

Fairfield University Graduating 21st-Century Students With Anytime, Anywhere Learning Thru ABC-CLIO's Online Databases

Online Access Allows Non-Traditional Learning Environment to Thrive

SITUATION

Fairfield University is dedicated to providing students with an environment of scholarly inquiry that nourishes curiosity and encourages connections to wider bodies of knowledge. To help meet this goal, they have tapped the power of electronic resources and established an Electronic Resources Committee (ERC) that dedicates itself to the development and management of sophisticated and comprehensive digital libraries and eResources.

Providing students with top tier eResources that complement their traditional library, Fairfield University's ERC, librarians, and faculty strive to enhance access to information, support distance learning, and provide students with the help they need to find, evaluate, and use online resources. To ensure students are "information literate," the university's 5,000 students are educated on how to use digital libraries to discover relevant, useful, and important information. "Our library home page includes recommended eResources for each of our academic programs," says Keith R. Stetson, Collection Development Librarian. "All of our freshmen receive library instruction in both their first and second

semester as part of their core English class, and they are shown how to find and use general eResources, and how to evaluate Google search results."

CHALLENGE 1: EXTEND REMOTE ACCESS

With online learning opportunities rapidly expanding and a growing number of non-traditional graduate students, Fairfield University needed to provide remote access to a more comprehensive digital collection of resources to serve a growing number of time-challenged and remote learners.

SOLUTION 1: EXTEND ACCESS WITH ABC-CLIO DATABASES

To meet individual learning needs and goals, Fairfield University added ABC-CLIO eResources to its digital library. Allowing distance learners and non-traditional students to become active participants in the learning process, the databases have enriched learning, provided students with 24/7 access, and helped the university to enhance information literacy among students who do not have access to one-on-one help from on-campus librarians and faculty.

CHALLENGE 2: FILL IN INFORMATION GAPS

When Fairfield University's research staff identified a growing interest in undergraduate research and the Latin American Studies program, they realized the need to provide students with rich, authoritative reference content to further studies in international studies, history, and the humanities.

SOLUTION 2: ABC-CLIO'S ONLINE DATABASES

ABC-CLIO's *The American Mosaic: The Latino American Experience* database has supported the Latin American Studies program with an effective

"ABC-CLIO's solutions support the University's strategic mission to give today's students and faculty almost instant access to information and a unique opportunity to participate in a worldwide scholarly community."

overview and comprehensive depth of the history and rich

culture of Latino and Hispanic cultures in the U.S. With more than 2,000 primary documents and media ranging from pre-contact Aztec and Maya societies to 21st-century political issues like recent immigration law to cultural themes, the award-winning database has given students and faculty a range of indispensable electronic research and learning resources to deepen and enhance the university's Latin American Studies program.

ABC-CLIO's *Pop Culture Universe: Icons Idols Ideas* has provided students and faculty with an ever-growing digital database on popular culture in America, both past and present. Offering culturally relevant eResources without bias, advertising, suggestive content, or questionable authorship of commercial or fan sites—the database offers students engaging information to support research projects and provides faculty with informative articles to support class lectures and build critical thinking skills.

THE FUTURE

The librarians and faculty have provided easy access to the ABC-CLIO's eResources by adding them to the university's "Best Bets for Starting Your Research" database. They plan to continue access, analyze usage data and add more ABC-CLIO databases as more information gaps and curriculum needs are identified.

ENHANCING CRITICAL THINKING AND ANALYSIS

Keith Stetson feels that, "High quality resources like ABC-CLIO's online solutions is what makes our graduates independent, critical thinkers. This pays important dividends in the workplace.

As part of its strategic vision, Fairfield University is committed to helping graduates become independent thinkers and flexible problem solvers. ABC-CLIO's digital resources support this mission, helping students use critical and analytical thinking to find, evaluate, and use quality online information to advance their research and studies.

EVALUATING SUCCESS

Using ABC-CLIO databases, Fairfield University has expanded remote access to a wide range of high-quality resources. Providing anytime, anywhere access to broad authoritative reference content, lecture companions, and a compendium of scholarly articles has helped the university create a deep, comprehensive digital learning environment that has increased information literacy, enriched core curriculum and helped students build the 21st century learning skills that are critical for success in today's world.

QUICK FACTS

Fairfield University Fairfield, Connecticut

- With more than 5,000 undergraduate, graduate and continuing studies students enrolled in six distinct schools, the University has awarded more than 45,000 degrees since 1951 and has developed a reputation for educational excellence.

• Primary objectives:

- To develop the creative intellectual potential of students and foster in them ethical and religious values and a sense of social responsibility.

• Curriculum focus:

- Integrating the teaching of information literacy skills across the curriculum.

• ABC-CLIO's Online Databases used:

- The American Mosaic: The Latino American Experience
- Pop Culture Universe: Icons, Idols, Ideas



DISTRICT LEADER

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