WGU ACADEMY CASE STUDY

WGU Academy Decreases Support Conversations by 23% with InScribe

WGU Academy

> Innovative, student-centric approach

> Self-paced courses

> Personalized coaching

Tackling an average of 22,000 support conversations annually became increasingly overwhelming for the student success team at WGU Academy. When program leaders Dr. Cherie Kroh, Academic Program Manager, and Tiffany Baldnado, Student Success Coach, saw that students were reaching out with the same question in 20 separate requests, they knew there had to be a better solution. How could they offer personalized, on-demand support, but in a much more scalable and efficient way?

The answer came when WGU Academy integrated InScribe's digital communities into their student experience, offering a new way for students to seek help. Because answers provided via InScribe are shared with all students automatically, WGU Academy quickly cut down on the number of duplicate questions coming to the success team. Within just one month, WGU Academy was able to decrease incoming conversations by 23%, while maintaining the high level of personalized support students had come to know and expect.

MEETING THE NEEDS OF NON-TRADITIONAL STUDENTS

WGU Academy is a not-for-profit college readiness program affiliated with Western Governors University (WGU). WGU Academy allows students to earn transferable college credit and prepares them for the rigorous expectations of a four-year degree program. All of WGU Academy's students learn online, and the vast majority are considered non-traditional. Many of these students come from underserved communities, have children and full-time jobs, and are often returning to school after many years. As non-traditional learners, these students face unique challenges, and many have questions and anxieties about their education journey.

Included in the WGU Academy model is a required course called the Program for Academic and Career Advancement (PACA). PACA focuses on the non-cognitive reasons that students don't succeed in school. The course works to create a thriving mindset that helps students build self-efficacy, self-awareness, interpersonal skills, and a sense of belonging. Because PACA is the first-course students encounter in their program, it generates a significant number of support inquiries. Knowing this, the WGU Academy team decided to use PACA as the starting place for their new digital community strategy.

23%
Decrease in YOY Support Conversations

1,644
Active Members

246
Questions Asked

36,000+
Conversations Viewed

*The success data represented in this case study is based on 30 days using InScribe communities.

"What's great is normally there would have been 20 phone calls to the student helpline regarding the same question and now, with InScribe, we get to solve problems without 20 conversations."

**Dr. Cherie Kroh | Academic Program Manager**

PACA LOBBY POWERED BY INSCRIBE

WGU Academy began by integrating InScribe's digital communities directly into the PACA course via the Moodle LMS. Branded the "PACA Lobby," the community creates an on-demand, virtual space for students to find answers, share ideas, and locate important resources related to their course work. The Lobby is always available, giving students an easy way to seek help anytime, anywhere. Today the Lobby is supported by a small team of 4 student success coaches from WGU Academy who review incoming questions and provide answers as needed. As questions are asked and answered, they are added to the Lobby's searchable repository and shared automatically with community members, ensuring that important information reaches all students, not just the student asking for help.
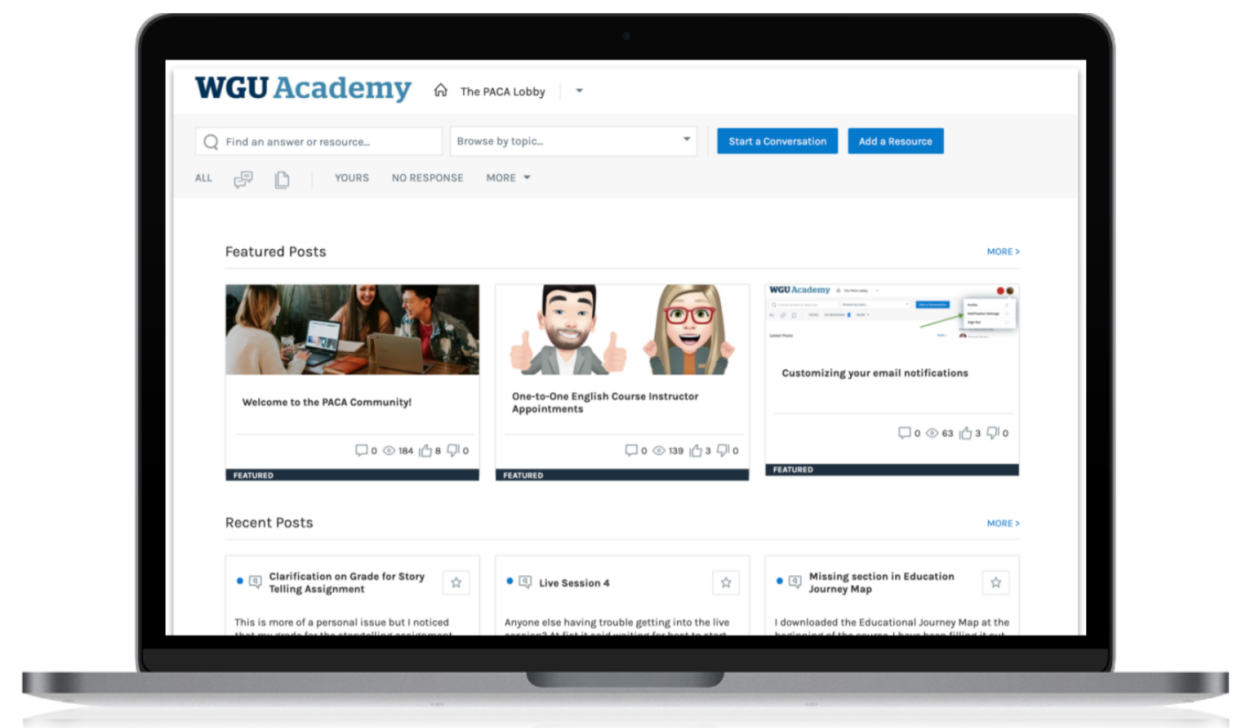
The Lobby isn't just about getting answers from the WGU Academy team. It also encourages students to support each other, answering questions and sharing experiences that can help their classmates along the way. When students provide an excellent answer, the WGU Academy success team can endorse that response, highlighting the best solutions and further reducing their workload.

IDENTIFYING AT-RISK STUDENTS WITH ROSI
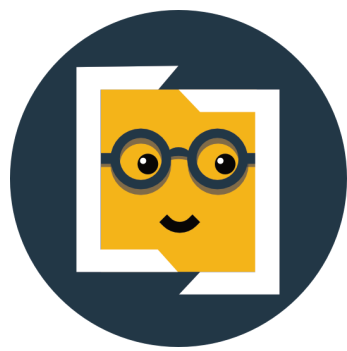
Working alongside the WGU Academy team and students is InScribe's AI-enabled technology assistant, ROSI, who helps keep the community healthy and on track. One of ROSI's jobs is to connect students to answers as quickly as possible. As a student begins to type their question, ROSI automatically suggests existing answers and resources that may help, further reducing the number of repeat questions and connecting students to solutions immediately.

In addition, ROSI uses AI to analyze the conversations in the community and proactively escalate high-priority issues and students that may require direct intervention. These AI monitored notifications have helped the WGU Academy team prioritize their time for the students that need help the most.

Hi Jane - I flagged this post because Kaz S seems frustrated and may need personal help. Do you want to schedule a live session?

TACKLING THE HIGH SUPPORT VOLUME

Once launched, students began to engage with the PACA Lobby in InScribe immediately. Participation grew quickly, from 200 active students to more than 1,644 active students in just 3 months. In addition, the questions, answers, and resources in the community got a lot of attention, receiving more than 36,000 views in that short timeframe.

The success of WGU Academy's new digital community strategy had a significant positive impact on the student success team by directly reducing the number of support conversations they received. In February 2020 (pre-COVID-19 pandemic), the WGU Academy student success team resolved 1,905 support conversations. After the implementation of InScribe in February 2021, the student success team fielded 1,469 support conversations, a 23% decrease in support conversations

Year-Over-Year Support Conversations

30 days using InScribe

	February 2020	February 2021
Conversations	1905	1469
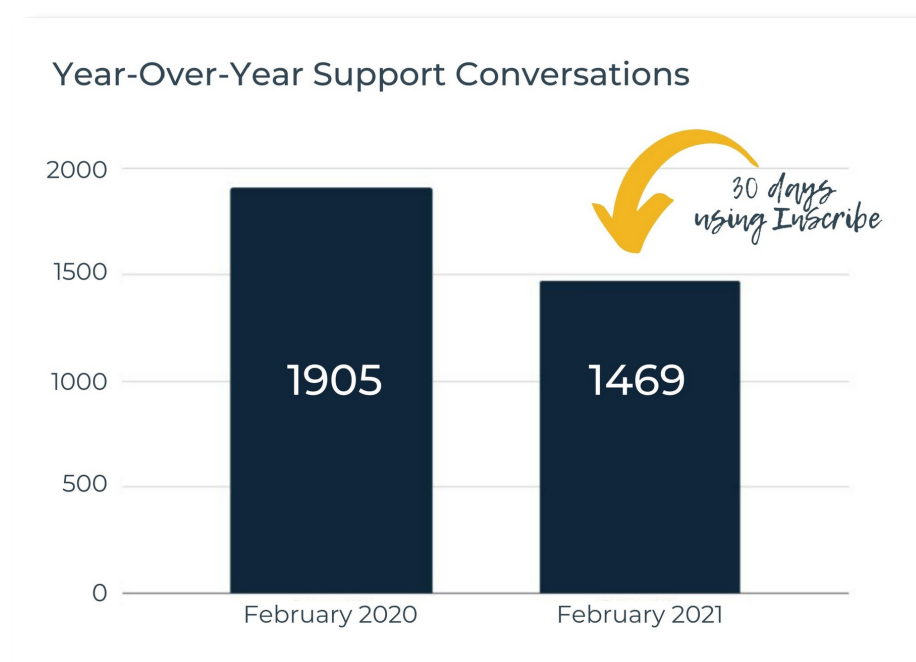
EXPANDING THE REACH OF COMMUNITY

Today, WGU Academy enrolls one thousand new students each month and expects to increase this number to five thousand within the next two years. After seeing the success of the initial rollout of their virtual community strategy, WGU Academy will be partnering with InScribe to expand access across additional courses and other areas where student support needs are highest. "We look forward to our ongoing partnership and the positive impact InScribe will have on curriculum design, support team efficiency, and student outcomes." - Dr. Cherie Kroh, Academic Program Manager

InScribe

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