



## Danielle Bachan

Instructor, Houston Community College

### Challenges

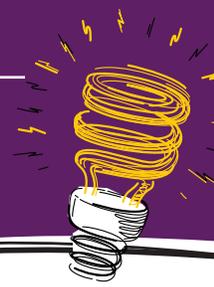
- Getting busy community college students to perform at a higher level on exams covering Texas government and politics with just a traditional textbook.
- Helping students better comprehend course material and develop critical thinking skills that will be used outside the classroom.

### Solution

- Cengage Learning's MindTap® for *Practicing Texas Politics, 16e*

### Results

- MindTap provides an interactive digital learning environment that increases student engagement, comprehension, and critical thinking skills.
- Personalized learning tools students can access on their smartphones results in higher exam scores.



## Success Story

### MindTap® Assists Instructor Struggling to Engage Students with Traditional Classroom Resources

Today's community college student is often faced with a difficult decision when deciding how to allocate their time and resources while focusing on work and family or school. Few understand this as well as Danielle Bachan, an instructor at Houston Community College, who teaches busy students about Texas politics and government. Bachan is tasked with inspiring students to learn about issues, agencies, and processes they otherwise might not explore or learn about on their own.

Bachan finds her students also have heightened expectations when it comes to technology and how it's used in the classroom. Increasingly, they expect to be able to access interactive course materials whenever and wherever they are. "At the time, all we had was the textbook," Bachan said in reference to her course on Texas government. "I was really pushing for a digital pilot program in our department that would provide students a better learning experience."

Bachan suggests students simply weren't engaging with traditional textbooks as they might with a digital solution. She also suspected students were not performing as well on exams as they could. It was a hunch Bachan would not only have a chance to test, but also prove accurate.

### MindTap Excites Students and Gains Traction On Campus

Unbeknownst to her at the time, Bachan's departmental lobbying effort for a digital learning solution would be a prime example of how the political process often works in state capitols across the nation. With dogged tenacity and an articulate argument, Bachan got exactly what she wanted when Houston Community College adopted Cengage Learning's MindTap for *Practicing Texas Politics*, a digital learning solution that transforms students into critical thinkers by customizing learning experiences, providing real-time mobile access, and the ability to track individual performance to help students achieve academic and financial goals.

"Once I started using MindTap I loved it," Bachan said. "In fact, the students had so much success with it I actually expanded my pilot project, and I now use it in all of my classes."

Not only is the platform accessible in and out of the classroom and on multiple devices, but it also organizes concepts in ways that allow students to comprehend the material more efficiently than they otherwise might. Besides offering Bachan's students the ability to do keyword searches that prevent them from having to scour an entire text for an answer, MindTap also empowers students by helping them create customized learning sheets that aid in test preparation.

"Twenty percent of a student's class grade is tied to using MindTap and now we're seeing evidence it's helping them improve their academic performance," Bachan said.



“The [students] who used MindTap scored 20-35-percent higher on each exam.”

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To learn more about this and other digital solutions provided by Cengage Learning, visit: [www.cengage.com/LearningSolutions](http://www.cengage.com/LearningSolutions)

## Students Using Mindtap Dramatically Outperform Those Who Do Not In Split Test

The real value in MindTap, according to instructors and students, is the increased engagement and improved academic results it facilitates. MindTap provides busy students like those in Bachan’s classroom with vocabulary quizzes and flashcards that condense complex information into more manageable pieces. “It has been great,” Bachan said. “I love that the book can be read to students and I like that they can practice for their tests and quizzes.”

Besides allowing students to personalize the learning experience and streamline test preparation, MindTap also supplements class textbooks with a current events component that provides students with real time political or governmental updates that keep students abreast of the latest developments.

Recently, Bachan ran a split test to measure the impact MindTap had on her students; half of Bachan’s students took her course using MindTap and half without. “The students using MindTap loved the flash cards and app for their phone,” she said. “The ones who used MindTap scored 20-35-percent higher on each exam.”

## Mindtap Saves Instructors Time and Helps Students Develop Critical Thinking Skills for Use Beyond the Classroom

Students who use MindTap praise it not only for its breadth but for the depth in which it allows them to engage with course material. Ordinarily, students relying solely on a textbook might skip or gloss over portions of the material they now consume and comprehend because of the way it’s presented digitally in MindTap.

“The traffic to my office hours has really been cut down because MindTap answers their questions for them,” Bachan said. “I use the engagement tracker to see how much students are using it, which is really fun for me, but also indicates students really like it.”

Bachan has also noticed improved critical thinking skills among her students using MindTap. “It’s more than just a book, it’s a way to reach students in their language,” she said. “It gives them options regarding how they prefer to learn and they’re really developing a sense of critical thinking they didn’t have in the beginning.”



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