



Case Study: Southwestern College Certified Nurse Assistant Program

How one CNA program achieved near-perfect pass rates

Delivering equitable and accessible education for a wide range of students

Like many states, California is facing a serious nursing shortage at every level — a shortage that is expected to continue through 2026. For those just starting out in the healthcare field, completing a California Department of Public Health-approved program is crucial in order to qualify for employment at California healthcare employers. Certified Nurse Assistant (CNA) programs in California typically run from 6 to 12 weeks. Many of those who get certified through the National Nurse Aide Assessment Program continue on to a full nursing program.

Southwestern College, located in Chula Vista, CA, offers a more rigorous program that may take up to 18 weeks. But even while boasting a nearly 100 percent pass rate for the certification test, Southwestern has confronted obstacles. The competition among schools for acquiring nursing students was already incredibly stiff. Then along came the COVID-19 pandemic, which threw another obstruction in the way. How do you continue to keep a diverse student population engaged in a robust program without face-to-face learning?

Before the pandemic, most books and classroom materials associated with the CNA program at Southwestern were printed textbooks; little to no digital learning materials were provided. For any type of video learning, students viewed DVDs. The CNA faculty at Southwestern discovered that both hard-copy textbooks and DVDs had become obsolete during the pandemic: how do you use those on a Zoom call? What if a student needed to rewatch a DVD multiple times to learn a concept or skill?

Southwestern quickly acknowledged that a shift to digital learning had become crucial. After canceling the spring semester when COVID first hit, the school planned to reopen for the summer session, which meant it had to select a platform and get both instructors and students on board fast.

Given that a lot of students were younger, the school anticipated no issues with adapting to a more-technology-based program. The instructors, however, were a different story: most of them were of retirement age and not particularly tech savvy. So whatever platform they selected had to be easy to use by both students and instructors.

After evaluating available alternatives, Southwestern chose Lippincott® CoursePoint — specifically, Pamela J. Carter’s *Lippincott Textbook for Nursing Assistants: A Humanistic Approach to Caregiving* and the educational solutions that come as part of the suite. Not only did the CNA program’s faculty feel confident in moving to digital learning solutions, but also they found they preferred the Carter humanistic approach to caregiving and fostering respect and dignity with patients instead of the then current textbook, which was more task oriented.

Profile

As the only public institution of higher education in southern San Diego County, Southwestern College is in a unique position to provide career opportunities for a diverse student population. Its CNA program, offered four times a year, puts students on the path to working in healthcare settings and/or becoming vocational or registered nurses. The program accepts up to 40 students per class.

For most students enrolled in the Southwestern CNA program, English is not the first language. Forty-three percent of students are younger; in California, you can take a CNA program starting at age 16.

65%

For whom English is not the first language

43%

Students 20-24 years old

85%

Students who identify as female

“Lippincott CoursePoint enables us to meet students where they are – both literally and figuratively. The digital platform helps students build the clinical judgment skills and confidence they need to pass the certification test from wherever they are, which gives them a lot of flexibility in their learning styles and their lives outside of work. With videos, e-book with highlighting, notetaking, and read-aloud features, students can match how they learn the material best, thereby yielding a better outcome. We assign e-book readings and encourage notetaking and highlighting to use the e-book as a study tool. We also love being able to track student viewing of the skills videos and the pre-lecture quizzes so we can help ensure they are learning as we teach.”

Jamie O’Connor Florez, MSN, RN, PHN, CNE, Professor and CNA Program Director, Department Chair of Nursing & Health Occupations Program, Southwestern College

The solution

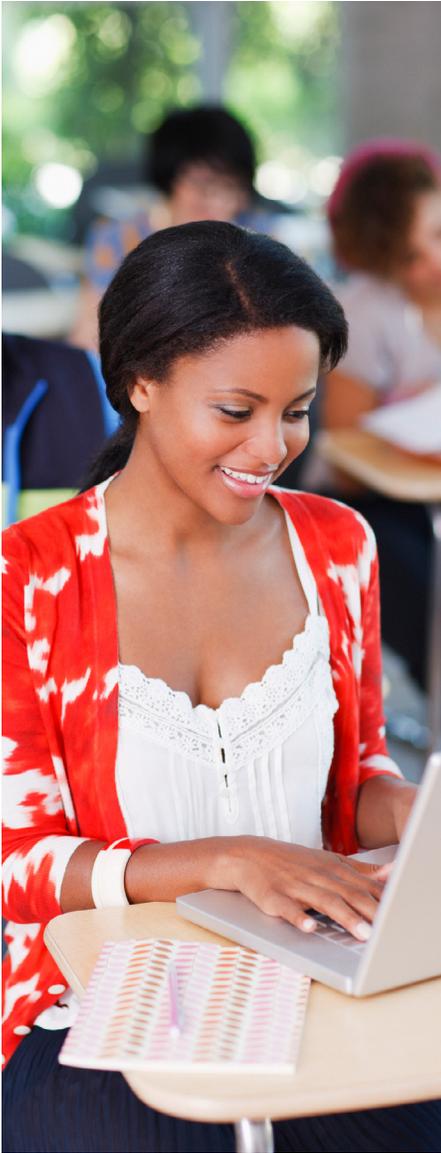
A digital learning platform that students from all walks of life and instructors feel comfortable with

Given that Southwestern didn’t want to lose the momentum of its high pass rates, the school needed an inclusive suite of educational solutions it could deliver digitally. Choosing Lippincott CoursePoint committed Southwestern to a platform that combines the latest evidence-based content, time-tested technologies, and extensive flexibility to help students cultivate mastery and critical thinking. Lippincott CoursePoint has been used successfully by more than 1 million nursing students in the past decade.

The intuitive platform helps both students and instructors navigate with ease. It provides a personalized approach that instills confidence in students and brings to bear powerful translation and pronunciation capabilities that ensure understanding if English is not a student’s first language.

With Lippincott CoursePoint for a Certified Nurse Assistant program, the experience is crafted to improve student learning. The ebook includes audio with up to 16 different native language dialect choices to reduce learning barriers for ESL students. Learners use the ebook as a study tool with notes, the ability to highlight, and a flashcard builder. The pre-lecture quizzes prepare students for class and the skills videos.

Instructors can track student progress and pinpoint strengths and weaknesses through a comprehensive dashboard with key data points. For those less familiar with digital learning platforms, Lippincott CoursePoint offers a customer success team that includes digital implementation specialists and nurse educator consultants for personalized training and support by way of live webinars and on-demand training.



Results

Ignited the desire of students to go further

The goal of the Southwestern CNA program is to prepare students for passing the test and moving forward to higher levels of nursing education. In an informal survey, approximately 96 percent of respondents indicated they wanted to take a nursing program.

Reduced language barriers

Because the Southwestern CNA program comprises a large percentage of nonnative English speakers, language can be an issue — particularly when it comes to medical terminology. Lippincott CoursePoint includes a medical language dictionary with pronunciations, and the e-book contains a read-aloud feature in multiple languages (dialect or accent), thereby lowering the language barrier for English as a Second Language students or English-language learners.

Southwestern continued its streak of perfect pass rates among students who took the National Nurse Aide Assessment Program examination and faculty believe using Lippincott CoursePoint has been a contributing factor. Instructors can use a hybrid learning model through the online, on-demand platform along with in-person learning. Students, meanwhile, enjoy making notes in the e-book, which helps facilitate better studying habits.

Maintained nearly 100% pass rate on the CNA certification test

Nearly all Southwestern College CNA students passed their certification tests. Additionally, for those who decide to continue on with their nursing careers, other nursing schools and employers perceive Southwestern CNA students as better prepared.

Information provided regarding persons, products, or services are the views of the contributor and do not constitute or imply its endorsement, recommendation, or favoring by Southwestern Community College District.

Considering a digital learning solution? Let us help you evaluate how to take advantage of Lippincott CoursePoint can prepare your nursing students for real-world practice.

Contact a Wolters Kluwer sales representative today and discover what Lippincott® can do for you.
<https://thepoint.lww.com/relocator>