



Questionmark Case Study

Kirkwood Community College's Surgical Technician Programs

Distance Delivery of Courses

In today's job market, surgical technicians are in large demand and community colleges offer surgical technician programs to a large base of students. Kirkwood Community College, a multi-campus community college in Iowa, addressed the demand by offering surgical technician courses to remote campuses via a distance delivery program. Faculty developed courses that could be conducted over a statewide fiber-optic network where students and teachers interacted through real-time video conferencing. Faculty used Questionmark Perception as the software tool to develop and deliver both quizzes and tests.

While Kirkwood had a great deal of experience offering distance-delivered courses, the college had less experience with offering assessments over the web to remote locations. A number of security issues came up about delivering assessments across multiple remote campuses.

Security Considerations

Security requirements included ensuring that all quizzes and tests would be both authored and controlled by faculty at the main campus, guaranteeing identical quiz and test content. In addition, student testing experiences should be comparable and that differences in test delivery would not cause differences in student performance. Finally, quiz and test questions should be locked-down or protected so that students could not easily share the content of questions with their peers.

Faculty Access Only

Questionmark Perception made it easy to satisfy the first requirement. Only surgical technician faculty at the main campus with access to Perception authoring tools could create, update, and publish the quizzes and tests. All students received the same quizzes and tests throughout the surgical technician courses.

Proctor Supervision

However, test center facilities and proctor procedures were not the same across the remote campuses. Some students launched their own quizzes or tests from a link on computer desktops without proctor supervision. Learning this, main campus faculty enabled a feature in Perception that requires a test proctor to enter a username and password before a quiz or test can be launched. This prevented students from launching their own tests without supervision.

Secure Browser

Using the Perception Secure Browser prevented students from sharing question content, from accessing a standard browser tool bar, or leaving the browser window while taking a Perception test. Students cannot surf the Internet, launch other applications like word processors or email programs, or print the question content. The Perception quizzes and tests administer questions randomly. If two students take the same quiz at adjoining workstations, they would not receive their questions in the same order, greatly limiting their ability to share answers. Finally, because the tests are administered in a proctored setting, students were monitored while they tested.

Results

Faculty at Kirkwood Community College were concerned about ensuring control of quiz and test content, the standardized administration of quizzes and tests, and limiting students' ability to share question content for the surgical technician's courses. Questionmark Perception and manual procedures met these head-on.

More information

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