

Case Study

Shifting Paradigms:

Ivy Tech Community College—Northeast Increases Student Learning Opportunities with Lecture Capture Solution Panopto Focus



Ivy Tech—Northeast At a Glance

Location:
Fort Wayne, Indiana

Type:
Community College

**Total Enrollment at
Region:**
11,497
(Fort Wayne's Fall 2009)

Web Site:
www.ivytech.edu

Andaz Ahmad, director of instructional technology who manages Instructional Technology, Distance Education for faculty/staff and Media Services, for Ivy Tech Community College—Northeast in Fort Wayne, Ind., often compares education to a one-time performance.

“In most cases, students have one shot at it,” Ahmad said. “They go to a lecture, listen, and have one chance to learn the material. By next week, the lecture is on another topic. There isn’t time to go back.”

With unplanned events often conflicting with lectures, many Ivy Tech—Northeast students worry not only about understanding lecture material, but about falling behind due to missed lectures. Add in Indiana’s harsh winter storms along with recent reports of H1N1 flu, and a dangerous situation emerges. How can Ivy Tech students be expected to learn course material when they are out sick or unable to make it to campus?

After reviewing the situation, Ahmad turned to lecture capture technology to provide Ivy Tech—Northeast with the perfect answer.

The Need for Lecture Capture

When Ahmad first learned about lecture capture, he knew it could greatly benefit the Ivy Tech—Northeast campus. Through lecture capture, professors could make lectures available online to students who missed classes as well as provide all students with the opportunity to revisit complex material. They could also develop rich media recordings that include video, audio and screen capture components.

“We have several situations where students and faculty have to take time off. To deal with this, we wanted a way to save course material during both planned and unplanned outages in the instructional process,” said Ahmad. “We also wanted a way to help students review critical material presented in class so they didn’t have to rely solely on the lecture. After reviewing the options, we decided lecture capture technology was just the thing.”

Once hooked on the idea of lecture capture, Ahmad surveyed faculty and staff and comprised a list of desired features. Having struggled previously with traditional recording methods, Ahmad wanted to ensure this new initiative provided the functionality necessary to capture course lectures without taxing current resources.

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“Previously when we wanted to record classes, we basically rolled video cameras into the classroom. This tied up our resources and took a tremendous amount of time, as multi-media technicians needed to record the session, transfer footage onto a computer, do some editing and then burn it to a CD or DVD. It was a process that we couldn’t afford and didn’t want to repeat,” said Ahmad.

Ahmad wanted a solution that faculty members could use to easily capture and share rich media lectures without help from a technician. He also wanted students to be able to view all facets of a lecture, including online demonstrations and PowerPoint slides. Given budget constraints, he needed a solution that was cost-effective and efficient.

“We wanted to ensure that the recording process could literally be a one or two-click process,” said Ahmad. “Within two or three clicks, faculty should be able to start recording. We didn’t want them to have to do anything complicated, or to need a technician to create or post recordings.”

To help Ivy Tech–Northeast find the best solution, Ahmad reviewed eight vendor solutions and trimmed the list down to a few finalists. After meeting with finalists and holding an unsuccessful trial with a competing solution, Ahmad learned about Panopto Focus and was immediately excited about its innovative functionality and low cost of ownership. Ahmad also was excited by Panopto’s willingness to offer a three-semester trial.

“Panopto had the features we wanted at a price we could afford. We were going through budget cuts and could not have afforded a lecture capture trial through a company that wanted to charge us the full-scale price,” said Ahmad. “When I told administrators about Panopto and its very affordable rate for a three-semester trial, it was a very easy sell.”

Practice Makes Perfect

While Ahmad knew Panopto’s innovative lecture capture functionality could revolutionize learning at Ivy Tech–Northeast, he worried that past experiences with recording sessions would make professors hesitant to try the new technology.

To combat these sentiments, Ahmad worked with Panopto to design an incentive program that would kick-start the trial and increase faculty buy-in. Through this program, faculty members that implemented Panopto Focus and completed specific tasks could win iPods, Web cams, microphones and other small prizes that could be used with their new software.

To be eligible for this program, professors had to attend training sessions and focus groups as well as use Panopto to record a brief course introduction and at least one full lecture.

“Setting the expectations with the faculty was a big winner. Unlike other trials, where faculty members didn’t know what to expect, with Panopto we were very specific. Faculty members knew what we wanted them to do, and this greatly increased the quantity and quality of trial participation.”

The program was extremely successful as professors immediately saw the benefits of Focus. Professors noted that they really liked being able to record with multiple devices, allowing them to focus the recording on themselves, PowerPoint slides and students. They also liked Panopto’s fast response time to technical support questions.

In addition, by watching their own recordings, professors were able to learn more about their teaching styles. Certain professors realized they were unaware of nervous habits, while others were able to pinpoint areas of their lectures that were too boring or confusing.

“With Panopto, faculty members began watching their own lectures, something that many of them had never done before. When they watched themselves giving lectures, they were able to self-critique themselves and improve their lecture style,” said Ahmad.

Students also provided positive feedback, as they were excited by how easy it was to access missed lectures online and review those that had been confusing or complicated.



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In addition, students who used Panopto’s note taking and text-based search functionality found the new technology to be invaluable as they now could mark confusing points in the lecture, and then pull up the recordings during faculty office hours to review specific areas of concern with professors.

“Students are starting to use Panopto’s note taking features and they love it. Now students can put comments in the timestamps, search for them later, and pull up particular points that they want to review with a professor,” said Ahmad. “In addition, they can take notes about what they need to go back and review, including information on related readings and more.”

Furthering Student Education

After the completion of a three-semester trial, both students and faculty members alike were convinced that Panopto Focus was a critical tool for enhancing learning. Students now could access classes they had to miss, and also could revisit material that was confusing – allowing lectures to become guided practice sessions instead of a one-time game.

“We decided Panopto was the best product to meet most of our needs,” said Ahmad. “It’s simple to use and the students and faculty love it. Recently, it took less than 15 minutes of training to teach a faculty member, and since then they’ve been able to create wonderful lectures.”

In addition, Ivy Tech–Northeast saw Panopto as a vital component of its disaster recovery plan, as it allowed professors to record lectures from home during campus closures, and provided sick students with the opportunity to experience missed lectures first-hand, allowing them to easily catch up on missed material.

“Most recently we’ve been dealing with the challenge of H1N1 and there have clearly been absences of students and staff,” said Ahmad. “So as part of our disaster recovery plan, we decided Panopto Focus would be the best way to tackle the challenge, because with Panopto, students don’t have to be in class to access the material.”

After deciding to implement Panopto Focus campus-wide, Ahmad began working with Ivy Tech to install Panopto on all teacher work stations across the Fort Wayne campus. Ahmad noted that installation has been easy and cost-efficient.

“Panopto has been the best lecture capture tool we’ve ever tried in terms of the ease and speed of installation,” said Ahmad. “It also has been very cost effective because we can use very affordable microphones and Web cams that we already have. Unlike other solutions, it doesn’t require that we buy high-end cameras or other expensive components. Panopto just really works well.”

As more and more professors make plans to implement Panopto in their courses, Ahmad is excited about the new opportunities Panopto is providing Ivy Tech–Northeast faculty members and students. He is interested in partnering with other campuses within Ivy Tech’s 24-campus statewide network to promote distance learning, and hopes one day to use Panopto to expand the Ivy Tech online degree program. He also is working with Panopto to implement Focus’s latest functionality and integrate directly to Ivy Tech’s Blackboard Learn® Platform.

In addition, Ahmad is excited about the new opportunities available to faculty members and students every day. Through this initiative, he has shifted campus learning from a one-time performance to a continuous process, where professors can provide students with critical material in an easy-to-use, cost effective manner.

“We needed a proper lecture capture solution that could promote student learning and be driven by faculty without extra costs or staffing requirements. Panopto has been able to meet all of our challenges,” said Ahmad.



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or visit panopto.com for more information.