



The Challenge:

How to Increase Participation in Online Courses

As the third largest institution of higher education in the state of Washington, Bellevue College offers a range of programs from technical career training to four-year degrees.

While some programs are fully online, most include a combination of online and hybrid courses. Dr. Myriam Feldman, a biology and nutrition instructor at Bellevue, said the two biggest problems she faces when teaching online are high attrition and low participation.

Problems faced by online instructors

High student attrition

Low student participation

Dr. Feldman said many students enroll in online courses because they mistakenly believe they're easier. "Other students," she said, "aren't ready to learn online. They may not have the technology they need, the computer skills, or the discipline to do the work."

In face-to-face courses, Dr. Feldman said she can talk with students after class about issues or barriers. But in an online environment, she needs a way to make a human connection.

The Solution:

Why Bellevue Chose ConexED

- Virtual classrooms integrated with the Canvas LMS for synchronous lectures and face-to-face communication
- Reliable, easy-to-use video conferencing that's FERPA, HIPAA, and ADA compliant for privacy and accessibility
- Additional features such as a shared whiteboard, document library, and closed captioning for text-to-speech functionality

The Result:

More Engaged Students

Dr. Feldman uses ConexED in online courses to check for understanding. When she posts a new study guide, she offers two synchronous review sessions—one midmorning and one in the evening for students who take classes or work all day.

“First, I load up the study guide,” she said. “I go through all the points and then it’s open for questions.” She said most students avoid their microphones, preferring instead to interact using the online chat feature. But she said the synchronous contact makes a difference: “They hear me speak, and suddenly there’s a connection. I exist. I’m a person.”

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Myriam Feldman
Ph.D. Instructor
Bellevue College

 Type of institution:
Public, Four-Year College

 Location:
Bellevue, Washington

 Number of students:
32,000+

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The ConexED features Dr. Feldman likes most are the shared whiteboard, document library, and closed captioning. With the whiteboard, she can collaborate with students in real time. The document library saves time on re-uploading files for every session. And, with closed captioning, she said, “International students find it more comfortable to actually read the text.”