Sherri Hoss, M.Ed, B.S.N, RN.
Health Care Instructor — Southeast Technical Institute (STI)

Allied Health Students See, Hear, Practice, and Learn Medical Terms with MindTap™

Forbes magazine rated Sioux Falls, South Dakota, one of the best places for business and careers five years in a row — and the city's Southeast Technical Institute (STI) is doing its part to develop career-ready professionals in 40 areas. Sherri Hoss teaches general health courses such as human relations, medical terminology, anatomy and physiology, and patient care to future medical professionals at STI. She's also a practicing registered nurse. Medical terminology is a challenging course, and the MindTap™ personalized online learning experience facilitates the engagement of students to drive their interest in a difficult, but important, subject. More than an eBook, MindTap combines core readings, an audio pronunciation feature, activities, homework exercises, quizzes, learning apps, and more in a singular Learning Path — with all resources instantly accessible at any time.

COURSES AND PARTICIPANTS

The students in Sherri's face-to-face medical terminology course are pursuing an associate degree in allied health, and share the typical diverse profile of today's student populations. They include a mix of traditional and non-traditional students, many with jobs and families. Students read core content and complete required homework exercises for each chapter online in MindTap. Technology-shy students have the option of reading a printed version of the content, but still use MindTap for homework. Sherri encourages students to take advantage of the many other MindTap study and learning resources. In fact, she often uses MindTap in class, projecting key content onto a screen at the front of the class to emphasize terms and concepts, and showing her students how MindTap can help them study more effectively. And because MindTap can "go mobile" (it's compatible with iPad 2.0 and above), the course can "meet" student outside the classroom and wherever their hectic lives take them.
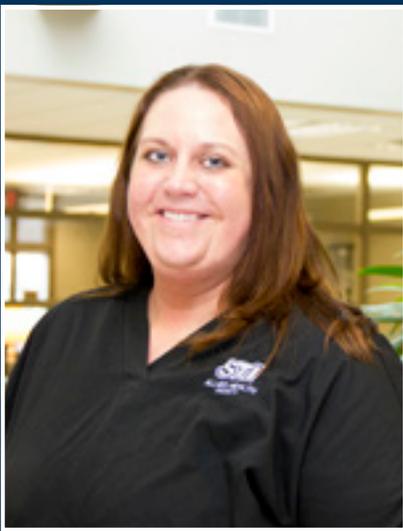
When Sherri or her students experience technical issues with MindTap, Cengage Learning is quick to respond. And, as an online technology, MindTap helps students take a load off, literally. "Students in the healthcare environment tend to have bags loaded with books," she says. "The digital format of MindTap means there's one less thing for them to carry."

THE CHALLENGES

Sherri's biggest concern is motivating her students to come to class prepared. She says, "I want them to read before they come to class so that we can work more productively and efficiently with the material in class"—even if they don't always come prepared.

Related to her students' aversion to reading before class is their hesitancy to use the learning resources that are available to them, MindTap being an important one. "The top students use most or all of the resources available in MindTap. Others do not, and they tend to be the ones that struggle the most," she says.

CHALLENGES

- **Absorbing and retaining complex medical terminology** requires visual and audial learning tools.
- **Students are intimidated by the volume of course content,** and often need additional study assistance.
- **Absence of timely feedback** on assignments can cause students to lose interest, and may impede learning and retention.

SOLUTIONS

- MindTap *Medical Terminology for Health Professions*, by Ehrlich, Ann & Carol L. Schroeder

RESULTS

- **Audio pronunciation** feature allows students to click on a term and hear the pronunciation. Students review and retain terms with helpful tools such as spelling bee exercises and in-line terminology pronunciations.
- **MindTap appeals to a range of learning styles** with interactive, multimedia resources and exercises that help students learn more efficiently and effectively. ReadSpeaker® MindApp online text-to-speech application allows students to listen to their reading assignments.
- **Students get instant feedback and scores** on graded online homework, engaging them in their learning and reinforcing concepts. Students work at their convenience. Automatic grading saves instructors time.

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Students also experience some anxiety at the vast amount of material covered in the course, which has the additional dimension of requiring them to learn pronunciations of complicated and unfamiliar words.

THE RESULTS

Students taking full advantage of MindTap can work through the Learning Path for each chapter and review learning objectives, watch videos, read core material, and complete activities that reinforce their learning.

"MindTap provides students with many helpful resources outside of class," says Sherri. In part, she is referring to the MindTap learning apps, which provide students with everything they need to prepare for class or an exam, all from a single platform. "Students can hear the pronunciation of a term by simply clicking on it, and there are illustrations and videos for visual learners. They also like the dictionary app, which calls up definitions when students type in a word or click on a term in bold-face type." For students that retain more information by hearing instead of reading, they can select content and listen to it using the ReadSpeaker® MindApp online text-to-speech application.

Students complete homework at their convenience within the assignment timeframe, submit it online, and receive instant feedback. When they answer incorrectly, they can read an explanation that clarifies the correct response. "Students like being able to check their answers and receive feedback on every problem," says Sherri. "MindTap also saves me time that I would otherwise spend grading or answering questions."

Sherri's students particularly appreciate the flashcard app, which allows them to click through a set of flashcards to review key terms and concepts. "When students are certain that they have learned a term, they can hide it from the collection and focus their time on learning the words that they don't know," she says. "Anytime you can use the medical terminology or medical language, it improves learning and retention. It's a must to practice and reinforce the terms to get them into long-term memory, and MindTap allows students to do so much more than just read about them."

MindTap Medical Terminology for the Health Professions is more rigorous than the department's previous medical terminology text. That's by design to better promote student preparedness for other courses and careers, and MindTap's interactive resources offer support at every step. Says Sherri, "My students give positive feedback and say that MindTap is a helpful resource. It has been an excellent supplement for our classroom."

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