

University of Memphis CASE STUDY



**Driving early intervention
to support student success**

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Ryan Crews

*Coordinator of Student Success
Resources*

The strategic plan created by the University of Memphis emphasizes leading with innovation and prioritizing student success. As part of this plan, they joined Macmillan Learning to implement iClicker Insights as a supplement to their existing student success efforts. With iClicker Insights, the Division of Student Academic Success easily collected and used attendance and survey data in a timely manner to intervene with students and support their success.

Challenges

Faculty were required to collect attendance in many courses. Class attendance is one of the earliest and most significant indicators of student performance and retention. But, the process for collecting attendance data was burdensome. Ryan Crews, Coordinator of Student Success Resources at the University of Memphis, said “Our faculty currently have to both record attendance and alert student success staff of students who have not attended or have stopped attending their class.” Student success staff needed an easier way to view attendance data to both identify individual students and to view aggregate, broad patterns of non-attendance.

Student success staff also needed ways to identify students with non-academic issues. Research indicates there are many issues that can adversely impact student success in college, like sense of belonging and financial constraints. Staff needed a solution that helped them holistically support students both inside and outside of the classroom.



Solution

The University of Memphis used the iClicker Insights dashboard for administrators to view the student data collected by the iClicker student mobile app and the iClicker Insights retention surveys.



Attendance

The University of Memphis set up iClicker attendance in about 50 course sections in fall 2019. Just before class, students received a push notification that class was about to start. As class started, students joined the class session in iClicker. Their attendance was automatically collected using the geo-location mobile attendance feature. This significantly reduced the effort required of faculty to collect attendance data.



Surveys

In addition to capturing attendance-based flags, the student success team at The University of Memphis also launched the iClicker Insights retention surveys to over 200 students. These 12-question surveys are typically administered in the first 3-5 weeks of the fall semester. The content covers key transition issues for new students, such as institutional commitment, social integration, academic resiliency, and homesickness. The surveys were developed by Macmillan Learning's Analytics and Research Team using 20+ years of Mapworks research at 150+ institutions.



Interventions

The University of Memphis used the combination of attendance and survey data to implement a series of interventions for students that needed additional support. Faculty reached out to students who missed consecutive courses or students with an attendance rate of less than 50%. Student success team members reached out to students whose responses to the retention survey indicated they were struggling with various issues. These interventions included in-class sessions, targeted workshops, and personalized, one-on-one advising sessions.



Results

During the first semester of implementation at the University of Memphis, iClicker Insights empowered faculty and staff to better identify and support students.

“The survey results enabled me to better identify the underlying issues, bring them to the forefront, and know what to focus on.”

Rika Hudson

*Student Success Advisor
University of Memphis*

A key advantage in using iClicker in classes was the automation of attendance collection.

Attendance recording moved from a manual, burdensome, exercise to a simple, automated, and reliable process. Crew noted, “With iClicker, we now have a tool that essentially automates attendance and provides valuable insights into student attendance patterns. We are able to move beyond simply recording attendance and think strategically about how we help students work through issues that affect their class attendance.” A complete semester of data will also lead to a better understanding of patterns of absenteeism, creating opportunities to implement small incentives, and support mechanisms to boost attendance.

Results from the retention surveys allowed the student success team to better understand the non-academic issues their students faced. With a 50% survey response rate, a number of advisors were able to use the data to reach out to students and make a difference. Rika Hudson, Student Success Advisor, noted that, “You can’t solve a problem until you know there is a problem. Having a mechanism to reach out and ask these types of questions was helpful. The survey results enabled me to better identify the underlying issues, bring them to the forefront, and know what to focus on. Going forward, we can better formulate a strategic plan as an administration to answer the challenges that are students are facing.”