



Learning how to handle a crisis

UMM makes a successful pivot to online learning during the COVID-19 emergency with Brightspace

The Metropolitan University of Monterrey (UMM), one of Mexico's most prestigious universities, is overcoming the challenges of the coronavirus pandemic by working with D2L's partner Evanza to implement a robust online learning platform. Adopting D2L's Brightspace platform is helping UMM keep all its courses and content accessible and maintain educational continuity for its students.

At a Glance

Client: Metropolitan University of Monterrey
Learners: 13,000
Industry: Higher Education
Website: umm.edu.mx

Platform/Features:

- D2L's Brightspace platform
- Video conferencing
- Quizzes
- Pulse mobile app

Interviewee:

- Professor Carmen Tamez Muñoz, Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, UMM

Highlights:

- Made around 4,500 courses available online in a week or less
- Achieved rapid adoption of the platform through daily staff training sessions
- Launched a powerful mobile app to increase access and student engagement

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Challenge

In March 2020, the majority of universities in Mexico responded to the COVID-19 crisis by taking the decision to suspend all face-to-face classes, knowing that their students might not be allowed to return to their classrooms for several months.

For a university as prestigious as UMM, it's vital to be able to guarantee an excellent academic experience for students—so the university needed to coordinate a responsible and accessible response to the crisis across its entire faculty.

That's why, in the space of a few weeks, UMM worked with D2L and Evanza to convert its Brightspace learning management system [LMS] into an indispensable tool for its 770 teaching staff and 13,000 students.

Solution

Originally, UMM only used Brightspace to support face-to-face teaching. However, professors soon began using its videoconferencing tools to support their classes remotely, and gradually took advantage of the platform's other features too. During the crisis, the university has been holding daily training sessions for teaching staff with support from D2L, which has accelerated the adoption of the platform.

“In our role as teachers, we were not accustomed to using an LMS—we are not experts in the platform, and the university has only had the platform online for three months. Nevertheless, with the help of Evanza and D2L, we have been able to migrate all our course materials, train our teaching staff, and launch around 4,500 courses online in a week or less.”

*Professor Carmen Tamez Muñoz,
Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, UMM*



Result

Teachers now feel comfortable with Brightspace and have adapted quickly to the wide range of tools and functionalities that they can integrate into their classes, projects and assignments. Students are happy, too: Brightspace makes learning varied and fun, and the platform's quizzes have been very well-received.

Carmen Tamez Muñoz describes the platform's mobile features as a particular highlight: "The mobile app is a tool that our students love — it puts all their notifications at their fingertips, and it's a perfect fit with their lifestyle. For those of us who are responsible for sending out day-to-day academic and administrative updates, it has also helped enormously with managing the way we communicate with students."

The university is now only a few weeks away from its midterm exams, which it plans to deliver remotely via Brightspace. UMM will customize the platform's assessment tools to align with its current best practices for administering the exam schedule, which will enable students to complete their exams online.

"Within just a few weeks, we have responded to COVID-19 by moving 100% online with Brightspace — and when this emergency is over, we'll be in a much stronger position than before.

I'm completely confident that when our students and teaching staff return, they will continue to use the platform in the classroom, because it's so helpful for research, essays, assignments and rubrics, and they love that it gives them such a wide range of multimedia options."

*Professor Carmen Tamez Muñoz,
Vice-Rector for Academic Affairs, UMM*

About Evanza

Evanza has been a D2L Platinum Partner since 2018, and specializes in sales, implementation and training services for the Brightspace platform in Mexico and throughout Latin America.