



Case Study

Wake Forest uses MyStudentBody program to supplement mandatory student health course

Comprehensive, user-friendly program helps students learn how to make smart alcohol and drug choices and engage in a healthy lifestyle

About Wake Forest

Located in Winston-Salem, North Carolina, Wake Forest University is a small, nationally-renowned liberal arts college with approximately 5,000 undergraduate students.

Wake Forest's course offerings and degree programs are designed to provide a well-rounded, diverse education for its students. Undergraduates may select among 38 major fields and 55 minors, with over half of graduating seniors seeking degree credits abroad.

In order to ensure students enjoy not only a well-rounded academic education, but a thorough health education as well, Wake Forest requires students to pass a health course that informs students about the effect of lifestyle behaviors that may lead to disease and other illnesses.

Challenge

Every undergraduate student is required to enroll in and pass a course called HES 100: Lifestyle and Health. On the Wake Forest website, this course is described as "a lecture course that deals with the effect of lifestyle behaviors on various health outcomes, including cardiovascular disease, cancer, and sexually transmitted diseases."

The purpose of the course is to "give students a guide for living a healthy lifestyle," said health educator Natascha Romeo. "Every student must take the class to graduate."

Since implementing a mandatory health course was challenging, Wake Forest sought a program that would blur the lines between a standard lecture course and a personalized wellness tool that students would find interesting and useful. The campus had taken great pains to ensure this balance, including bringing in health specialists to elaborate on specific lifestyle topics relevant to students.

Solution

After seeking out a prevention program to supplement the health course, Wake Forest turned to MyStudentBody in 2003. The program offers comprehensive courses on drugs, alcohol and sexual violence, as well as a parent-based intervention, reporting tools for campus administrators and various online resources promoting a healthy student lifestyle.

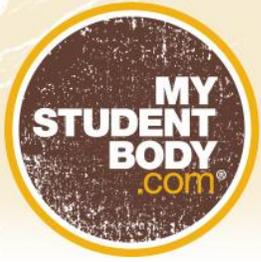
According to Romeo, Wake Forest chose MyStudentBody because it "provided us with a comprehensive series of tools. We were charged with delivering a variety of health initiatives and this one was research-based, allowing it to go hand-in-hand with the Health 100 class."

Wake Forest currently supplements MyStudentBody-Alcohol with the [B4UDrink Educator](#), a virtual "bar" which allows students to simulate the experience of drinking and learn about the consequences of binge drinking or other irresponsible choices.

"The MyStudentBody-Alcohol section is especially useful. It points out information that college students might not know about. About thirty percent of our students say they do not drink at all and even they say it's helpful since it gives them insights about their friends and the potential risks of engaging in certain activities."

In addition, says Romeo, instructors offer extra credit to students who pursue other MyStudentBody components including MyStudentBody-Drugs and MyStudentBody-Nutrition.

"It's been a very positive response. We really try to make it as relevant as possible for the student," said Romeo. "We cover nutrition, alcohol, sex, transitioning from high school to college. We try to promote a healthy lifestyle from a holistic perspective, educating students about not just drinking, but drugs, and STDs, etc."



Wake Forest administrators are able to monitor students' progress in the Alcohol courses online, and access anonymous data on students' self-reported behaviors. Aside from using the data to identify health challenges on the Wake Forest campus, the Alcohol course is also used in judicial matters as well, "to educate offenders on the risks of their behaviors and how it can affect their education," Romeo said.