University of Arizona

Boosting Student Tutoring Usage and Safeguarding Data

An AppointmentPlus Case Study
The Writing Skills Improvement Program at the University of Arizona needed a more secure and efficient method for handling its student registration and appointment process. The program had relied on a paper-based system that was inconvenient for students and time consuming for staff. More importantly, this system did not meet the University's security standards.

In 2014, the University Writing Skills Improvement Program decided to implement AppointmentPlus® scheduling software to streamline both their registration and appointment-management processes.
Student adoption of online scheduling resulted in:

- **40%**
  - time savings for administrative staff

- **3x – 5x**
  - increase in student appointment scheduling speed

- **50%**
  - increase in staff schedule predictability, due to advance notification of tutoring needs

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**About University of Arizona’s Writing Skills Improvement Program**

The Writing Skills Improvement Program (WSIP) was established more than 30 years ago to help students at the University of Arizona improve their writing. The program comprises a carefully selected staff of expert and committed instructional specialists and professional tutors. These writing coaches work one-on-one with students, staff, and faculty across all majors and degree programs. WSIP also offers regular writing workshops, custom workshops, a professional editing service and summer writing institutes.
Manual Process Deterred Students From Using the Program

Dr. Robert Cote, Assistant Director of the Graduate Writing Institute, says that before implementing AppointmentPlus software, students had to register to use WSIP’s services by filling out a 5” x 8” paper application card. Students had to physically come into the WSIP office to fill out this card — not just once, but every semester. The process was repetitive and inefficient. And because the office is not centrally located on campus, registering to use WSIP services was inconvenient for many students.

In addition, University security standards required that the physical registration cards be stored in a manner that would guarantee student confidentiality and records security. With the paper registration system, it was too easy for staff to leave an application card in public view after retrieving student information. Without a more secure system for registering and managing student records, the WSIP was in danger of violating University standards and compromising student confidentiality.
“The AppointmentPlus software has made us more accessible and customer-friendly to our students. Since implementing the system, we haven’t received a single student complaint.”

Dr. Leslie Dupont  
Coordinator, Graduate Writing Institute  
University of Arizona Writing Skills Improvement Program

Ease of Use Improves Student Experience

WSIP tutors serve over 1,000 students each year and handle approximately 300 appointments per month. Their writing program required a solution that was cost effective and flexible enough to allow them to start small and expand over time.

AppointmentPlus scheduling software was able to meet their needs by providing a solution that could handle changing tutor schedules, group sizes, and session durations — all while securely storing student information.

With the AppointmentPlus system in place, students are able to take more responsibility for their tutoring by proactively registering online for WSIP services and scheduling appointments up to a month in advance through the WSIP website. Students report that the process is incredibly user-friendly.
Using AppointmentPlus Software to Enhance Security Standards & Marketing Effectiveness

After only one year, AppointmentPlus software has helped the Writing Skills Improvement Program resolve its security issues and make its services more accessible. Students’ confidential registration data is housed within the AppointmentPlus secure data centers, and is no longer kept on paper forms that could be lost or compromised.

WSIP staff plans to use the reporting and analytics features within the AppointmentPlus scheduling system to further improve student tutoring usage and program expansion. With trend data showing which appointment times, sessions, and tutors are most in demand, the program can refine its offerings to reach more students and raise awareness of its most sought-after services.