Career Prep Course Helps NIU Grad Students Tackle the Job Market

StandOut AI Video Practice Builds Confidence and Crucial Interviewing Skills

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Northern Illinois University Graduate School

DeKalb, Illinois

Product:
StandOut® Video Interviewing

Why StandOut?
"When we saw StandOut in action – with its AI capacity, productivity, nearly instantaneous feedback to students, and its ability to allow students to re-record and watch their practice interviews so they could work to improve – we just knew it was the right product."
– Bradley Bond, PhD., Dean and Associate Vice President for Graduate Studies

"StandOut builds online interviewing skills that are critically important especially now, during COVID-19. The system's bank of questions and the ability to customize questions were huge selling points for us. Plus, closed captioning allows for accessibility, along with visually reinforcing the questions being asked."
– Elizabeth Wilkins, Ph.D., Professor and Coordinator of Graduate Career and Professional Development

Northern Illinois University
NIU

The Challenge

In 2019, Northern Illinois University Graduate School began offering a new course, UNIV 602, *Career Preparation for the Job Market*, to assist students with transitioning from graduate school into a chosen occupation. Given today's competitive job market, the university recognized the value of a curriculum specifically designed to support students' career preparation. Framed by real-time market analytics, UNIV 602 helps students target their job searches and improve their chances of beginning a successful career path. In addition to helping each student develop their own Job Market Plan, the course focuses on composing cover letters and resumes, selecting application materials, and developing interviewing skills. When Dean Bradley Bond began searching for interviewing practice software to include in the course, he hoped to find a robust video-based platform that would integrate into the current curriculum and provide easy, self-guided interviewing practice and evaluation. He also wanted a platform that would be both customizable and scalable. According to Dean Bond, "We wanted the ability to create an interview protocol and then scale up in response to each student." What he found exceeded his expectations.

The Solution

"As soon as we looked into StandOut, we understood it was more impressive than anything else on the market," Dean Bond remarked. "The bank of questions, the ability to customize questions, and the AI speech recognition all blew us away. It

perfectly complimented the work we were already doing on career and professional development. It's really a plug and play model – we were up and running with it in three days. And the students immediately loved it. It's easy to use; they can review and re-record their practice interviews, and they get instantaneous feedback. We see it as a game changer."

Customizable and Scalable

According to Dr. Wilkins: "StandOut enables us to customize interview question protocols, so we can start with common questions and then go to more individualized, program-specific and behavioral-specific questions. Having the flexibility to create interviews tailored to a student's program area is extremely valuable. Then, we can move on to behavioral questions, problem-solving questions, and so on, later in the course. StandOut's advanced cognitive computing and AI provide students a comprehension score based on the words and phrases used in their responses. Students really appreciate having the comprehension score as a goal-setting tool. We're finding it's invaluable pronunciation practice for international students.

"I have to say the platform is intuitive and quick to learn – easy for students and advisors to navigate," Dr. Wilkins added. "Our students have the ability to re-record and watch their practice interviews; they can reflect on and share their responses with me, as well as invite feedback from their peers. Feedback can include verbal or written commentary about eye contact, distracting mannerisms, clarity of speech, answering all parts of a question, and so on. This kind of experience boosts students' confidence, helps them learn to speak clearly, and succinctly, and to elaborate effectively. They tell me StandOut interviewing practice is their favorite part of the course."

The Benefits

• Self-guided practice and re-recording

• Feedback from mentors, instructors and peers

University Profile

Located in DeKalb, 65 miles west of downtown Chicago, Northern Illinois University boasts an authentic college town atmosphere. Its diverse student body totals more than 19,000, including 4,500 graduate students. NIU has more than 80 degree offerings, 70 master's degrees, 62 certificates of graduate study, 25 doctoral degrees, and more than 100 online courses. The school and its individual programs of study rank nationally year after year.

NIU is accredited by the Higher Learning Commission and is a member of the North Central Association of Colleges and Schools. The Carnegie Foundation for the Advancement of Teaching classifies NIU as a High Research Activity University (R2).

• Speaking skills scored via AI and cognitive computing

• Customizable questions

• Scalability

• Boosts confidence

• Improves presentation and speaking skills

• Closed captioning supports accessibility

• Ideal for international students

• Develops critically important interviewing skills in the age of social distancing

Want to Know More?

To discuss how StandOut AI video technology can improve career services, campus hiring, and admissions interviewing on your campus, contact: sales@standout.com

Find out more!

Visit **www.collegenet.com** or contact us at 503.973.5200 or at sales@standout.com

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