

Arizona College Case Study

Key Findings



Arizona College needed a solution to support accreditation, eliminate academic dishonesty, and enrich the student experience



After a simple implementation process, ExamSoft helped solve these issues as well as improve NCLEX pass rates



Students and faculty were satisfied. Now Arizona College is able to grow with greater ease and confidence in its academic rigor and integrity

Founded in 1991, Arizona College currently has eight campuses in four states – Arizona, Nevada, Texas, and Florida and aggressive plans for growth. By 2025, the school plans to have at least 20 campuses dedicated to preparing individuals for professions in healthcare. Arizona College adopted ExamSoft in 2019, knowing it would support accreditation, eliminate academic dishonesty, and enrich the student experience. Moreover, it would be a tool for collaboration among faculty as they worked to standardize exams across various campuses. In only one year, ExamSoft delivered on all fronts.

ExamSoft was adopted to help:

- ✓ Support accreditation
- ✓ Eliminate academic dishonesty
- ✓ Enrich the student experience

The Situation

Arizona College (AC) was founded in 1991 as the Arizona School of Pharmacy Technology. In 1996, it became Arizona College and broadened its offering to include education and training for a variety of healthcare professions. In 2013, AC expanded again to include a three-year Bachelor of Science in Nursing degree program.

Being a relatively young school, and with aggressive plans for growth, faculty and administration at Arizona College recognized the need for a tool that allowed for collaboration across geographically distributed campuses. They also wanted to standardize student evaluations, ensuring a degree of uniformity in their programs. With ExamSoft, they could raise the bar on testing and create higher quality exams. Achieving these goals (collaboration, standardization, elevated quality) would create an easier path to expansion.

While supporting the school's growth was a key driver, it wasn't the only motivation for ExamSoft adoption. With the addition of the Bachelor of Science in nursing program came another layer of accreditation from the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education, in addition to the existing Accrediting Bureau of Health Education Schools. The school lacked a system for storing, sorting, and gaining insights from exam data. It needed centralized repository for data and platform for measuring and reporting on the effectiveness of its courses and programs.

Achieving these goals (collaboration, standardization, elevated quality) would create an easier path to expansion.

What were the driving factors behind the switch to ExamSoft?



The need for expansion through collaboration, standardization, and elevated quality.



A centralized system for storing, sorting, and gaining insights from exam data.



A solution to address all forms of academic dishonesty and combat cheating.

Finally, Arizona College needed to address academic dishonesty. Several students had raised concerns about cheating, with documented proof that students were sharing test questions and even entire exams. Absent their own unique test bank, faculty would use textbook test banks, which can be found online. Quizlets were rampant. And, with scantrons and paper tests, there was the old-fashioned approach to cheating – copying a neighbor's answers.

The Solution

Arizona College has a dedicated director of assessments and evaluations who learned of ExamSoft at a professional development conference. Not having a dedicated repository of student performance data had long been a pain point for him. The data tracking and insights offered by ExamSoft was the first thing that caught his eye. (For the most part, the school's data lived in file cabinets or disparate spreadsheets.) With the College's plans for growth in mind, he brought the ExamSoft solution forward.

The leadership at Arizona College was eager to advance the school's exam administration protocols. A better way to design and deliver exams, and manage student data, was already on their radar. They knew pencil and paper couldn't scale and support the school's growth goals. They quickly saw the benefits of ExamSoft and how it was uniquely able to enable collaboration, enhance academic rigor and security, and support accreditation and growth.

In a matter of weeks, ExamSoft implementation at Arizona College was underway for spring semester 2019.



“We’re fortunate to have strong leaders and supportive faculty. They’re forward looking and recognized the value of ExamSoft right away.”

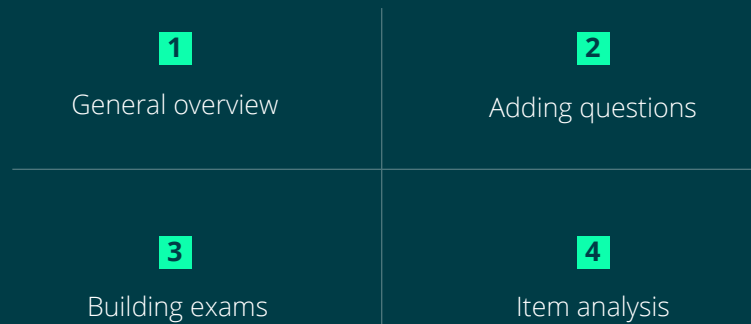
Implementation

The implementation team started its rollout by looking at the timing for spring semester exams, working against the goal of spring midterm exams administered via ExamSoft. At the time, there were only two campuses and about 15 faculty to get up and running on the platform.

Arizona College held four trainings with ExamSoft covering:

1. General overview
2. Adding questions
3. Building exams
4. Item analysis

Arizona
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covering:



Even faculty who were admittedly not tech savvy found ExamSoft easy to learn and use. There were few issues in the adoption process. For any that did crop up, an answer was just a phone call or online tutorial away.

Arizona College dedicated “super users” from each campus. These chosen faculty and IT members received additional training in order to support their campuses and be the point person for questions. Faculty were encouraged to dive in immediately and put their training to work by uploading questions and building exams.



“The ExamSoft team was always accessible and quick to help as we were getting started. They made it easy.”

Results

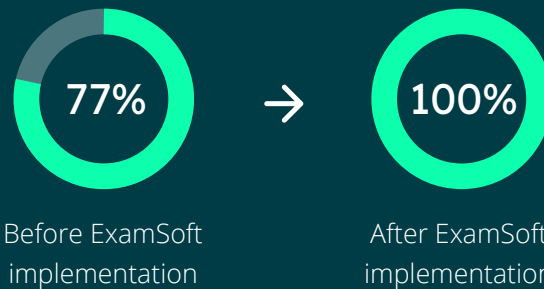
One year in, ExamSoft has been met with rave reviews from both students and faculty at Arizona College.

Students

Once Arizona College students started using ExamSoft, they had nothing but positive reviews. They found it easy and intuitive to use.

One of the more noteworthy and quantifiable impacts was in the nursing program. Before ExamSoft, passing rates for the licensure exam—which is delivered electronically—were low, hovering at around or below 77 percent for three consecutive semesters. Since implementing ExamSoft, 100 percent of Arizona College nursing students (three separate cohorts) have passed the National Council Licensure Exam (NCLEX) for nursing.

Exam score
increase after
implementation



Faculty attribute this to higher quality instruction and exams and familiarity with the electronic exam platform. The College was able to increase the rigor of the nursing program, which in turn better prepared students for the NCLEX. Around this time, Arizona College also brought in strong new leadership and faculty to help move the program in the right direction. With the implementation of ExamSoft, they were able to solidify their testing environment, ensure validity and reliability, and chronologically improve exam items.

Since implementing ExamSoft, faculty no longer receive reports of cheating from students. With a fresh and unique item bank, their test questions aren't making rounds online, in emails, or in texts. Since ExamSoft randomizes both questions and answers, it's virtually impossible to use your neighbor's answer.

Based on anecdotal feedback from students, they appreciate a level playing field where the experience is similar, exams and expectations are uniform, and all students are held to the highest degree of academic integrity across all the schools' campuses.

Faculty

Arizona College faculty have made strides in one year, in terms of faculty collaboration, exam development and using item (or question) analysis to enrich instruction. Item analysis was a huge benefit to this young and burgeoning school. It helps faculty see how each question is performing...and which questions might need more work.

ExamSoft's item analysis dashboard provides:

1

A question-by-question view of student performance.

2

A look at how high- and low-performing students performed on a given question (discrimination index).

3

Intelligence on the effectiveness of distractors.

4

Point-biserial data to indicate whether getting a question correct correlates positively or negatively with performance on the exam.

The Strengths & Opportunities report gives faculty a view of individual student performance on the exam and within specific categories. This report is also made available to students; it helps them focus on specific categories of information and study smarter.

By using item analysis to strengthen exams and overall instruction, faculty realized that they had been teaching to the exam. And so, instruction has improved along with the quality of exam—an unanticipated benefit.

Moving into year two with ExamSoft, Arizona College is focused on tagging questions to outcomes and accreditation requirements in order to clearly demonstrate its effectiveness in preparation for its first post-ExamSoft accreditation with the Commission on Collegiate Nursing Education in 2021. Preparations for that are underway and infinitely easier with the data stored in and analyzed by ExamSoft.

As it looks to the horizon and a period of rapid expansion, Arizona College can grow with greater ease and confidence in its academic rigor and integrity because of ExamSoft.

ExamSoft Tips

- 1. Play with it.** Get in and use it. Build questions. Play with settings...you can't break it! This is key to fully understanding all the options and settings.
- 2. Start early.** Uploading questions for the first time can be time consuming. Don't wait until the week of the exam. You'll more than make up for the time you invest at the outset during future semesters.
- 3. There's a resource for that!** ExamSoft has many online guides in the community center. If you or someone else on your faculty has a question, they probably have videos or written material to answer it.
- 4. Appoint super users.** Some people are just more inclined toward technology. Encourage them, and make room in their schedules, for them to be a resource to others.
- 5. Host brown bags in the early stages.** Get faculty together to share what they've discovered and what they're struggling with.

Tips and Tricks



Play with it.



Start early.



Find a resource.



Appoint super users.



Host brown bags.



ExamSoft is the digital assessment platform that helps institutions achieve higher levels of course, program, and student success. With an intuitive testing application, ExamSoft makes it simple to create, administer, and grade exams, and generate detailed performance reports from the results — all to provide educators with a complete and accurate view of student learning.

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