Established in 1947 as a two-year Wilmington College, the University of North Carolina Wilmington (UNCW) received four-year status in 1963 and became the sixth university in the UNC System in 1969. It has a student population of more than 12,000 and offers a variety of undergraduate and graduate degree programs. The university is organized into the College of Arts and Sciences, the Cameron School of Business, the College of Health and Human Services, the Watson College of Education and the Graduate School.

Several years ago, in an effort to create structured and unified learning and development opportunities, the university began offering SkillChoice™ Complete, a collection of business, IT and desktop courses and books, to all faculty, staff and students. All faculty, staff and students access the learning resources through Skillsoft’s learning management system, Skillport®, giving them ability to learn when and where they choose. In collaboration with several divisions and student groups, the ITS Learning Systems team successfully marketed the Skillsoft solution to the university community.

Meeting compliance requirements & aligning learning
Recently, UNCW was challenged with rolling out a compliance initiative to faculty and staff in just eight months. In addition, UNCW sought to align the Skillsoft learning resources with strategic campus initiatives.

It became a university-wide requirement for all faculty and staff to complete unlawful workplace harassment training. The Learning Systems team used Skillsoft Dialogue Design to create custom courses, one for managers and another one for faculty/staff. This made it possible for the university to provide everyone with this training, without hiring additional staff, in just eight months.

UNCW successfully aligned Skillsoft learning resources with strategic initiatives including Blackboard orientation, School of Nursing orientation, supplementing classroom instruction and a first-year research tutorial.

Blackboard orientation
The Learning Systems team created courses and videos for accessing and navigating Blackboard Learn, a content management system for online academic courses. This includes computer settings, login instructions, and a basic overview of the tools in Blackboard such as discussion boards, email, assignments and assessments.

Challenges
• Align learning to strategic campus initiatives – all with limited staff.
• Provide structure for supplementing classroom instruction.
• Complete unlawful workplace harassment training with faculty and staff in just 8 months.

Solutions
• SkillChoice™ Complete: IT, desktop and business courseware and books.
• Skillport® Learning Management System.
• Skillsoft® Dialogue™ Design to create compliance courses and custom content.
• Competency mapping.
• Blending e-learning resources with classroom instruction for employees.

Results
• Rolled out Blackboard orientation, School of Nursing orientation program and a first-year research tutorial.
• Supplemented classroom and online courses by utilizing Skillsoft learning resources and Skillport, UNCW’s learning management system.
• 100% of faculty and staff completed unlawful workplace harassment training by the end of the year.
School of Nursing orientation program
The School of Nursing initiated an orientation course in Skillport for PreLicensure nursing students in 2012. The delivery of the orientation information via Skillport allowed students to conveniently review the information and return to the course for reinforcement as needed.

“Previously, students attended a 4-hour, in-class orientation and often left overwhelmed and confused,” says Debbie Pollard, Associate Professor and Assistant Department Chair, School of Nursing. “Student evaluations of the Skillport course have been very positive.”

Supplementing classroom instruction
Faculty assign Skillsoft courses and books to get students up-to-speed from both a technology and content perspective. For example, to help build desktop skills, each semester a biology class with six lab sections assigns three Microsoft Excel courses to their students. Skillsoft’s subscription model allows an advertising and communications professor to assign eleven supplemental books without incurring any extra costs for the students.

The faculty use Skillport to easily select the courses and books and assign them to their students. Recently, a professor had a medical emergency. The Learning Systems team pulled together a program for the students and no momentum was lost while the faculty member was on leave. From a reporting perspective, Skillport saves time, allowing the Teaching Assistants to track student progress and completions without burdening the faculty.

First-year research tutorial
A first-year research tutorial was created by library staff and was assigned to all freshmen. It covers creating a search for library materials using keywords and related words, and looking for books in Randall Library. This pre-orientation prepares students to attend an instructor-led session after taking this course.

Spreading the word
To educate employees, the Learning Systems team participates in several employee fairs and informational sessions which include representatives from a variety of university departments. HR became an advocate and began incorporating blended learning using Skillsoft for staff programs. Each week, the Learning Systems team also holds open lab hours, so employees can take classes and get away from the distractions of their desk and phone.

“We found many potential courses to supplement our staff development programs,” says Beverly Vagnerini, Director of Technology Research Assessment Services, ITS. “The competency mapping tool is an excellent resource for isolating targeted courses and recommended reading for specific job classifications.”

Future goals
The Learning Systems team is partnering with individual university departments to ensure the resources are helpful and meeting their needs. The team is also aggressively targeting new employees during onboarding and existing employees through targeted learning programs. Due to these efforts, over the next few years, they expect Skillsoft usage to continue growing. They look forward to making learning more mobile and leveraging community features to encourage collaboration and knowledge sharing.

For more information or to learn more, call 800-327-6960 or visit www.Skillsoft.com