



Staying on the Leading Edge

Always on the lookout for innovative solutions to help her students, Karen McCredie, the Registrar at Capilano University, knew immediately that in Visual Schedule Builder she had found what she was looking for. She wanted a system that would streamline the registration process. What she did not anticipate was how much more benefit it would bring.



Although Capilano's registration system had at one point been leading-edge, Karen knew the process could be improved upon. The system in place was a two-step process: first, students searched for their courses using trial and error to create schedules, with no means to save their work. Then, they used a separate login to enter their course selections and register. This created a number of issues each semester – not least of all lost plans, or unavailable schedules due to classes being full – and required a lot of help from staff.

Karen was looking for a single system that was clean, easy to use, provided students the ability to plan ahead and save their work, and as a bonus offered data reporting, which the current system lacked. Above all, Karen wanted to make sure that with a single system there would be no loss of functionality for students.

When Karen attended a presentation of Visual Schedule Builder at the AACRAO SEM conference in the fall of 2015, she knew immediately that she had found what she was looking for. VSB had all the functionality she had hoped for to successfully streamline the registration process, and then some.

Six months later, VSB was already implemented and Capilano was ready to go. More than 90% of Capilano students adopted VSB in the first registration period it was available – despite having no training at all. Such a high adoption rate is a testament to VSB's simple, easy to use interface, and it ensured an excellent return on the university's investment.





"VSB allowed a multiple-step process to become a single, streamlined experience. We monitored usage carefully and noticed two things right away: students adopted VSB enthusiastically, and we received next to no support calls about how to register."

– Karen McCredie, Registrar

Enhancing the schedule planning and registration process with VSB has resulted in an increase in the average number of credits taken per student, and fewer support calls. Students are taking more classes, which leads to faster progression and is correlated with higher retention and graduation rates, and there is less demand on support staff – everybody wins!

Case in Point: Brothers, one attending Capilano and the other at another university, compared notes on registration. The Capilano student thought it was a breeze to register for a full course load, while his brother, tongue in cheek, questioned whether his university really wanted him to enroll!

"The VSB team is very responsive, and the product keeps evolving in ways that benefit our students and the university as a whole," says McCredie. VSB's analytics module has proven to have a significant impact on how the registrar and academic departments are looking at course offerings. The Course Enrollment Report provides a clear view of how course supply stacks up to student demand, including anticipated demand, while the Common Course Conflicts Report allows Capilano administrators to see how many students are searching for particular course pairings that are not available. This allows them to plan for optimal course access.

"We have gained visibility over our course offerings and student demand in ways we had never imagined. It is a game changer."

– Karen McCredie, Registrar

VSB's integration with the Banner system is seamless, making the entire schedule planning and registration process that much easier for students. "We had to make some adjustments to our Banner process, but the benefits are well worth it," said Susan Bush, IT Project Lead. Students at Capilano now have a much easier time planning and registering for classes around their personal commitments, and can more readily enroll in a full course load. Capilano is once again leading edge.

VSB and Capilano look forward to a strong ongoing partnership as Karen and her team, along with the team at VSB, continue to look for innovative ways to deliver better student services.