



## George Washington University School of Nursing Uses Smartsheet to Streamline Course Development

The George Washington University School of Nursing is part of the George Washington University and is based in Ashburn, Virginia. The school offers bachelor's, master's, doctoral and certificate programs to around 800 students.



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Miro Liwosz, Assistant Dean, Online Learning and Instructional Technology at the George Washington University School of Nursing

### School of Nursing

THE GEORGE WASHINGTON UNIVERSITY

**Customer:**

The George Washington University School of Nursing

**Industry:**

Education

**Organization Size:**

Enterprise (10,000+ employees)

**Region:**

North America

**Website:**

[nursing.gwu.edu](http://nursing.gwu.edu)

The George Washington University School of Nursing, located in Ashburn, Virginia, is one of the top-ranked nursing schools in the nation, offering innovative educational programs led by top-tier faculty, supported by the latest in health care technology. Founded in 2010, the School of Nursing offers bachelor's, master's, doctoral and certificate programs and helps nursing students succeed in providing high-quality, compassionate healthcare. The school has more than 60 faculty members and around 800 students.

### Background

Behind the scenes, a team of project managers in the online learning and instructional technology department is busy managing projects across the school including course development strategic planning, and providing resources to support faculty, staff, and students. Smartsheet is at the heart of it all. *"Smartsheet essentially runs our school,"* says Miro Liwosz, assistant dean, online learning and instructional technology at the George Washington University School of Nursing. *"It gives us a robust framework that enables our instructional design office to manage projects and help our staff and faculty ensure course readiness."*

Several years ago, Liwosz and his team relied on different spreadsheet software and digital project management tools, none of which fit the department's growing needs. *"Project management wasn't centralized or coordinated, and everything was a little chaotic. There was a lot of emailing back and forth to try and get updated information,"* Liwosz says. For example, course scheduling, new faculty and staff onboarding, and syllabus review were all separate processes that required significant manual effort to update and track. The online learning and instructional technology department also lacked a reliable method of reporting on course readiness metrics for stakeholders.

Finding better tools became especially important as the school developed a new strategic plan. *"We needed a better way of mapping our work to the school's upcoming strategic priorities,"* says Liwosz.

### Solution

After considering several project management systems, Liwosz selected Smartsheet. *"I was able to set up a free trial, and I connected with the tool*

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*immediately," he says. "It allowed me to easily create historical information for each project and then track that from beginning to end. It also gave us collaborative capabilities we've never had before to connect us all in one space across the school."*

The School of Nursing uses Smartsheet to centrally manage more than 160 courses each year. Each course is presented in both a high-level project management view as well as a detailed view in Smartsheet, with real-time information such as course schedules, instructors, checklists, and textbook orders accessible to internal staff and faculty. Each course is also assigned an internal instructional designer to help develop each course and track course milestones and feedback.

The school uses workflow automation in Smartsheet to partner with staff and faculty, automatically sending out course milestone and deadline notifications to staff and faculty and to automate the school's syllabus review process, which includes a course approval system for educators and program Deans. In addition, the school uses Smartsheet to manage key assessment measures at the end of a course. Each faculty member submits a course evaluation in Smartsheet, with the information automatically sent to program Deans and measured against the school's program outcomes. Additionally, Smartsheet helps the school streamline syllabus reviews, identify textbooks, and connect to the library to order books.

The school uses Data Shuttle to automatically upload course coordination data from the internal Banner enterprise resource planning (ERP) system to Smartsheet. By connecting Banner with Smartsheet, the school can map courses and credits and view current enrollment metrics and create course schedules in real time with real-time data coming in from Banner every day.

## Mapping courses to objectives and outcomes

Using Smartsheet, the School of Nursing streamlines course coordination and project

### In a Nutshell:

The online learning and instructional technology department uses sheets and reports to identify which courses meet learning objectives, and which courses deviate from those objectives.

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management while mapping each project to the school's goals and initiatives. Specifically, the online learning and instructional technology department uses sheets and reports to identify which courses meet learning objectives, and which courses deviate from those objectives. *"With our 'map and gap' system for tracking accreditation in Smartsheet, we can easily see if a course is not mapping closely with an objective, so we can determine if we need to redesign the curriculum,"* says Liwosz.

The school has also started to use Smartsheet along with artificial intelligence (AI) for parts of the strategic planning process. At a recent staff and faculty strategy planning meeting, the school created questions to arrive at specific goals, recorded answers to the questions in Smartsheet, and then used OpenAI to generate possible strategies. *"By the end of the meeting, we had a list of potential strategies in Smartsheet, and we used those to begin developing a strategic plan with four major goals,"* says Liwosz. The team tracks progress toward the goals in a single Smartsheet strategic planning dashboard, helping to be more proactive in supporting ongoing initiatives.

## Better visibility through dashboards

The School of Nursing uses dashboards in Smartsheet to give students, faculty, and staff easy access to important resources, projects, and courses. For instance, a Smartsheet resource hub dashboard gives students a place to view events, course information, and technology resources. *"The resource hub and dashboard is important for helping our students navigate their days and their academic experience overall,"* Liwosz says. *"Websites are more static, so the dashboards are a much more dynamic way of delivering the resources that students need."* A similar dashboard for faculty provides instructional resources such as course assessment to enable more effective teaching. Workflow automation also helps the school track faculty paid time off (PTO) requests. Once a faculty member enters a request into Smartsheet, it automatically gets sent to a supervisor and is approved or declined. Liwosz also uses Smartsheet to easily manage course development intellectual property contracts with vendors.

Smartsheet also gives the school better control with governance to manage privacy and security and ensure compliance with policies and procedures. As a result, the School of Nursing can better focus on its mission of training nurses to provide high-quality, compassionate healthcare.

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The school also relies on Smartsheet to manage faculty and staff onboarding, with a dashboard displaying a list of requirements such as computers, educational resources, and offices for each new employee.

## Saving time by digitizing and automating key processes

The School of Nursing has eliminated manual work for key business processes. *“We have taken a lot of manual effort out of the syllabus review, accreditation mapping, and contract management processes by using Smartsheet, and that saves us a lot of administrative time,”* says Liwosz. *“Smartsheet automates syllabus review and approval so I no longer have to email people and collect signatures for sign off from multiple departments. Smartsheet saves me several hours per week by streamlining that process.”*

Smartsheet gives the school the infrastructure it needs to be successful by organizing project management and ensuring the school can scale and continue to enhance key workflows and processes. Smartsheet also gives the school better control with governance to manage privacy and security and ensure compliance with policies and procedures. As a result, the School of Nursing can better focus on its mission of training nurses to provide high-quality, compassionate healthcare. *“Smartsheet has helped me increase my skills and capacity for understanding how people learn, organize, and work,”* says Liwosz. *“It has also become a critical tool to help our faculty focus on delivering the best possible education to our students.”*

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