones, Global Classroom Video
Producer, East Carolina University,
Greenville, NC 27858.
Telephone: (252) 328-9617.
E-mail: lovee@ecu.edu

school's Global Classroom, capturing 40 Mediasite recordings per week within multiple colleges across the campus. To date, ECU uses 17 recorders and three servers to webcast more than 530 hours of classroom content per semester, which it expects to double to 1,000 hours over the next 6 months.

Jones records presentations from students who arrive in any of three reserved classrooms. Two of the classrooms seat approximately 30 students, while the other seats up to 60. Jones then burns a DVD of the classes so that professors can retain a lecture library to share with students in other classes.

Requests for the three Mediasite rooms come from the College of Technology and Computer Science, the College of Education, the College of Arts and Sciences, the College of Health and Human Performance, and the College of Human Ecology. Degree programs using rooms include: industrial technology, industrial distribution and logistics, engineering, information and computer technology, social studies and science, instructional technology, public health, recreational therapy, environmental studies, anthropology and international studies.

The majority of Mediasite content is captured by faculty for viewing by students. A recent U.S. Department of Agriculture conference was captured for ECU's distance learners. Engineering students undertaking a senior capstone project mediasite their final presentation to their clients at the end of the semester. Students also use Mediasite to capture and review their defense of thesis class on-demand.

"Thanks to Mediasite, thesis defense students can review and improve their presentation style and delivery before they enter a potentially high stress situation," says Jones. "We continue discovering new ways to use the technology for the betterment of both students and faculty."

RESULT

This next phase of ECU's Mediasite deployment will include the installation of 16 Mediasite recorders in the Allied Health Sciences facility with additional planned purchases campuswide. The new Mediasite units will capture and publish more than 300 lectures for both on-campus and global, live and on-demand viewing over the Web. The distance education program is also incorporating podcasting capabilities with Mediasite and users can attach it to any extension they wish.

ECU has extended its holistic education experience by offering blended learning activities, synchronous online lectures and collaborative content-building sessions using Mediasite. In addition, the university is posting its curriculum online via Sonic Foundry's Mediasite.com—the first searchable Web site focused exclusively on presenting publicly available expert presentations with video, audio, and graphics. Using this unique public outlet, ECU will share the archived course lectures captured on campus with both ECU and other students, professors and the general public.

"The population of distance learners definitely has increased since the program began employing Mediasite," says Jones. "Additionally, this tool is applied across disciplines, allowing ECU's distance education program to deliver a more student-centered educational format to those who must travel, who wish to review course content more than once or individuals with irregular schedules."

BENEFITS

- Allows university to offer blended learning activities, synchronous online lectures and collaborative content-building sessions;
- Expands structured classroom teaching and independent student learning;

- Accommodates the diverse needs of students who need to travel, who wish to revisit course content, or who are spread across the state; and
- Scalable online learning platform grows to meet increasing demand.

EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY "... HAS CREATED MORE THAN 50 DEGREE AND CERTIFICATE PROGRAMS IN HEALTH, EDUCATION, TECHNOLOGY, AND OTHER AREAS, AND A NUMBER OF NEW DEGREES ARE UNDER DEVELOPMENT FOR ONLINE DELIVERY."