Produce Your Catalog Faster Than You Ever Thought Possible

The Challenge

The Office of the Registrar at the University of Northern Colorado started using Watermark Curriculum Strategy (formerly SmartCatalog) in 2012 to create a web-based catalog. However, faculty still submitted their curriculums in PDFs and didn't enjoy the process. Users found them hard to read and felt constrained by limited space. Even minor updates required users to resubmit the forms in their entirety. The PDFs were also challenging for the Office of the Registrar to maintain, as the quality of PDF submissions and approval process was inconsistent across campus, and there was no centralized way to track the integrity of the process.

The Solution

In 2020, the Office of the Registrar introduced Curriculum Strategy as a 100%-online tool. They recreated all PDF forms within the system, which allowed them to expand the number of fields and make them easier to read. They also increased the length of the fields so faculty could enter more information and restructured the layout for ease of use and better navigation. They also revamped the approval process so that faculty could add a proposed course to a program. Then, reviewers would check the new course and program change as a package.

The Office of the Registrar also implemented some parallel processes. For example, one department can gather feedback from another department when a curriculum change may impact them, and manage the review process within Curriculum Strategy rather than reaching out by email to get an impact statement from another unit.

The Wins

A complete record of review and approvals: An audit trail allows the Office of the Registrar to keep a record of all approvals and any changes made throughout the process. There are no longer any undocumented or unapproved changes occurring.

Positive feedback from faculty and staff: The users that fill out the forms appreciate having all the information in one place, and the automatic prefilling of course and program data into the form reduces manual data entry (and errors).

Significant time savings on catalog creation: In 2020, the Office of the Registrar published its catalog a month ahead of schedule, despite the pandemic and other administrative challenges.

More accurate and consistent data: The information gathered within Curriculum Strategy is more accurate and consistent due to fewer manual entry points. Administrators can coordinate data across Banner and the catalog, adding another level of consistency between systems.

Institution snapshot

University of Northern Colorado
Greeley, Colorado

Institution Type:
Doctoral University
Public

Total full-time students:
9,881

Total full-time faculty:
441

Number of campuses:
1

"Now, with the electronic forms in the curriculum management system, we are seeing fewer issues caused by multiple versions. People are all seeing the same thing, and they can collaborate. It's also beneficial for me as an admin to be able to help faculty through their process since we see the same form, and I can help them specifically with their items."

Megan Crews
Curriculum Liaison Specialist
University of Northern Colorado

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