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Assigning students an online homework system they can actually afford

How a biology instructor supports student learning and meets teaching needs with a $10 tool.

Challenge

Ensuring students in Scott Danneman's college biology classes could afford the required homework system.

Solution

Implementing OpenStax Tutor in all of Scott's biology classes to guarantee his students could access the course's required homework.

It was a fellow educator of Scott Danneman's who introduced him to OpenStax Tutor.

> **A colleague at another college gave a presentation about open-source materials, and once I investigated the website, I found OpenStax Tutor.**

Scott, a college biology professor at Anonka-Ramsey Community College in Coon Rapids, Minnesota, had never heard of OpenStax Tutor. At the time, he was using a different type of platform, but it wasn't able to solve his students' most significant dilemma.

> **I was trying to break cost barriers. Our students tend to have very little extra money after paying for the course and many times would not buy the homework because it was extra money.**

A lot of Scott's students are either the first in their family to attend college, have lower incomes, are in a minority group, or are returning to get a second degree.

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> **Many of them struggle with putting in the necessary time to be able to do well in the class, as many are balancing work, family, and finances.**

Adopting OpenStax Tutor solved that problem immediately. At $10 per student, per semester, Scott had finally found an affordable option that also met his teaching needs.

> **Students really like the price.**

OpenStax Tutor has provided several additional benefits both for his students and for him.

> **For me, I love the ability to rapidly set up assignments. I think the best feature for students is reading assignments.**

Scott adds OpenStax Tutor was extremely easy to set up. He followed the setup instructions and integrated OpenStax Tutor with his learning management system. After setting up the course, he could go in and easily build readings and homework assignments.

> **I was very happy that OpenStax Tutor allows you to assign readings as well as it links students directly to the content they should be reading at any given time.**

Scott likes that OpenStax Tutor takes the often lengthy college readings and breaks them down into short and digestible segments. These portions are interwoven with simulations, videos, and conceptual questions.

Spaced practice and personalized questions help students learn and retain the material. Teachers can even integrate OpenStax Tutor with your LMS (learning management system).

Scott has every intention of continuing to use OpenStax Tutor for semesters to come. He would definitely recommend the platform to his colleagues.

Scott understands the importance of student engagement, particularly online in this post-Covid-19 era. Student engagement has increasingly been considered as a defining characteristic of high-quality teaching and learning in higher education. It is a constantly evolving field and Scott is convinced OpenStax tutor will help him achieve that.

For more information regarding OpenStax Tutor and how it can help your online classroom, visit **openstax.org/openstax-tutor.**

An easy-to-use platform that keeps high school students learning after class

This AP physics teacher uses OpenStax Tutor to inspire her students to learn more than just the bare minimum.

Challenge

Providing every student in Crystal Morales's classes with the required textbook.

Solution

Engaging OpenStax Tutor to provide online courseware, including the textbook that students need to complete the homework assignments and reading required for Crystal's classes.

For Crystal Morales, a high school physics and AP® physics teacher at Hayden Catholic High School in Topeka, Kansas, OpenStax Tutor was not a foreign concept.

In fact, her colleagues had been using it for a few years.

She knew it would be the perfect solution to her current problem: providing enough textbooks for her students. OpenStax Tutor provides each student with a digital copy of the required textbook. This is significantly cheaper than a printed edition of the book. A digital edition can be accessed anywhere there is a computer. Additionally, with OpenStax Tutor, students can access reading and homework assignments in a single platform.

Crystal says her students were initially skeptical about using OpenStax Tutor. However, she quickly noticed a change in engagement among them.

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Crystal was witnessing that her students were doing more than what was simply required to pass an exam or complete a certain assignment. Instead, they were indicating that they had become fully invested. They were displaying a desire to learn. They were displaying a willingness to do the work and wanted to gain a complete understanding of the topic. This was truly student engagement.

The layout of OpenStax Tutor was appealing to many of them.

> **Most students like it because their book and assignments are all in one spot.**

It's also incredibly easy for the teacher to set up.

> **I liked how I could separate the different sections of the course and how easy it was. It was all new to me, and I was able to complete the setup in about a half-hour.**

Her favorite part of OpenStax Tutor is being able to view her course as a student.

> **. . . that was super helpful.**

What has also been extremely helpful is OpenStax Tutor's price tag. At $10 per student, per semester, the price just can't be beaten.

OpenStax Tutor is designed to break down lengthy textbook readings into short, easy-to-digest segments. These reading segments are interwoven with videos, simulations, and conceptual questions.

Spaced practice and personalized questions help students learn and retain the material. You can also integrate OpenStax Tutor with your LMS (learning management system).

Crystal says OpenStax has been so helpful in her classrooms that she has every intention of using it again for future semesters.

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> **The way it is set up helps keep students and teachers easily organized.**

Adding she would recommend it to teachers everywhere.

For more information regarding OpenStax Tutor and how it can help your online classroom, visit **openstax.org/openstax-tutor.**

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