



Providing Tutoring When and Where Students Need It

A case study of Ivy Tech Community College and Tutor.com, with contributions from Stacy Atkinson, Instructional Designer at Ivy Tech | 2015

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

With more than 200,000 students on 14 campuses, Ivy Tech Community College is Indiana's largest post-secondary institution. By providing affordable, open-access education, Ivy Tech Community College prepares students to live and work in a diverse and competitive environment.

In February 2015, Ivy Tech found itself facing a major challenge—how to provide system-wide tutoring services to students with complex personal, professional and academic schedules.

Institution Snapshot

- Enrollment: 200,000
- Institution Type: 2-Year College
- Tutor.com Partner Since: 2015
- Students access Tutor.com remotely from anywhere with an Internet connection
- 24 hours a day, 7 days a week
- 45,000+ sessions served

THE CHALLENGES

For the students, the challenge of accessing tutoring services was two-fold. Many students lacked the time outside of class to spend with a tutor, or could only find the chance to work with one during hours when many on-campus resources weren't available. Other students



lived too far from campus or didn't have the transportation resources to make an in-person tutoring session a reasonable option.

“They're not going to drive two hours to get chemistry tutoring,” says Stacy Atkinson, Instructional Designer at Ivy Tech Community College. “We don't have just one campus or mandate that students take courses at their home campus. Students could be hours away from available face-to-face tutoring for the courses they are taking.” For the more than 40,000 students who work towards their degree through online courses, these challenges were even more pronounced.

THE SOLUTION

Ivy Tech's tutoring services needed to be available when and where students needed them. The online nature of Tutor.com's on-demand tutoring services made that possible by eliminating time and geography barriers.

“It was a way to get students the help that they need and meet them where they are. And what a unique way to do it, says Atkinson. “Once upon a time, this wasn't possible. Now, students can chat with a tutor online—who could be in another state—at 11 o'clock at night. We wanted to bring that to students and give them that tailored support.”

“I really appreciate the time the tutor took to explain this problem to me. **I was completely lost. Now I understand.**” — Ivy Tech Student



“This service is invaluable!

I’m so grateful for it. I had a great tutor today. I learned a lot and will remember it better since I was learning from my own writing.”

— Ivy Tech Student

THE MEASURE OF SUCCESS

Following the implementation of the program, the number of tutoring sessions accessed by students surged from just over 200 sessions in February 2015 to more than 4,500 in October.

Though the program has been successful, it faced its own set of challenges and reservations on behalf of the faculty. “Some people were skeptical as to how students could possibly build a relationship with an online tutor, which is an important part of a tutor and tutee relationship. Part of the success of the Tutor.com sessions is that they build a relationship with each other,” Atkinson says. Despite initial reservations, features such

as Early Alerts which identify students who are struggling with content mastery have helped skeptics turn a corner and see the value of Tutor.com’s services within their classroom.

“When we raise flags from those predictive alerts, every once in a while a faculty member will write back at the end of the semester and say, ‘I just want you to know that I met with the student and they ended up making a B in the course. Thank you for reaching out to me so that I could reach out to the student earlier in the semester.’” ■

98%

OF STUDENTS SAY THEY ARE GLAD IVY TECH OFFERS TUTOR.COM*

97%

OF IVY TECH STUDENTS WOULD RECOMMEND TUTOR.COM TO A FRIEND.*

96%

OF IVY TECH STUDENTS SAY TUTOR.COM HELPS THEM IMPROVE THEIR GRADES.*

96%

OF IVY TECH STUDENTS SAY TUTOR.COM HELPS THEM BE MORE CONFIDENT ABOUT THEIR SCHOOL WORK.*

*Compiled from Ivy Tech student post-session surveys during the 2015 calendar year.

For more information, visit tutor.com/higher-education.