



## Questionmark Case Study

### Distance learning and testing at Fox Valley Technical College

#### Background

The State of Wisconsin's technical college system has 16 districts, each of which has one technical college that offers many programs but offers certain ones that are unique to that college. Fox Valley Technical College has two main campuses, one in Appleton and Oshkosh, with several regional learning centers in other parts of its district.

#### Scenario

The College serves about 55,000 students each year, 7,100 of whom are attending full- or part-time in a degree program. Frequently, students in one district choose to attend a college in another district, which means distance learning—and distance testing. That's where Perception comes in.

Fox Valley had a couple of tools for its testing, including a machine-specific testing program and a course management system. But Terri Langan, a faculty specialist for Fox Valley, says that the early testing program wasn't very flexible, and the course management system's testing function was an add-on, not a dedicated engine.

#### Secure, Distributed Testing

Now, Fox Valley uses Questionmark Secure, because many of the instructors—primarily nursing and criminal justice program instructors—prefer secure online tests. With the old course management system, students were able to print out screenshots of tests and give them to each other. Now instructors are satisfied that tests authored in Perception are secure and cheating isn't as easy as it once was.

Tests are also easier to deliver remotely. For example, the associate degree dental assistant program is shared between two districts, so there's often an instructor in one location and students in other districts. Instruction is delivered via television and the Internet. Tests are scheduled through Perception and administered online, so distant students have the option of coming to the testing center in the host district or taking the test in their own district.

#### User-Friendly System

Langan says that Perception allows even non-experts to create the tests they need easily. "We wanted them to be able to create their own tests, modify them, and change them on the fly even if they weren't technologically savvy," Langan says. She adds that because Perception's authoring manager is intuitive and easy to navigate, faculty members have few problems using it.

Faculty members use the item analysis report to ensure that their questions are valid and reliable, and that they aren't too difficult or too easy or coded with the wrong answer. Many faculty also use the coaching report, because it gives them information about how a student works through a test. They look for patterns of right or wrong answers, and for teachable moments to work with students on things that keep coming up, such as students who make the same mistakes regularly in a formula on a math test.

#### Surveys that Save Time

The College's research department uses Perception to conduct surveys of graduates, current students, employers, and faculty. For example, the department has conducted campus climate surveys and also surveyed employers who have hired students who graduated from one of Fox Valley's degree programs. Now it is easy to get reports and data in readable form, in far less time than it took to do surveys and calculations by hand.

#### Future Plans

Overall, Langan says, Perception has made life easier, and soon the college will be integrating it with the Blackboard Learning System™ so that grades from Perception assessments can be migrated into Blackboard.

#### More information

##### Questionmark Contact:

Email: [info@questionmark.com](mailto:info@questionmark.com)

Phone: (800) 863-3950 • (203) 855-4500

