



Empowering students to succeed

Wageningen University harnesses interactive, digital content to engage students with the learning process

Wageningen University is always on the lookout for innovative ways to enable students to achieve their full potential. To complement its traditional teaching methods, the university deployed D2L's Brightspace platform, enabling teachers to build compelling, interactive learning experiences that drive student engagement and success.

At a Glance

Client: Wageningen University

Learners: 12,800

Industry: Higher Education

Website: wur.nl

Platform/Features:

- D2L's Brightspace platform
- Quizzes
- Class progress dashboards
- Mobile-first design

Interviewees:

- Sara Panis, Instructional Designer and Education Advisor

Highlights:

- Enables teaching staff to shape compelling, interactive learning experiences
- Empowers students to take a more self-directed approach to their studies
- Provides insight to help each student identify areas for improvement

“Brightspace unlocks the potential for huge efficiency gains for our teachers. For example, they can easily build online assignments and then add a description or update the due date at the touch of a button. It’s really compelling.”

Sara Panis, Instructional Designer and Education Advisor, Wageningen University

Challenge

Nurturing a new generation of scientists

Founded in 1876, Wageningen University is one of the leading public universities in the Netherlands for agricultural, life and environmental sciences. Wageningen aims to nurture a new generation of academic professionals who will help solve the complex ecological challenges facing the modern world.

Wageningen offers a comprehensive range of under- and postgraduate courses, taught mainly through on-campus lectures and seminars. Recognizing that each student has a unique learning style, the university is always searching for ways to personalize its approach to teaching and drive up the level of educational attainment.

The university saw an opportunity to drive deeper student engagement by augmenting face-to-face lectures and classes with compelling, interactive online course content, available at any time and on any connected device. To achieve its goal, the university decided to replace its existing learning management system with a more versatile solution.



Solution

Creating engaging learning experiences

Wageningen University selected D2L's Brightspace platform, whose powerful teaching tools make it easy for teachers to create engaging online courses and quizzes, and for students to track their progress through intuitive dashboards.

Sara Panis, Instructional Designer and Education Advisor at Wageningen University, explains:

“Brightspace unlocks the potential for huge efficiency gains for our teachers. For example, they can easily build online assignments and then add a description or update the due date at the touch of a button. It's really compelling.”

Driving rapid adoption

To help teachers hit the ground running with the D2L Brightspace platform, Wageningen University developed an in-depth training program covering all the key user journeys. These include creating, editing and copying courses, building quizzes, and using the solution's integrated analytics dashboards.

“We began with a two-month pilot project for 50 courses and used the lessons we learned to plan the university-wide deployment,” recalls Sara Panis.

“We have now migrated all our courses to the Brightspace platform, and both students and teachers have found it very intuitive. In fact, we don't think our teachers will need any additional training when they start building courses for the next academic year.”

Sara Panis, Instructional Designer and Education Advisor, Wageningen University

“Without a doubt, these capabilities are helping many of our students to take greater control of their studies, which will play an important role in their level of educational attainment.”

Sara Panis, Instructional Designer and Education Advisor, Wageningen University

Result

Enabling self-directed learning

Thanks to D2L's Brightspace platform, Wageningen University is empowering students to direct their own learning in ways that were never possible before. In fact, students and lecturers are now working together to decide on the structure and content of their online classes.

“Student-level reporting in Brightspace has made a huge impact on the student experience,” comments Sara Panis.

Each time a student completes a required item, such as a reading assignment or an end-of-module quiz, they can check off that task in the Brightspace platform. This gives learners an instant overview of their personal progress through each course, and detailed insights into their grades, making it easier to answer questions such as: “have I covered all the background reading for my upcoming classes?”, “what are my strengths and weaknesses?” and “have I revised enough for my exams?”

“Without a doubt, these capabilities are helping many of our students to take greater control of their studies, which will play an important role in their level of educational attainment,” says Sara Panis.

Based on the positive reception to the Brightspace platform, Wageningen University is already exploring other ways to use the solution to enhance the learning experience—for example, by using the Discussions tool in the Brightspace platform to enable students to ask questions, comment on learning materials and assignments, and collaborate on group projects.

Sara Panis concludes: “We are very pleased with the impact that the Brightspace platform is having on the student experience, and we’re looking to roll out new features more widely. We’re very confident that the solution will help our learners reach new heights of academic success.”