



## Creighton University Uses iLinc to Enhance the Experience of Online Learning, Teaching, & Collaborating



**Creighton University, founded in 1878, is one of 28 Jesuit universities in the United States designed in the Society of Jesus tradition and Catholic identity of academic excellence and service to others. The University, located in Omaha, Nebraska, provides its 4,000 undergraduate and 2,800 professional and graduate students an atmosphere that challenges them academically and professionally, and supports and inspires them individually.**

### Challenge:

Replace an unsophisticated Web conferencing technology with a robust solution to serve the distance learning needs of the nation's first distance entry-level doctorate of pharmacy program.

### Solution:

Implement iLinc Web conferencing software to enable distance learning and improve the educational experience through online presentations, study groups, virtual office hours, exam reviews, and more.

In addition to the College of Arts and Sciences, which enrolls 38 percent of the University's students, Creighton has the College of Business Administration, University College, the Graduate School, and the Schools of Nursing, Medicine, Dentistry, Law, and Pharmacy and Health Professions.

### The Launch of a New Program

In 2001, Creighton University received a grant to launch the nation's first distance entry-level doctor of pharmacy program, which enables students with at least two years of undergraduate work to earn a Doctor of Pharmacy degree. The program requires that students take all didactic courses online and use Web-based books / course materials, but that they come to campus in the summer for lab work. In all, students complete between 15 and 18 hours of online courses per semester, which is quite substantial compared to similar programs.

At the time, Creighton University used an unsophisticated Web conferencing technology that allowed for application sharing, message boards, and chat, but offered very little interactivity beyond the basics. Worse, the technology only supported one session at a time, which clearly wouldn't satisfy the broad learning and collaboration requirements of the program. To be successful, the School of Pharmacy and Health Professions would need to bring its technology in line with the high standards and expectations surrounding the program itself.

### Upgrading to iLinc for Web Conferencing

In order to meet the needs of students and faculty of the pharmacy program, the University would need to replace its existing conferencing solution. After looking at the leading competitors, the program's decision makers selected iLinc because of the strength of the technology and its pricing model, as well as the service-oriented approach of the company.

Additionally, iLinc met a critical requirement that other vendors could not provide. The University required that the Web conferencing solution integrate with Active Directory to enable single sign-on and authentication (i.e. enabling users to use the same User Name and Password to get into online courses and Web conferences).

**"iLinc had more than the tools we needed – interactive white-boarding, desktop and application sharing, and other robust features. Plus, the pricing met our needs for concurrent seat use and was very fair."**

**Tracy Chapman, Executive Director of eLearning and Academic Technologies, Creighton University**

Beyond the technology, Creighton's decision-making team appreciated the customer-focused service that iLinc consistently delivered.

Chapman explains, "iLinc was easy to work with from a service perspective as we were making our decision. Whenever I tried to get in touch with my sales person, I could get through. They were always fair and very helpful."

CASE STUDY

**“Beyond phones, email, and IM, iLinc gives our students a stronger collaboration tool to work on projects together in real-time. They can even do class presentations just like campus students. It’s a more positive student experience than we could offer before.”**

**Tracy Chapman, Executive Director of eLearning and Academic Technologies,  
Creighton University**

The decision to offer iLinc to students and faculty not only benefits them by providing broader options for study and collaboration, it also enables the University to keep IT resource utilization to a minimum.

“Supporting iLinc has been easy,” confirms Chapman. “The amount of time required of our system administrators is minimal.”

### **Using iLinc On and Off the Creighton Campus**

After fully implementing iLinc, the School of Pharmacy and Health Professions’ instructors began teaching some courses on campus and online at the same time. As the professor would lecture and facilitate the traditional classroom, an instructional designer would assist by running the iLinc portion of the class – sharing applications, documents, and engaging in chat and other interactivity with distance learners.

Outside the classroom, students jumped right into using iLinc as well, quickly learning how to set up sessions for class-related activities such as presentations and study groups.

The faculty relies on iLinc for virtual office hours, exam reviews, and even to interview potential employees. This saves the University the cost of paying for candidates to travel and eliminates having to ask candidates to take time off to attend interviews.

A very clear illustration of the ease with which iLinc was adopted occurred in one of the school’s post-professional health programs for working adults. In one particular program, students were clamoring for a tool that would enable working together on projects over the weekend. The program’s instructor hesitated to give them access to iLinc without any training, but eventually gave in to the request. Without any training at all, the entire study group got into session and immediately began using iLinc to collaborate and communicate online.

CASE STUDY