



K16 SOLUTIONS

University of Memphis



22,000 Students



Founded in 1912



9 Colleges



Scaffold Migration

Tight timeframe: K16 Solutions successfully migrate the University of Memphis to Canvas in less than six months.

Founded in 1912, the University of Memphis is a public research university that enjoys a largely suburban campus just 15 minutes from downtown. With a growing portfolio of research funding, the university's undergraduate students, who can choose from 50 different majors, can also take advantage of the institution's learn-by-doing approach, interning at local corporate powerhouses including FedEx, Medtronic, and International Paper.

In 2016, the university's longstanding contract with D2L for its learning management system (LMS) was up for renewal. After extending it for five years until December 2021,

leadership began a formal RFP process with evaluators, including faculty, staff, and students. Upon selecting Instructure's Canvas LMS, the university was unable to extend the contract any longer, giving its internal migration team just six months to transfer 27,000 courses while also archiving three years of data. Moving so much data so quickly in the middle of an academic year presented the university with a series of challenges, but K16 Solutions' automated migration solution made the transition seamless, allowing staff to focus on helping faculty feel more comfortable with the new system.





“K16 Solutions did a phenomenal job,” says Dr. Scott W. Vann, Director of Academic Learning Support at the University of Memphis. Even with the rigid time frame, the team was still able to benefit from three pilot phases before beginning the actual migration. **“We provided them several dozen courses from each college,”** he explains. This allowed faculty and instructional designers to log in and check each course and provide feedback to K16 Solutions. **“Every once in a while, a header would be out of place, and they’d adjust the API on their end,”** he said. After a few rounds of internal testing, K16 Solutions migrated the courses with ease.

Weekly check-in calls also helped, as did a thorough scope of work and a realistic timeline. On the regular calls, which included several members of the K16 Solutions team, the University of Memphis would report any issues and share how K16 Solutions could improve the process. **“They consistently asked for feedback on how to make the data archiving interface more user friendly,”** Vann says. **“Faculty wanted the ability to bulk download student data from an entire course, and they adjusted their system to provide that option,”** he noted.

“Having such an openness and the efficiency with which our feedback was integrated was really impressive,” says Dr. Barrett Schwarz, Instructional Designer at the university. **“Most issues we found were no longer issues after a couple of days.”**

Vann and his team delivered weekly updates to the Provost’s office as well. **“We were in constant communication with the faculty,”** he says, noting that they provided dates for testing each round of courses. **“Having faculty involved in the process and testing made it easier for us because they know the course content even better than we do.”** Because of the thorough beta testing, Vann says he can only think of 12 courses out of 27,000 that faculty reported having issues with.

CHALLENGES

Tight timeframe

The University of Memphis had just six months to transition from D2L to Canvas and archive three years of course data. And while the university employs instructional designers, they mainly focus on helping faculty create and improve course content. Upon trying to export data using D2L’s bulk export tool, the staff knew there was no way it could tackle such a significant move on its own.

Time of year

Many universities migrate over the summer when a smaller percentage of students are taking classes. The University of Memphis did not have that luxury. An added challenge: a large part of the university community was operating in hybrid mode due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Mix of classes

University of Memphis’ online classes follow a master course template, and moving them to Canvas was relatively seamless. However, the process is not as strict with hybrid and face-to-face classes.

SOLUTION

Instructure introduced the University of Memphis to K16 Solutions, which proved to be the only vendor capable of handling such a speedy migration.



RESULTS

“Gold Standard” customer service

Open communication with K16 Solutions made the migration much easier, especially given the tight time frame. **“If they didn’t know how to fix something, they’d be honest about it,”** Vann says, noting that they’d meet internally and follow up within a few days with a solution, including a realistic timeframe. **“They were by far one of the better vendors we’ve worked with on the basis of open and honest communication.”**

More time for training

Not migrating the courses on their own meant that academic support staff could spend more time helping faculty learn the new system and even improve their courses. **“Having that time did a lot psychologically to make them feel more comfortable about the transition,”** Schwarz says.

Seamless transition

“In January, when faculty logged in to get started, the courses we migrated looked just like they had in D2L,” Vann says. **“We received a lot of great feedback about the course content coming over with no issues.”**

“Responsive customer service is going to stand out for any vendor I work with. K16 Solutions has become the gold standard”

- **Dr. Scott Vann**, Director of Academic Learning Support

