



Case Study

Fashion Institute of Technology uses MyStudentBody to support “dry campus” policy

Comprehensive, user-friendly program helps FIT educate students and set expectations about the use of alcohol and other drugs

About the Fashion Institute of Technology

Located on Seventh Avenue in the heart of New York City, the Fashion Institute of Technology (FIT) is a leading-edge fashion institute that aims to prepare students for professional excellence in design, fashion, and business through an educational experience that fosters “creativity, career focus, and a global perspective.”

FIT’s course offerings and degree programs reflect the Institute’s focus on preparing students to thrive in the contemporary world of fashion. Students can major in more than 30 fields, in such diverse areas as Fashion Design, Visual Art Management, and Computer Animation and Interactive Media. The Institute offers both undergraduate and graduate programs, awarding Associate Degrees, Bachelor Degrees, and Masters Degrees.

Recognizing the connection between students’ health and academic performance, FIT has adopted a strong drug and alcohol abuse prevention policy. As part of the policy, the Institute has chosen to make its campus in downtown Manhattan a “dry campus.”

Challenge

Of the 11,000 full- and part-time students enrolled at FIT, approximately 2,300 live on campus. FIT works to educate every student about the risks of alcohol and drug abuse, and requires those living on campus to agree to the dry campus policy and complete an alcohol education course. “That includes first-year students, summer students, and any returning upperclassmen who want to live on campus,” says Gabrielle Arthurton-Crumb, Assistant Director of Judicial Affairs at FIT.

In addition to the challenge of reaching every student with consistent health education, FIT strives to deliver information in a way that makes sense to students. “In the 21st century, communication is technology-based, and young adults are used to instant responses,” explains Arthurton-Crumb.

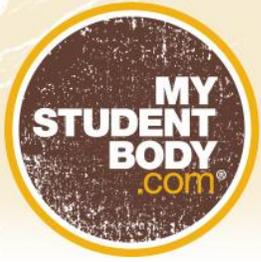
While it may be quick and easy for students to find health information on the Internet, not all of the information is trustworthy. To protect students, FIT works to provide students with easy access to accurate health information -- including information about emerging health risks, such as the risks of misuse or abuse of prescription stimulants and painkillers.

Solution

After investigating several online prevention programs, FIT chose to implement MyStudentBody. The program integrates student courses on drugs and alcohol, a 24/7 online student wellness resource, a parent-based intervention, and a set of specially developed tools and resources for campus health administrators. Every school that subscribes to MyStudentBody has access to each component of the program at no extra charge.

According to Arthurton-Crumb, FIT chose MyStudentBody because it is “user friendly,” and through brief motivational self-assessments in six topic areas, the program helps FIT deliver comprehensive health education that is tailored to individual students.

“MyStudentBody allows us to provide students with essential health information that is both accurate and presented in an interesting way. They can get answers to questions they might not otherwise ask, for various reasons -- they’re embarrassed, they think they should already know the answer, etc. The program also allows them to ‘personalize’ the website to reflect their interests and needs,” she explains.



In addition, says Arthurton-Crumb, MyStudentBody offers student courses on both alcohol and drugs, and FIT makes use of both courses.

“With the launch of MyStudentBody-Drugs, we have the opportunity not only to offer freshmen the Alcohol course, but also to offer our upperclassmen a different but equally valuable course,” she explains. “The Drugs course helps us to address not only the use of illegal drugs such as marijuana, but also the increased use of prescription drugs on college campuses.”

FIT administrators are able to monitor students’ progress in the Drugs and Alcohol courses online, and access aggregate, anonymous data on students’ self-reported behaviors. These data allow administrators to identify the unique health challenges on their campus, and to track changes in behavior over time.

“The system is easy to use, and the reports allow for accurate tracking,” observes Arthurton-Crumb.

Finally, says Arthurton-Crumb, FIT administrators have found that MyStudentBody’s staff is responsive and strives to meet FIT’s evolving needs.

“There is a strong customer service, for both our students and staff,” she says. “The MyStudentBody staff is open and receptive to our suggestions and requests for features that we’d like to see so that the program reaches its full potential. And the website is always improving.”