



Questionmark Case Study

Santa Fe Community College

Background

Established in 1983, Santa Fe Community College (SFCC) in New Mexico serves some 14,500 students each year in its credit, noncredit and adult basic education programs. Students attend classes either on campus or at a distance to pursue 51 associate degrees, certificates and letters of qualification.

Multiple Assessment Types

SFCC began using Questionmark Perception in 2004 in order to offer course placement exams online. The college's testing center administers the placement exams to establish skill levels for students planning to take classes in English, math, or foreign languages.

The college also uses Perception for course and faculty evaluations in gatekeeper and distance education courses, with plans for a major expansion to all courses this year.

In addition, SFCC is using Perception for course-related tests, particularly in the nursing department, the dental assistant program and the emergency medical technician program.

More Efficient Evaluations

Using Perception has vastly improved the process and the results of course evaluations. SFCC has typically used Scantron sheets, requiring a faculty member to go to classes to conduct evaluations. Not only does this consume valuable instruction time, collating the data from paper-based evaluations is time-consuming, and instructors often haven't seen the results for almost three months after the end of the course.

With Perception, the reports are immediate, and instructors see the results right away. This makes the feedback more meaningful for them, and gathering the feedback via Perception has improved its quality. Students feel like their confidentiality is protected since their handwriting isn't involved, and comments have become much more specific.

WebCT Integration

The college has used the Questionmark WebCT Connector to integrate Perception with the WebCT learning management system. The integration has made it possible to add links to a course to any assessments, tests or evaluations for that course. That in turn makes it easier to maximize participation in evaluations.

Using Statistical Reports

The college uses Perception's item analysis reports to find out whether the questions are performing properly, if they need to be rewritten or are too difficult. The college also uses the survey report to get a graphical picture of the answers to assessment questions and see which answers get selected most often. The transcript report enables staff members to see assessment results for individual students. Using Perception for this kind of reporting is saving the college both money and resources.

"For us, the value of Perception for us is not so much in how it delivers assessments," says SFCC Testing Center Director Chantel Reynolds. "That's nice, but the reason we like it is the reporting. With Perception I can make the data get up and dance if I want to."

Expansion Plans

Administrative assistants are creating most of the evaluations, and they've been getting a crash course in Perception within the college's testing center. But plans are underway for more comprehensive training program to prepare for the expansion of online assessments campus-wide.

More information

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