LSAC 2021 – eCoaching: Using Video Campaigns to Engage Learners and Develop Academic Skill

Welcome, welcome! Gather ‘round and hear the tale of the great video campaign of Winter 2021.

Ok, so, not quite, but almost.

Since 2018, Tutorial and Academic Coaching Services has worked diligently to enhance the academic skills development aspect of its services. We wondered: How could we further students' growth as learners by engaging them in academic skill development?

So, way back in the time before COVID, we started by hosting 7 group sessions that focused on reading comprehension and writing skills. We had such modest success**—42 students showed up!—**that we thought we’d expand our offerings the following year. We took the learning assessment tool we use with students and we developed sessions around each skill listed within in:

* **Study Strategies**
* **Note-taking/Listening**
* **Reading Comprehension**
* **Writing Skills**
* **Test-Taking Strategies**
* **Organizational Techniques**
* **Time Management**
* **Academic Motivation**
* **Test Anxiety**
* **Concentration/Attention**

 Eh, well, that didn’t go so well. Fewer students showed up for our sessions that year**—only 20 showed up**. And then COVID happened, which messed things up for us along with the rest of the world.

We were quick to shift to an online platform, but we weren’t used to hosting less than 150 drop-in sessions a day! Despite using multiple avenues of communication, many students said that they didn't know we had pivoted to using BlackBoard or said they knew we had but weren’t sure how to find us online.

That’s when a couple things started to come together. We set to work creating 16 videos based on the 12 academic skills mentioned earlier, as well as two additional topics**: Online Learning and Learning in Uncertain Times**. We then posted the videos to our homepage. We did a stellar job with the videos, but not many students ended up watching them. It seemed like the videos weren’t easy to find. Once the students found the videos, they didn't seem to watch them all the way through; it seemed they were too long to watch. We wondered: Do we create a course?—No, no, no, no, no!—and decided this time we'd do a video campaign**: (noun) like a newsletter but with video instead of text . . . so more like social media?**

Now, in the past we had sent out enewsletters . . . and we weren’t very successful with them. If we were going to send them out again, what were we going to do differently this time? First, we limited students’ choice. In the enewsletter we were going to send out this time, students were going to be presented with one link: the link to the video. It was up to them to either click it or not click it. We made time to show our faces. . . or do I say, we made face time? Point is, we got in front of the camera. We took the five-minute videos we created in the summer and broke them down into their most essential parts, further simplifying the steps for whatever strategy we were sharing. We made sure to offer a little something for everybody—even if it was just a funny moment or a joke! We chose to email three videos a week **(Mondays, Wednesdays, Fridays)** for the first four weeks of the Winter term. As well, we already used what we had access to: the NorQuest Library YouTube channel, Campaigner, and our amazing talent. And we asked our students to like our videos as a way of measuring if they found them helpful.

We ended up delivering 12 2:00-minute videos to over 7,000 students, as well as our liaison contacts in programs and various service areas. Students LOVED them. Some students even watched the videos more than once. They’ve also left some really good questions and helpful feedback in the comments for us! Some have even emailed us with questions we usually don't help with . . . which we've been able to redirect to the right people:

**Registration Fees? Office of the Registrar!**

**Moodle login? Service Desk!**

**Accommodations? Assistive Technology!**

**Research and citation? Library Services!**

**Visa applications? International Office!**

We hope to continue using this model to stay connected with students, as well as deliver relevant and timely tips and tools to help them throughout the term. As we move forward, here are some questions to explore: How do we get more students to be actively engaged instead of passive observers? How do we coax more students to open the email, then click on the link, then like us or leave a comment, and then connect with us? As well, Learning Support is reviewing all aspects of its services—including these videos—to see how they can be anti-racist and anti-oppressive. We hope you’ll take some time to check out the videos we’ve created.

Finally, because it takes a village to make something amazing, here’s a list of shout outs to all the amazing people who were a direct part of video production, the original team, as well as those who provided us with thoughtful suggestions along the way:

**Tutorial and Academic Coaching Services**

**Work-Integrated Learning and Career Education Centre**

**Centre for Growth and Harmony**

**Library Services**

**Office of Student Judicial Affairs**

**International Office**

**Brand & Marketing**

Thanks for watching!

Links to check out:

Winter 2021 Series on Norquest Library YouTube Channel (12 2:00-minute videos):

<https://youtube.com/playlist?list=PLZ2z1xmGA13-DSJmz_ZjReM6zlXQJ1pxX>

Tutorial and Academic Coaching Services Academic Skills Videos (scroll down the page to the Academic Skills section):

<https://libguides.norquest.ca/tutorialcoaching/resources>

School Motivation and Learning Strategies Inventory (SMALSI) Learning Assessment Tool:

<https://www.wpspublish.com/smalsi-school-motivation-and-learning-strategies-inventory>

Campaigner:

<https://www.campaigner.com/>