

More Responsible Than ChatGPT: Edvisor's Course-Specific AI at CSU Long Beach



Asela Thomason

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CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY
LONG BEACH



120+

students taught each semester with Edvisor



47+

hours saved through automations



\$210

saved per student

Onboarding At a Glance

2 hours

to launch hyper-customized coursepack

2 minutes

for student onboarding

15 minutes

to restart a prior course

Challenge: Post-COVID Engagement and Achievement Decline

Professor Asela Thomason faced a **post-pandemic classroom** where students were checked out and **grades were dropping**. Students had forgotten how to build study habits and half the class wasn't even opening the **\$180 textbook**. Asela considered leaning on **classroom discussions** to spark active learning, but there was a hurdle. In a class of 120-130 students, it was fairly difficult to achieve and **verify participation during peer exchange**.

At the same time, accreditation pressure was rising: departments increasingly must demonstrate two distinct, auditable forms of **student engagement**, especially in online courses.



"Student engagement is really a big issue, and a lot of universities know it's a big issue ... I think I like the Discussions feature, that's why I think Edvisor is coming out at a time where I can help because I do think **discussions engage students**."

Solution: Rebuilding Engagement with Curriculum-Informed AI

Edvisor's **curriculum-aligned platform** addressed her concerns by making students use AI tools in a learning-first and responsible way. Professor Thomason decided to adopt Edvisor in her **Critical Thinking and IT Literacy** and **Management of Information Systems** courses and this is how it helped her students:

- ✦ **Course-Specific AI Tutor:** Edvisor answered questions strictly from her slides and readings, increasing interaction while **protecting her past exams and IP**. Achieving this was a high priority for Professor Thomason. This was especially valuable in large **classes of 120-130 students**.
- 📖 **Aligned Practice:** Assessments were grounded in the actual course, (MCQs, short answers, case studies, full essays, and discussions) and aligned with **learning objectives** and **Bloom's taxonomy levels**.
- 💬 **Structured Discussions:** Discussion prompts sparked peer exchange even for the large course. Students had to respond thoughtfully to prompts to earn points and this structure was especially effective in **training freshmen**. She's excited for **video replies** next, which will let students respond with short recorded videos to put faces to names and add a human touch.

Why It Worked

Thomason needed **guarded digital engagement**, but hesitated to use **generic chatbots**. Edvisor gave her the control she was looking for.

Edvisor's AI acted **like a coach instead of a shortcut**. The auto-graded quizzes created a **consistent cadence** for students between lectures as they delivered instant feedback students could act on. **Peer discussions** also required a **deep response** and tracked it, so participation rose week over week.

She especially loved **grade recovery** because it turned mistakes into learning moments. Students earned back points by showing their reasoning and corrections which fostered stronger attention and effort during assessments. The impact was tangible: higher engagement, improvements in grades, and a class that felt more disciplined yet more supportive. Students saved **\$210 each** on **outdated materials**, and Asela saved **47 grading hours** across 120+ students, making the whole course easier to teach and **far more enjoyable** to take.



"What I love about Edvisor is that it gives students a **safe place to use the OpenAI model** with some constraints and with real data that pertains to their course."

Inside the Edvisor Coursepack



Syllabus, weekly slides, and professor notes combined into a 16-chapter interactive coursepack



Canvas workflow supports roster sync, grade sync, and time accommodations



Auto-graded quizzes with rubric support



Tutor chat and assessments fully matched to course content