



Questionmark Case Study

FIDM/The Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising empowers instructors with online assessments

Background

FIDM/The Fashion Institute of Design & Merchandising prepares students for careers in the fashion, graphics, interior design and entertainment industries. The institute, which has campuses in Los Angeles, Orange County, San Diego and San Francisco, offers both on-campus and online courses to its 6,000 full-time students. Three hundred students are usually enrolled in FIDM's two dozen online courses.

Scenario

The institute formerly ran assessments within its LMS, but after troubleshooting issues with students that could not access the built-in assessment tool, FIDM's eLearning team developed some Flash-based testing applets. These proved difficult to update, and instructors were not able to use them for test authoring. The eLearning team needed an assessment management system that could capture necessary data from learners and store it for more than one semester at a time, build legible and usable reports, and allow instructors to create their own content. In 2005, the team selected Questionmark™ Perception™.

Solution

The eLearning team runs about 350 online assessments and serves about 300 students per quarter. This adds up to almost 3500 testing sessions per quarter. In addition to weekly quizzes, midterms and final exams for online students, the institute delivers quarterly course/instructor evaluations, a self-evaluation for potential students, and pre-skills surveys for on-campus classes.

FIDM uses assessments in online classes to measure students' knowledge and to determine whether course content meets accreditation objectives and prescribed student learning outcomes. Perception surveys are also used for non-graded course activities and anonymous course and instructor evaluations. Online students take their exams from home, accessing Perception through the learning management system.

Instructors in Control

When the institute switched to Perception the faculty response was overwhelmingly positive. They could finally take control of their own tests and content and make changes where needed to meet the demands of the class. FIDM instructors can submit and edit most questions using Browser Based Authoring (BBA). They can also request to have their exams exported to formats such as Microsoft Word, which gives them the ability to print hard copies.

The eLearning team helps author questions requiring special questions such as drag and drop questions or questions that require custom meta-data or reporting. The team also sets the schedules and requirements for exams, coordinating delivery through the institute's learning management system.

Perception's reporting features allow instructors to quickly get a snapshot of student performance. They also provide data that instructors use to make proactive changes in their course content teaching. Reports also help demonstrate the validity of online course content to administrators.

Benefits

Perception is helping the institute standardize assessments. Lead instructors are responsible for tracking online and on-campus assessment content for their subject areas and must produce evidence of meeting student learning outcomes. Using question repositories and reports to create consistent assessments and utilizing learning data to continuously improve these assessments has made FIDM's accreditation review process more efficient and successful.

More information

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