



CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORIES: HESI TESTING & REMEDIATION

SCHOOL NAME: Heartland Community College

INSTRUCTOR: Lisa Aberle

HESI helps radiography program regain 100 percent pass rate

Background: Heartland Community College in Normal, Illinois, offers an Associate in Applied Science Degree in Radiography. The program, which follows recommendations from the Joint Review Committee on Education in Radiologic Technology, has a completion rate of 87 percent. Of those who complete the program, 93 percent have a job within six months of graduation.

Issue: After revisions to the American Registry of Radiologic Technologists (ARRT) exam and other factors, Heartland Community College found that its passing rate had fallen to 89 percent in 2009 from previous pass rates of 100 percent.

Approach: The Radiography Program Director implemented the HESI Exit Exam to pinpoint areas where the program could improve its curriculum and to identify students who might be at risk for not passing the exam. Students take the exam at the start of their final semester.

The results prompted Heartland Community College to revise its curriculum to address the issue of a weakness in physics and imaging equipment, two subsections of the equipment operations and quality control section of the ARRT exam. Faculty also met with students who failed to achieve the desired pass rate on the HESI Exit Exam and encouraged them to complete remediation.

Results: In 2012, the pass rate returned to 100 percent. Students' confidence has improved, and they report that the ARRT exam is not as hard as the HESI Exit Exam. In the future, Heartland Community College plans to have students take a second, different Exit Exam immediately before graduation and to require, rather than recommending, remediation.

Benefits: The program director, who also writes test questions for the HESI Exit Exam, says a rigorous process ensures that the test reflects the ARRT exam so students can feel prepared. A content expert develops each question, which then undergoes editing and a pilot test to determine effectiveness. Questions that work well are then eligible to be added to the part of the test that is scored. Remediation allows students to correct knowledge deficiencies and those who score well on HESI feel more confident in their ability to pass the ARRT exam.