MOREHEAD STATE OFFERS DEVELOPMENTAL MATH ONLINE

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Morehead State University offered their first Developmental Math online classes in the Summer, 2008. There were several reasons why we decided to offer this style of class, one being that we had so many students who needed flexibility, either because of a job or their physical location. Another reason we decided to offer online classes was because of the comments we had from our students’ online surveys about the software. Some of the Morehead State University student comments are:

- “It is like having a teacher right there in front of you to explain the mistakes.”

- “They are extremely helpful because they, unlike many other resources I have used in the past, explain exactly why I was incorrect, instead of just giving me the answer and expecting me to figure it out on my own.”

- “I like the fact that if you make a mistake, you know what that mistake is before you can even move on to another problem, takes you step-by-step through the solution. . . . otherwise you do the work without knowing for sure what mistake you have made, of even if you have made one at all.”

- “Most beneficial to my learning is the certification system involved in this software. I like how it pushes me to actually learn the material rather than put down any answer in order to get the assignment finished.”

- “I love this software. I like the instruct, step by step, and the practice. I go over and over and over these things. I have been out of high school for 23 years so this course is a refresher for me and I have found the software very helpful and simple to use.

We use Hawkes Learning Systems software. One of the main reasons we chose this software was that our students did not have to be online to do their homework. This was important for us because of where our students lived, mostly rural. The students can do their homework offline, then SAVE it and take it to class or any internet connected computer to submit it.

We did not have to use an outside message board because there is one within our software. Students were able to send questions on the message board and other students could answer the questions. Also, after teaching this for many years the instructors knew where students have the most problems so video clips were added, made by an instructor using “Camtasia” (a piece of software that records the instructors’ voice as they talk and shows the problem the instructor is working on as he or she does it).

In our online survey, in response to “Do you feel you have adequate communication with your instructor?” 90% of the online students answered “YES”. This was also
important to us; we still wanted the students to feel like they were getting the attention they needed even though there were never face-to-face with the instructor. When responding to “**Compare your confidence in your ability to do mathematics now as to when you began this course,**” 93% of the students answered more confident or the same confidence. 60% responded “more confident” in their ability to do mathematics. **When comparing the completers of the course, 74.6% of the students in the course passed the course.**

A summary of features of the class:

- Students work at own pace and are also allowed 2 semesters to finish without penalty (must finish at least the first 3 chapters the first semester, then register for the course again to start where they left off to complete the course.)

- Students are graded on certifications and tests only.

- Students must be proctored for all exams. (The proctor must be a non-related professional. The student gives the Instructor the name, phone, and email of the professional then the Instructor contacts that person. The proctor signs a contract that lays out the steps. After each test the proctor emails a completed form, with test score and any comments about the process.

- Class is perfect for motivated students and students who need flexibility

- Documents available that we use are;
  1. Letter to the student, sent prior to the beginning of class
  2. Instructions for students before taking a test
  3. Guidelines for Proctoring a MSU Math Test (for proctor use)
  4. The Proctor Form to be emailed to the Instructor from the proctor verifying the test score

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