



NAASS Member: Georgetown University

Initiative Title: Using Instagram Live to Promote Virtual Pre-College in the Age of COVID

Award Category: COVID Challenges and Solutions

Description:

After the switch to virtual programming due to the pandemic, Georgetown saw a sharp decline in withdrawals due to parents and students not knowing what the virtual modality would entail. Georgetown Summer and Special Programs was one of the first schools to announce that they were going completely online in 2020. Like many, in a short amount of time, Summer and Special Programs pivoted to ensure programs had a robust virtual curriculum and offered immediate faculty training with expert advice from instructional designers to ensure academic rigor and excellence. It was still crucial to connect with prospective and registered students swiftly. For the first time in Georgetown Summer and Special Programs history, the team went on Instagram Live to summarize how students would benefit from summer pre-college programs, to provide information about scholarships, to explain how offerings had been transformed from in-person to a virtual experience, to reassure parents and students that staff were ready to deliver and exceed expectations, and even to demonstrate a quick and easy recipe for a protein snack to stay focused during online synchronous sessions!

Summer and Special Programs also had faculty create short videos on their phones that summarized their courses which were then disseminated through Georgetown social media channels. This led to parents and students feeling comfortable about their investment and motivated on-the-fence prospects to make the leap to enroll.

In a short amount of time, Georgetown saw a dramatic increase in enrollment and received positive feedback from students and parents stating that the Instagram Live sessions helped them make a final decision. The idea of Instagram Live to communicate with prospective students, current students and other populations was then adopted by the larger Georgetown School of Continuing Studies for the first time to communicate similar type of information to target audiences.

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