Starfish

UT Health San Antonio School of Nursing: Using Starfish to Nourish Student Success

UT Health San Antonio

University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, San Antonio, Texas

The UT Health San Antonio School of Nursing is part of the largest health sciences university in South Texas, and is the only Tier 1 research university in the area. UT Health San Antonio is one of the two schools in the region to offer doctorate nursing degrees, but also offers traditional Bachelor degrees and second degree programs for students who have completed a baccalaureate degree in another field.

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- Dr. David A. Byrd, Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Services

In the years prior to implementing additional resources, like Starfish, to support students, UT Health's passing rate for the nursing licensure exam had dropped slightly. Today, UT Health's pass rate is 98% - the highest in the UT system and second highest of all BSN programs in the state.

In order to spark more student-faculty relationships and provide a more collaborative environment for student success, UT Health San Antonio implemented Starfish solutions in Fall 2016. "Our faculty was desperate to have more student engagement tools at their disposal," said Dr. David A. Byrd, Associate Dean for Admissions and Student Services. "They wanted a systemic way to make meaningful connections with at-risk students and spur them to action."

"We looked at a variety of vendors but Starfish immediately gave us the personal contact we knew would be a good fit for a team our size," said Dr. Vanessa Meling, Assistant Dean for Academic Enhancement. Meling and her team began a phased rollout, first within the Student Success office itself, so they "could feel like it was embedded in our culture," said Meling. A Starfish pilot program was then introduced to the two cohorts in session during the summer term, before eventually rolling out to all undergraduates and faculty.

10K Over 10,000 appointments created for 800 students

45% of the student population scheduled appointments in Starfish

**30%** of students received Kudos from an instructor

17.7% increase in progress survey submissions in just one academic year

Approachable Faculty

Since implementation, Byrd feels that Starfish has created an environment where faculty are seen as more approachable. "I get a strong sense the morale of our students is higher than it's been in the past and it's due to higher student- faculty engagement," said Byrd. "Starfish has a large role in that improved communication."

UT Health has made extensive use of appointments to connect with students - 45% of its student population has scheduled an appointment in Starfish. Partially due to widespread appointment use, progress survey submit rates have grown from 14.8% to 32.5% over the course of just one academic year. "Our faculty speaks the language of data," said Byrd. "Once we provided them with Starfish and they saw how it checked so many of their boxes, getting their buy-in was easy."
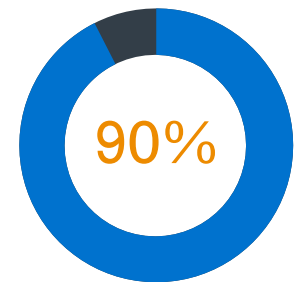
98%
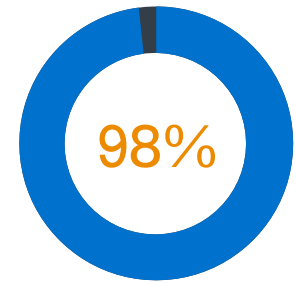
Pass Rate for the Nursing Licensure Exam

Earlier Intervention

Prior to the Starfish implementation, the only way the Student Success Center became aware of a student who was struggling was with the publication of mid- term grades and by that time, it was often too late to help. "From my perspective, the primary thing Starfish is helping us do better is identifying the students who are struggling earlier and then connecting them with the proper resources," said Byrd.

Meling feels that the system also helps students manage stress. "In the past, our students often did not know where they stood in a course and that kind of anxiety is far from ideal. They crave validation and Starfish helps them know they've made the right career choice."

90%

Graduation Rate Overall