



AURORA
COLLEGE

CASE STUDY

Aurora College

Aurora College is a vibrant northern college committed to excellence in education and research, that strives to demonstrate leadership in the delivery of quality education



BACKGROUND

Aurora College, at first glance, may be easy to overlook. The college is the only post-secondary institution in Canada's Northwest Territories, home to just 41,000 people spread out across 1.3 million kilometers. But its relative obscurity hides a school that's doing big things. Aurora College, which largely serves the area's Indigenous population, offers academic upgrading, diplomas, continuing education, certificates, and degree programs in subjects like nursing and trades. It has three regional campuses and numerous community learning centers that serve roughly 3,000 students and are dedicated to delivering community-centered programs that reflect the local culture and needs of the local labour market.

Aurora College recently celebrated its tenth anniversary as a client of Remote Learner (now a Learning Pool company). After all that time, it might be tempting to let routine take over. But Aurora College continues to work with the Learning Pool team, which also hosts Aurora's sister college, Nunavut Arctic College, to find ways to increase their impact. COVID-19 presented the next opportunity to do just that.

SOLUTION

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, Aurora College realized that they needed to move their courses online from a largely in-person format. While Aurora College has offered online courses for many years, the environment provided by Learning Pool was relatively unfamiliar to instructors used to teaching exclusively in-person. In response, a rigorous training schedule, led by Learning Pool's Client Training Coordinator, Rich Lewis, was assembled for Aurora College's instructors.

Training consisted of six cohorts of instructors going through five two-hour sessions in a workshop style format. Topics covered ranged from course design basics and forums to Gradebook setup & usage and Quiz & Question Banks. "One of the responsibilities of the training team is to provide customized training when a client needs it for specialized situations," said Mr. Lewis. "but this was the first time, at least in my experience, for something of this scope to be entirely online."

For the training, Aurora College instructors were each given their own sandbox course to work in. This approach allowed people to follow along in a hands-on way. They clicked through the environment just as the trainer did and were able to share their screen when asking questions. This approach, while somewhat unorthodox, clearly made an impact. "It was intense but very rewarding," Mr. Lewis said. "It's an experience I would love to reproduce for more clients when they need to ramp people up quickly. It was like a boot camp."



RESULTS

“As the weeks went by, we kept getting requests from individuals and department heads asking to join the training as reports from individuals who had participated in the training spread through the college,” shared one Aurora College administrator. By the conclusion of the training, a survey that over 94% of respondents agreed that they had benefited from participating in the live training sessions. Just as important, over 85% of respondents indicated that they continued or planned to continue developing their online courses after training ended.

Aiding that commitment to ongoing improvement, Aurora College expanded its investment in professional development through Learning Pool’s Stream LMS. Stream LMS is searchable, self-paced, and on-demand. “We account managers are always asking our clients if they are using their Stream LMS seats,” said Janet Churchward, Aurora College’s account manager. “It’s so important for maximizing the value of their investment.”



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