



Learning in Action: Humanities and Social Sciences

A report on MyLab efficacy

Table of Contents

Guide to What's Inside	p. 1
Introduction: MyLab products and student success	p. 2
MyLab/Mastering standards for efficacy research	p. 4

HUMANITIES

ART

MyArtsLab

Kingsborough Community College Success Story	p. 5
Auburn University Success Story	p. 7
University of Cincinnati Success Story	p. 8

MUSIC

MyMusicLab

Green River Community College Success Story	p. 10
Schoolcraft College Success Story	p. 12
Johnston Community College Success Story	p. 14

SOCIAL SCIENCES

ANTHROPOLOGY

MyAnthroLab

University of Oklahoma Success Story	p. 16
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COMMUNICATION

MyCommunicationLab

Monroe Community College Success Story	p. 18
Lower Columbia College Success Story	p. 19

MySpeechLab

Brevard Community College Success Story	p. 21
LaSalle University Success Story	p. 22
Crowder College Success Story	p. 23
Stark State College	p. 25

HISTORY

MyHistoryLab

Alfred State College Success Story	p. 26
University of Alabama, Birmingham Success Story	p. 27

El Centro College Success Story	p. 28
Southeast Missouri State University Success Story	p. 29
University of North Carolina, Charlotte Success Story	p. 31

POLITICAL SCIENCE

MyPoliSciLab

Delaware Technical and Community College Case Study	p. 33
Tarrant County College, Northwest Success Story	p. 35

PSYCHOLOGY

MyPsychLab

Wayne State University Case Study	p. 36
University of North Carolina, Charlotte Case Study	p. 40
Bloomsburg University Case Study	p. 42
University of Delaware Success Story	p. 46
Southern Connecticut State University Success Story	p. 48
Prince George's Community College Success Story	p. 50

MyVirtualChild

San Francisco State University Success Story	p. 52
Delaware Technical & Community College Success Story	p. 54
Indiana University South Bend Success Story	p. 56

SOCIOLOGY

MyFamilyLab

Millersville University Success Story	p. 58
Portland State University Success Story	p. 59

MySocLab

Los Angeles Mission College Success Story	p. 60
Texas Christian University Success Story	p. 61
Mississippi State University Success Story	p. 62
Indiana University Success Story	p. 63
Southeast Community College Success Story	p. 64

TWO-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

○ H L BREVARD COMMUNITY COLLEGE | MySpeechLab Success Story 21
T ○ H CROWDER COLLEGE | MySpeechLab Success Story 23
T ○ DELAWARE TECHNICAL & COMMUNITY COLLEGE | MyPoliSciLab Case Study 33
○ DELAWARE TECHNICAL & COMMUNITY COLLEGE | MyVirtualChild Success Story 54
○ EL CENTRO COLLEGE | MyHistoryLab Success Story 28
T ○ GREEN RIVER COMMUNITY COLLEGE | MyMusicLab Success Story 10
T ○ JOHNSTON COMMUNITY COLLEGE | MyMusicLab Success Story 14
T KINGSBOROUGH COMMUNITY COLLEGE | MyArtsLab Success Story 5
T ○ LOS ANGELES MISSION COLLEGE | MySocLab Success Story 60
T ○ LOWER COLUMBIA COLLEGE | MyCommunicationLab Success Story 19
T ○ MONROE COMMUNITY COLLEGE | MyCommunicationLab Success Story 18
T ○ PRINCE GEORGE'S COMMUNITY COLLEGE | MyPsychLab Success Story 50
T SCHOOLCRAFT COLLEGE | MyMusicLab Success Story 12
T ○ SOUTHEAST COMMUNITY COLLEGE | MySocLab Success Story 64
T ○ STARK STATE COLLEGE | MySpeechLab Success Story 25
T TARRANT COUNTY COLLEGE | MyPoliSciLab Success Story 35

FOUR-YEAR INSTITUTIONS

T ALFRED STATE COLLEGE | MyHistoryLab Success Story 26
T AUBURN UNIVERSITY | MyArtsLab Success Story 7
T BLOOMSBURG UNIVERSITY | MyPsychLab Case Study 42
T INDIANA UNIVERSITY | MySocLab Success Story 61
T INDIANA UNIVERSITY SOUTH BEND | MyVirtualChild Success Story 56
T LASALLE UNIVERSITY | MySpeechLab Success Story 22
T ○ MILLERSVILLE UNIVERSITY | MyFamilyLab Success Story 58
T MISSISSIPPI STATE UNIVERSITY | MySocLab Success Story 62
○ PORTLAND STATE UNIVERSITY | MyFamilyLab Success Story 59
T SAN FRANCISCO STATE UNIVERSITY | MyVirtualChild Success Story 52
T SOUTHEAST MISSOURI STATE UNIVERSITY | MyHistoryLab Success Story 29
T SOUTHERN CONNECTICUT STATE UNIVERSITY | MyPsychLab Success Story 48
T TEXAS CHRISTIAN UNIVERSITY | MySocLab Success Story 61
T UNIVERSITY OF ALABAMA | MyHistoryLab Success Story 27
T UNIVERSITY OF CINCINNATI | MyArtsLab Success Story 8
T UNIVERSITY OF DELAWARE | MyPsychLab Success Story 46
T UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA—CHARLOTTE | MyHistoryLab Success Story 31
T H UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA—CHARLOTTE | MyPsychLab Case Study 40
T UNIVERSITY OF OKLAHOMA | MyAnthroLab Success Story 16
T WAYNE STATE UNIVERSITY | MyPsychLab Case Study 36

COURSE FORMAT KEY			
T	Traditional	○	Online
H	Hybrid	L	Lab

“As students worked in MyPsychLab, we began to see them engaging with course concepts more deeply and asking substantive, informed questions during class discussions.”
—Professor Sue Spaulding,
University of
North Carolina—Charlotte

MyLab products and student success

Developed and refined over a decade with the involvement of thousands of educators, our MyLab products deliver proven results in helping individual students succeed. Their automatically graded assessments, personalized study plan, and interactive eText provide engaging experiences that personalize, stimulate, and measure learning for each student. Simply stated, MyLab products bring learning to life.

Sound pedagogy, stimulating resources, 24/7 availability

MyLab products have been designed and refined with a single purpose in mind—to help educators create real understanding for their students.

- A personalized study plan for each student promotes critical-thinking skills and helps students succeed in the course and beyond.
- Assessment tied to most videos, applications, and chapters enables both instructors and students to track progress and get immediate feedback—and helps instructors to find the best resources to engage students.
- The Pearson eText lets students access their textbook anytime, anywhere, and any way they want—including listening online or downloading to an iPad.

Learning made personal

To help ensure success in the course, MyLab products generate a personalized study plan for each student. Here's how it works:

After reading the chapter, but before attending the class covering the chapter, students take a Pre-Test, which is automatically graded. Based on the results of the Pre-Test, each student receives his or her own personalized study plan for the chapter, focused on the areas in which he or she needs the most improvement.

The personalized study plan's activities are automatically graded and feed into the MyLab Gradebook. The study plan is organized to enable students to progress from less complex thinking—like remembering and understanding—to more complex critical thinking—like applying and analyzing.

A text for today's students

The Pearson eText lets students access their textbook anytime, anywhere, and any way they want. Just like the printed text, students can highlight relevant passages and add their own notes. For even greater flexibility, students can download the eText to an iPad using the free Pearson eText app. And, students can even listen to their text, streaming full chapter audio on their computers or on the go.

Support from a trusted partner

More than 8 million students are now using MyLab products from Pearson to achieve success in higher education. Our MyLab products can be implemented in any environment, including lab-based, hybrid, distance learning, and traditional. Integrated usage has shown measurable gains in student retention, subsequent success, and overall achievement. MyLab products flex to the unique learning needs of each student and can be easily customized to your specific course goals. The result? Inspired students, higher success rates, and better retention.

By your side, each step of the way

Over a decade of experience—building the MyLab platform, and working with educators and students—helps us understand the challenges you face when teaching with technology. We know there are never enough hours in the semester, and that you can't afford

“MyPsychLab is much easier than other course management tools I've used. The new version of MyPsychLab has a very clean interface with great navigation; the registration process for students is smooth and easy. The Help button is genuinely helpful, offering a template and explaining topics clearly and completely. And if you need to transfer grades from MyPsychLab to another course management software package, the process with MyPsychLab is easy, quick, and painless—with excellent support available should you need help.”

--Professor Marion Mason, Bloomsburg University

to waste time learning a new program. That's why we make ourselves available to assist with each part of your MyLab course—from getting started, to training and implementation, to ongoing support.

Hands-on assistance from experienced faculty

The Faculty Advisor Program is a peer-to-peer mentoring program that partners experienced users of MyLab products with new and potential users to help them successfully integrate MyLab products into their courses—and further enhance their skills using MyLab products. Our Faculty Advisors are committed to providing strong support for online learning and sharing their best practices with the MyLab community.

To learn more, please visit us at www.pearsonhighered.com or contact your Pearson representative at www.pearsonhighered.com/relocator.

The Pre-Test/

personalized

study plan/Post-

Test structure is

really effective

at prompting active

learning.”

*--Professor Marcus Dickson,
Wayne State University*

MyLab / Mastering Standards for Efficacy Research

What Pearson means by the terms “efficacy” and “effectiveness.”

- “Efficacy” describes whether a product or intervention has a positive effect on learning, such as reducing wrong answers, increasing retention rates, or raising final exam scores.
- “Effectiveness” measures the size of the educational improvement from a product or educational intervention.

Why Pearson is interested in efficacy studies.

To deliver the best educational experience for students, we need to understand how Pearson’s content is performing and verify learning gains associated with the use of our products. Toward that goal, we actively seek out educators who wish to explore educational research questions and investigate the efficacy of MyLab / Mastering products.

Who is Pearson’s efficacy research team?

Our research team includes Ph.D. level statisticians who provide practical advice about tracking and analyzing student data when redesigning a course to incorporate technology. Our research team also includes experts in psychometrics, educational statistics, and journal publications. These individuals support instructors who want to run an efficacy study; provide our editorial staff with detailed reports on the quality of our online content; and advise our software engineers of new methodologies for collecting and processing student learning data within MyLab / Mastering.

How Pearson and instructors work together.

Every research project is unique. The process takes time—generally a semester or longer.

How Pearson can help instructors get started.

Pearson can provide templates, guidelines, checklists, and samples on course redesign, efficacy studies, data collection, and more. In order to maintain objectivity, Pearson does not pay for data or participation in efficacy studies.

Research Standards

Pearson adheres to the [SIIA guidelines for evaluating educational technology products](#).

The key guidelines are:

- Ask the Right Question
- Support the Implementation of the Product or Service
- Plan a Study of Sufficient Size and Duration to Demonstrate an Effect
- Plan for Plausible Causal Claims
- Avoid (the Appearance of) Conflicts of Interest
- Provide a Comprehensive and Detailed Research Report
- Make the Research Findings Widely Available
- Accurately Translate Research for Customers

Contact your Pearson Representative for more information.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyArtsLab

An interview with
Maya Jiménez, PhD
Kingsborough Community College
Brooklyn, NY



Course Information

I am teaching two courses right now with a strong MyArtsLab component: Art 31, a survey of art history entitled “The Visual Experience,” and Art 33, the first part of the survey course of art history from ancient to renaissance. Both are traditional lecture-style classes that meet twice a week. For Art 31, the book-in-use is Stokstad and Cothren’s *Art: A Brief History* and for Art 33, the text is Stokstad and Cothren’s *Art History: Volume 1*. In both courses, MyArtsLab is mandatory.

The class size is anywhere from 30–40 students and there is a diverse student body demographic in terms of age and social and ethnic background. Our whole campus is speaking different languages and everyone is coming from different walks of life.

I have used MyArtsLab for two semesters. Our department chose to use MyArtsLab when we changed texts. We wanted to incorporate more non-Western art into our surveys and the Stokstad and Cothren text provided that coverage. The Pearson eText and MyArtsLab were also big selling points. I am a fan of MyArtsLab and my students know how much I love it.

Assessment

MyArtsLab quizzes are 15% (about 5–6 quizzes). The midterm exam is 10–20%; the final exam is 20%; the paper is 20–30%. In-class attendance and participation is 15%. I do a lot of activities in class where students break-up into small groups. Technically it is a lecture class, but there is a lot of discussion going on, as well as in-class group assignments or homework assignments.

I try to make MyArtsLab quizzes count as much as the midterm, because I want students to have a portion of their grade be determined not by just one exam, but by a series of quizzes. Quizzes are taken at home and are open-book, open-note. The quizzes may be taken only once.

Implementation

I require MyArtsLab, partly because it allows my students to take weekly or bi-weekly quizzes. In the chapters section, they take either the chapter exam or the Post-Test. They have 24 hours from the end of class to take it. I record and track their grades and encourage students to take additional quizzes from the ones I require. Oftentimes I see that in addition to taking the quizzes I require, students also take the Pre-Test to get ready for the chapter test. MyArtsLab not only allows students to take a quiz that is going to affect their grade, but also to prepare for it.

I use the chapter resources a lot, specifically all of the videos and multimedia components. There are fabulous 360-degree views of interiors, and links to National Geographic and BBC videos on YouTube.

I actively incorporate MyArtsLab in my lectures. I have MyArtsLab open before class begins. First, I show my regular PowerPoint presentation, but then instead of showing students multiple views of one church, I will pull up a 360-degree view on MyArtsLab right there in class. Doing this changes the students’ understanding of the work completely. Sometimes to break up the rhythm, I will show a two- to three-minute video on whatever subject we are talking about.

For the midterm and final exam, I encourage students to use the image flashcards section. Because I give them a study guide with a list of images, it is their responsibility to go to the flashcard section, print out those flashcards, and then write their notes on the flashcards. It is a more modern way of studying for art history. When I was a student, you had to write out your flashcards, but here, the flashcards are already being made for you.

I also use the “For Instructor” section on MyArtsLab to create certain multiple-choice and essay questions for my exam. I either incorporate them into my exam or incorporate them into a review session that we take before the exam.

Lastly, I use the writing and research resources on MyArtsLab when I have students write a compare-and-contrast essay based on a museum visit. If they are a non-art major, which many of them are, this is really a huge introduction and crash course into art. I walk them through the “how to write a compare and contrast essay” resource in class, and even if I do that quickly, I always make a point that they can go back to the same place and revisit the information.

MyArtsLab

Benefits

MyArtsLab helps to reinforce my lecture because it adds an extra dimension to a particular object that I want to emphasize. For example, if I want to spend a lot of time talking about the Pantheon, I have the resources—360-degree views, diagrams, and videos. I can really stress an artwork and develop more ideas using these additional resources. In that way, it is extremely helpful.

It is also helpful to use MyArtsLab to break up the pace of what can sometimes be a very monotonous course. When I pull up a video, students get into a different mode—they perk up. Students are already so tech-savvy and they like having the multimedia in class. (Maybe they equate it with watching TV.) Even though it is somebody else on the video saying the exact same thing that I was just saying, it wakes them up a little bit.

Using MyArtsLab takes a little bit of the responsibility away from me, so that when I have to cover hundreds of artworks and I do not have time to teach each one in detail, I can touch on the information in class, and then have the students refer back to the information on MyArtsLab. It allows me to flesh out more ideas in class as opposed to just getting through the material as quickly as possible. Using MyArtsLab gives me flexibility and it also adds to my teaching by introducing new ways of explaining material and resources.

I think MyArtsLab gives students a greater sense of responsibility because they have an added educational resource. MyArtsLab helps students succeed in terms of easing the pressure of exam preparation. Having access to this online tool 24/7 gives them a strong sense of reassurance. They can quiz themselves, they can retake and take the Pre- and Post-Tests as many times as possible, and they can create their flashcards.

The more quizzes students take on MyArtsLab, the more they are exposed to the material and the better learners they become. It is a matter of practice. The more questions you answer on Egypt, the better you'll know the material on Egypt. I do think that students like MyArtsLab in general. They like what it does, and they like the internet component. It's futuristic, engaging, and interactive, and, in the age of social media, this is like an educational Facebook.

MyArtsLab also makes students more active learners. They are more engaged with the material. Some students do not read the book, but instead choose to have the book read to them. They tell me, "It is better for me to hear something read to me than it is for me to read it." It caters to different learning styles, to visual learners and auditory learners. It is more applicable for students and MyArtsLab has an option for any type of learner.

My favorite feature is the 360-degree views. There is nothing else like them. When I show the 360-degree views in class, I pause and say, "Don't get dizzy!" because you can really get a little bit disoriented if you go too fast. Students see the 360-degree views and they are literally in awe. They have the sensation that they are in the middle of a room in the Pantheon. Especially for our students who do not necessarily have the financial resources to travel to many of these places, it is as close to the original as they are going to get. It brings the artwork to life. You hear "ahhhs" and sighs—literally the whole class is entranced. It is quite exciting!

Conclusion

The first piece of advice that I would give to a fellow instructor is to make MyArtsLab mandatory. It helps to have the entire class on board because if you have one student who has it and another who does not, your students are not on an equal playing field.

The second part of advice I would give to instructors is to really take time both at the beginning and throughout the semester to flesh out the different possibilities of MyArtsLab. Despite the fact that students have smartphones and are on Facebook, I had to walk my students through the registration process many times. If you just give students a handout and tell them to register, they are never going to use it. Furthermore, if students do not see their professor using MyArtsLab in class, they are not going to use it. You have to be really active with MyArtsLab both in and outside the classroom with homework and quiz assignments. I show them where the quizzes and flashcards are located. I want them to take advantage of this resource, otherwise, it is just a subscription that is not being utilized. I always show students new things and new features, and they ask me, "How did you get to that video?" It is all about taking the extra time to walk students through the process and to patiently repeat yourself.

As MyArtsLab is expanding, I will be integrating it more and more!

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyArtsLab

An interview with
Professor Cynthia Kristan-Graham
Auburn University
Auburn, AL



Course Information

I use MyArtsLab in two different survey courses: Introduction to Art History I, an introduction to world art from prehistory to ca. 1000 CE, and Introduction to Art History 3, an introduction to world art from the eighteenth century to the present day. Both are traditional, three-credit courses, which are required for art history, studio, and design majors. Students can take them to fulfill a core Fine Arts requirement; many take them as electives. Auburn University is a traditional campus. I use Stokstad and Cothren's *Art History* text. The class size is 30–70 students per section.

Assessment

Three exams are worth 25%, quizzes are worth 12.5%, and a paper about MyArtsLab is worth 12.5%. The paper is a way for students to get to know MyArtsLab. They must review one of the chapters required for class, critique it, and suggest a change or improvement.

Implementation

I used MyArtsLab for the first time during the 2010–2011 academic year. I chose to use it because, according to *Wired* magazine, Auburn University is one of the most wired campuses in the country. I know that students respond well to technology and I thought using MyArtsLab would make the course seem a little more contemporary for them. I have found that students are really happy to do things on their own, such as visiting websites and viewing videos.

I assign required MyArtsLab reading every day on the syllabus. Sometimes I put a MyArtsLab-related activity or image on an exam or a quiz—not to trick anyone or to be punitive, but to reward students who do what I have asked them to do. Students who use MyArtsLab perform better on their exams than students who do not.

My quizzes are unannounced and cover material we have been reading in the text or in MyArtsLab. Some students catch on quickly and discover that if they do the reading and their MyArtsLab work, they have a really good chance of doing well in the course.

Benefits

Using MyArtsLab allows me to fit more material into a semester. With MyArtsLab, I tell my students to look at specific things before or after class to supplement what we are going to be studying.

My favorite features are the *Closer Looks*, where you can zoom into the detail of an image and read supplementary information. Students love these too, as well as the *Animation of Architecture* features. I have also been told by students with learning disabilities that they listen to the reader because they are aural learners and they like listening to the eText.

Another thing that I really like about MyArtsLab is the paperless essays and grading. You can read student essays, give comments, and grade—all online. A timer tool allows me to set time limits for assignments, and, when the time is up, I can print out a grid that shows me who has submitted and when. I do not have to get writer's cramp, students do not have to struggle with reading handwritten comments, and it is environmentally friendly.

Conclusion

The advice I would give to a new or prospective MyArtsLab user is to go through all of the features and familiarize yourself with what is available before adding anything to the syllabus. One of my MyArtsLab best practices is, in my office before class, I complete all the MyArtsLab exercises that I assigned—this is a really good way to refresh my memory about what we are doing instead of just going over my notes. It does not take very long, and I can do it over a cup of coffee.

I do not currently show a lot of MyArtsLab content in class, but I am going to start. Students can get bored just looking at slides, so I plan on showing more videos and *Closer Looks* in class to break things up. Students do not have long attention spans, so anything that can change up the class is really good for them. Also, I know that MyArtsLab gives professors the ability to add their own content. I have not had the time to pursue this yet, but I might do so in the future.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyArtsLab

An interview with
Cindy B. Damschroder
Adjunct Associate Professor
University of Cincinnati
Cincinnati, OH



Course Information

I adopted the Stokstad and Cothren *Art History* text for the 2010–2011 academic year and our department required students to use MyArtsLab as well. I teach the History of Western Art survey course (Art History 111, 112, 113) to approximately 150 students per class per quarter. Last academic year, I had two classes during the fall and winter quarters and one class during the spring. In addition, I use the Stokstad text with MyArtsLab to teach an honors version of the History of Western Art survey course in two sections of 25 students each.

This academic year, 2011–2012, I have switched texts to Sayre's *A World of Art*, keeping MyArtsLab. As our university will be making a major shift from quarters to semesters in the fall of 2012, I wanted to experiment with a non-chronological approach to the subject as I am only going to be teaching in a one-semester format next academic year. I am hopeful that the Sayre text, along with MyArtsLab, will allow me flexibility and academic rigor and will help me maintain student interest in the subject matter all at the same time. This academic year, I have one section of 150 students and one honors section of 50 students who are using the Sayre text with MyArtsLab.

Assessment

MyArtsLab Pre-Tests and Post-Tests for each chapter count as homework and make up 10% of the overall grade. Two exams each count for 20%, two writing assignments count for 25%, group work in class counts for 15%, and attendance counts for 10% of the overall grade.

Implementation

In class, I display MyArtsLab and the PowerPoints from the text up on the screen. When there is an image in a PowerPoint, I tie it together with a Closer Look. Or if there is a video clip, an interview with the artist, or a technique video on MyArtsLab, I show that to students in class. This multimedia helps us delve deeper into the material and gives students a change from a straight-up lecture to something more interactive, which they like.

For homework, I assign the Pre- and Post-Tests for every chapter. On the day they are due, I pull up the tests on the screen in class and we go over the questions. I ask if the questions made sense and we talk about them.

Pre- and Post-Tests really do help with students' retention of material. I can't spend time on all the concepts in class, so they are a good way to make sure students are learning all the necessary material in the course. This is a foundations course, comprised mostly of freshmen, and since they are only one year out of high school, they feel very comfortable doing the Pre- and Post-Tests for homework.

Benefits

Now that I have been using MyArtsLab for a little over a year, I can say that I find several of the features to be quite helpful from both the instructor and the student standpoint. For the instructor, there are several chapter resources that compliment a typical lecture/presentation type of format. The Closer Look features, the short videos, and the architectural animations all serve as tools to help further explain art works to a student in a way that a still image and instructor explanation cannot. They are also great tools that can be used to help change the pace of class and create discussion points throughout.

From a student standpoint, the flashcards are very helpful as a visual study tool—whether they study from them in an online format or they choose to print them and make their own traditional flashcards. Many students say they also enjoy the convenience of having the eText on their computers right at their fingertips.

As far as writing assistance, I feel there are several student benefits. First and foremost, there are the Student Tools that help them write research papers. These are very helpful for the student who has little to no familiarity with the visual arts and the descriptive vocabulary needed to write effectively. Second, MyArtsLab offers links to wonderful websites of museums and

collections worldwide. A student could become immersed for hours!

Other resources that instructors may utilize are the links entitled After College and Graduate Study in Art History. As the Undergraduate Student Advisor in Art History for our department, I find that these links provide great talking points for students. When students ask what careers they can pursue with a degree or where they might look for graduate schools, these websites are great places to send them to start their searches—as well as great places to send their parents!

Conclusion

MyArtsLab keeps students connected in another way to the course material.

Taking the Pre- and Post-Tests helps students prepare for their actual exams. I also encourage students to take the chapter exams on MyArtsLab for additional practice and I notice that many of them do. I do think that in the future, quizzes in MyArtsLab and requiring MyArtsLab chapter exams might also be worth pursuing.

In the past, a course like this might only have had a midterm and a final exam that determined the overall grade. This type of assessment is really difficult for students who don't test well. Incorporating MyArtsLab Pre-Tests, Post-Tests, and writing assignments gives a way for students to methodically and incrementally gain points in a variety of ways and helps them develop critical thinking skills.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyMusicLab

An interview with
Kelly Eisenhour
Choral Director
Green River Community College
Auburn, WA



Course Information

I teach music appreciation both face to face and online using MyMusicLab and Bonds, *Listen to This*. We employ the quarter system at our school and have used MyMusicLab for eight quarters. I have about 40 students per section.

The main course objective is for students to become familiar with Western music. I introduce both Western composers and master composers, and I cover music of the Middle Ages through modern music. I really want to expose my students to music they are less likely to have access to, so I focus on classical music instead of jazz and pop music. I try to get my students to listen critically instead of just for entertainment. I talk about how and why we listen and why it is important to distinguish between listening to music for entertainment and listening to music as an art form or an entity within itself.

I chose to use MyMusicLab because I love its online format, its organization, and all the different tools and resources that the students have access to. I think it is well written and gives students a lot of ways to understand the material.

Implementation

I assign three Post-Tests every week. Students choose Post-Tests from the chapters assigned and have two attempts to pass them.

I also assign the chapter exam (I call this the summary exam), which students usually take at the end of the week, depending on how long the section is. I have made my own exams and I have used the ones on MyMusicLab as well. Right now, I am using the MyMusicLab exams.

I give assignments that I have written, but I also use *Inside the Orchestra* as an assignment. Students usually complete about five assignments throughout the quarter, which are supplemental to the book.

I like using the documentaries on MyMusicLab in class. I show them at the beginning of class when we are discussing the overview of the era.

I love the flashcards and I use them in my face-to-face classes. I make quizzes with them. I also use the Pre-Tests in class and I get students to go up to the computer and click the right answer. I do this activity in groups, with four students sitting at each table who get to decide on the answer as a group. It is fun, participatory, and everybody is involved.

Assessment

In my traditional classes, the Post-Tests are worth 20%, assignments are worth 20%, MyMusicLab chapter exams (which I call summary exams) are worth 30%, and a final exam that I write is worth 30% of their grade. All exams are taken outside of class except for the comprehensive final that is taken in class.

My online and traditional classes are mostly set up the same way, except my online class includes some additional discussion forum work, which requires students to write about each piece. This replaces the in-class assignments I do with my face-to-face class. The breakdown for my online class is as follows: summary exams are worth 30%, Post-Tests are worth 20%, assignments and discussion forums are worth 20%, and the final is worth 30%.

Benefits

I love the organization of *Listen to This* and MyMusicLab. Both are very easy to use. I like the way the chapters in *Listen to This* are laid out, each in the same format. Students can get into a groove with what appears in each chapter. I like that the chapters are short, only six to eight pages long.

I also like that *Listen to This* and MyMusicLab are not historically based—they are composition- and composer-based. This allows me to easily take out or add a composer or composition if I want to, without affecting the flow of the class.

MyMusicLab

My favorite MyMusicLab features are the automated listening guides, which are very well done. They allow students to see in real time what is going on in each section of a piece of music. Because I cannot point anything out in person to my online students, this is especially useful for my online class. I have had many students say they love the automated listening guides, and this has been a real plus.

Conclusion

There are so many different resources on MyMusicLab and many ways to use them. For my face-to-face classes, it is a great way to work with the students. And, I do not know how you could teach an online music appreciation class without a tool like this! It is really worthwhile for instructors to use a technology like MyMusicLab, especially if they have non-music majors, because it can be really difficult for students to understand the concepts without all of this help and support.

I am really pleased with how MyMusicLab is working. My online students are especially involved in working on MyMusicLab and discussing music. My students tell me that they have learned so much and they are going to miss working on MyMusicLab every day!

Because I have never taught a music appreciation class without using MyMusicLab, I do not have any before and after stories, but I know it has made my life easier. This was a new class for me, and I relied heavily on what was written by the authors of MyMusicLab and *Listen to This*. It has made it very easy to transition to teaching the course.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyMusicLab

An interview with
Jonathan Drake, DMA
Director of Choral Studies
Schoolcraft College
Livonia, MI



Course Information

I use MyMusicLab to teach two face-to-face sections of music appreciation each semester, with about 30 students per section. We use the Bonds textbook, *Listen to This*. We are a community college campus and have a variety of students ranging from new college students to second-career students taking this course. Music appreciation is a required humanities/general studies, three-credit-hour course.

This is a typical music appreciation course where students learn about the elements of music and how to listen to the elements through studying major works and composers from different historical periods. Students learn how to critically listen, write, and talk about music. It is my goal that, by the end of the course, students will have developed both an aesthetic and a greater appreciation of music.

I focus on classical music of western civilization because we also offer courses devoted to American popular music and to music of the American theater in our department. I stress the listening portion of music appreciation, emphasizing the key concepts, terms, and composers of individual musical pieces. I focus on the cultural aspects of each historical period, rather than making the course into a music history survey focusing on the detailed development of genre, style, and thought of each historical period.

Assessment

The final grade is comprised of six to seven exams (worth about 12.5% each)—usually one exam for every historical period covered. Tests focus on listening and the musical aspects of a unit. I also assign a written listening project and a concert attendance paper—each is worth about 6.25%. The written listening project is based on music that the student already knows and enjoys and is meant as a practice assignment before they attend a formal classical concert (orchestral, choral, wind ensemble, opera or ballet) and write a paper.

If I do give quizzes, they focus on the cultural and historical background material that is presented at the beginning of every unit. For example, at the beginning of the classical period, I might give a quiz asking, “What are the common aspects of art, music, philosophy, and religion at this time and what are some of the words we use to describe these aspects?” In my quizzes, I also assess students on the cultural and technological information presented at the beginning of each unit.

Implementation

I follow the lesson plan as laid out in “The Study Plan” in the *Listen to This* textbook. I start with the first assignment entitled “Listen to This First”. Students do their first listening, after which they go back and read the chapter. I have students use the website resources in MyMusicLab and the eText allows students to link directly to related resources. Students can re-read the chapter as many times as needed and then complete the end-of-chapter “Listening Guide”. After students complete their preliminary listening and reading, I give an in-class lecture for each chapter.

Depending on how much material there is for a chapter, I will often assign MyMusicLab video documentaries (such as “Opera in the 18th Century”) outside of class. These videos provide students a preview of the cultural and historical backdrop that supports the piece of music. I also assign other MyMusicLab multimedia resources—the “Explore More”, “A Closer Look”, “Inside the Orchestra”, “Elements Tutorial”, and “Animation Notation” activities—outside of class or present these activities inside of class depending on the difficulty of the chapter. In addition, I use questions from MyMusicLab tests from “Instructor’s Resources” in my class lectures and incorporate them into my own exams.

I use the PowerPoints found in “Instructor’s Resources” on MyMusicLab as lecture outlines for students and for test reviews. I have them posted on Blackboard ahead of time so that students can print them out and fill them in with notes while I am lecturing. It works well as an outline and also keeps me on target. I later post the same PowerPoint on Blackboard but this time with certain notes listed in the slide for test review outside of class. I do not assign the Pre-Tests or Post-Tests at this time, but I do recommend that students use them.

MyMusicLab

Benefits

I chose to use MyMusicLab because it helps students develop listening skills to recognize the elements in each historical period of classical music. I like the fact that MyMusicLab is very interactive. It also has excellent biographies, maps, and FAQs. I like the timeline and the corresponding “Closer Looks” and other multimedia materials such as “The Orchestra.”

My students are engaged by the visual aspect of the text and they like how the materials in each chapter are linked through the eText on MyMusicLab. They like the accessibility of all the resources—the fact that they can access MyMusicLab on their smart phones, tablets, and computers.

I like all the extra material in MyMusicLab—the supporting visual material, the glossary, and Pre- and Post-Tests which the students can do on their own. I particularly like the way the textbook is laid out. It is focused on listening, and students are continually building on listening concepts and terms throughout the textbook.

I also like how in the first 15 pages—the elements of music—we have a playback of the elements of music (using *Star-Spangled Banner*), which is the focus of what we are trying to teach using MyMusicLab. If you are an instructor who does not play the keyboard, the playback is available on the website. The series of *Star-Spangled Banner* music examples in the first 15 pages allows students to review regardless of their keyboard skills.

I appreciate that there is enough music on MyMusicLab to pick and choose what music I want to use to teach particular concepts and elements for each historical period. Some texts force instructors to do this developmentally through the historical periods much like a music history or music literature course. *Listen to This* and MyMusicLab allow me to tailor the course to what I want to teach and give me the flexibility to design my own course.

Conclusion

MyMusicLab is an excellent tool, and does such a good job of presenting the material with a variety of electronic resources which appeals to students and enhances their learning. Instructors have the flexibility to pick and choose the material on which they might want to focus.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyMusicLab

An interview with
Dennis de Jong
Music Program Coordinator
Johnston Community College
Smithfield, NC



Course Information

We use MyMusicLab for our Music Appreciation course (three credit hours). The majority of the students take Music Appreciation as a general humanities credit and a handful of students take it as a requisite for a Music degree. Right now, we offer two to three online sections and three to four traditional sections per semester, with 25 students per section. In our face-to-face classes, the text we use is Bonds, *Listen to This*.

One of the greatest challenges facing Music Appreciation courses and accompanying texts revolves around instructors choosing widely different objectives for the class. On one hand, music appreciation is a course set within an historical framework, and yet on the other hand, it demands a contemporary context in order to deal with mass media associations and inferences to societal trends and pop culture. Ultimately, I focus on developing better listening techniques and aural awareness. If students can improve their listening skills, they can continue to inform themselves for years to come.

As the only full-time music instructor at our community college, I have carefully reviewed and assessed a variety of potential texts which might best serve our faculty and students. *Listen to This* with MyMusicLab really made an impact. In using it for one semester, we've determined it to be everything we were looking for in a resource package for students. The combination of the text and technology enables us to provide both classroom teaching flexibility and consistent study modules for students' efforts out of class.

Assessment

A lot of my students are studying music for the first time, and, as a result, a lot of my course is completion-based. In trying to foster a large, sweeping understanding of music and listening skills, about 50% of the course is weighted in MyMusicLab. This includes MyMusicLab Post-Tests and chapter tests. In addition, journal assignments and concert reviews provide an opportunity for enhancing writing skills.

Implementation

The greatest advantage that I find with using the Bonds text and MyMusicLab is that it satisfies the constant challenge in teaching this course. Many of my students are less familiar with music and struggle with less than ideal habits for independent self-study. Before using Bonds and MyMusicLab, we would have good class sessions, but students failed to prepare or advance themselves between classes. It was difficult for me to feel like the students were engaging themselves outside of class time and it was hard to get them into the text. I felt like all of the information they were getting had to come from me and, as a result, I wasted the majority of my class time repeating informational data directly from the text.

Now that I use *Listen to This* with MyMusicLab, things have really changed. Every chapter has a self-study guide with Pre- and Post-Tests and additional resources students can use. I assign Post-Tests in MyMusicLab for every chapter in the syllabus as homework. I also assign MyMusicLab's online exams, using them as anchors for each historical time period we cover. Finally, I assign a semester-long journal assignment where students keep journals on independent listening assignments and specific examples from *Listen to This*. This is a great way to get students to incorporate writing skills into what they are learning, rather than having to assign a research paper. Using MyMusicLab gives me confidence to know that students are spending the time with the material that is necessary for them to make the most of this course.

I don't use every chapter in the text, but I choose the chapters that are most relevant for our class. That's another great thing about this text—you can pick and choose. You don't have to cover every page for fear of leaving something out because there is overlap and repetition between chapters.

Benefits

What I enjoy most about using MyMusicLab is that it frees up our class time. Time in a Music Appreciation class is very limited. With the bulk of material now being covered outside of class as homework, I feel emancipated to spend class time on more interesting things! We can utilize the video and multimedia resources in MyMusicLab or take time to explore operas or symphonies in full-length detail. There is now time in class for more engaging classroom discussions that can

MyMusicLab

potentially stray in any direction. In class, it's important to put the material students are studying into some kind of meaningful context—connecting the dots in practical ways.

In this first semester of using *Listen to This* and MyMusicLab, I could hear a noticeable difference in students' fluency of musical language. They were able to incorporate some of the specific terminology and jargon in conversations about music more readily and more easily than I had noticed when other texts were used.

Another benefit in using *Listen to This* is its multi-layered approach. MyMusicLab has something for every student. A young person who doesn't have a lot of experience with music can get something from it, and a more advanced student can get much more out of the same text and materials. It's easy for a beginner, but it's also applicable to the advanced student and anyone in between.

I also like the inclusion of "Global Connections." For example, in the Middle Ages, you're not only listening to plainchant and organum, but also simultaneously engaging with similar concepts found in an Eagle Dance of the San Ildefonso Indians of New Mexico. That's really beneficial in a text like this—there's always a cross connection to be made. I also like it when breakout boxes provide supporting perspectives on something more contemporary. When the morality play of Hildegard von Bingen is discussed, you're prompted to make connections to scenes from *The Empire Strikes Back* and the *Star Wars* trilogy. These are important and meaningful ways that the text serves to connect with the students.

Conclusion

I am completely sold on using MyMusicLab with the Bonds text. MyMusicLab can be a little overwhelming in the beginning, but it only takes a few chapters before students can clearly manipulate the online tools. As an instructor, I am always looking for opportunities that will allow me to deliver more meaningful content to my students. There is so much to be found in MyMusicLab, and though I haven't gotten to all of it, I am excited to keep exploring!

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyAnthroLab

An interview with
Professor Kristin Dowell
University of Oklahoma
Norman, OK



Course Information

I use MyAnthroLab in the course ANTH 2203: Peoples of the World, a large Intro to Cultural Anthropology course that fulfills a general education requirement in non-Western cultures. This three-credit course is taught as a traditional lecture class, capped at 75 students. A diverse group of students takes this course—both Anthropology majors and non-majors, primarily freshmen and sophomores.

The main theme of this course is cultural relativism. I want students to develop an appreciation for cultural diversity—to look at the world differently and to think of the ways in which categories like gender, family, and race are socially constructed rather than givens in the world. Every lesson and lecture is designed to prompt students to think about understanding cultural practices in context, to think about these categories as social constructs, and to look at their own cultural worlds in new ways.

Assessment

Two exams count for 33% of the final grade. A final exam counts for 20% of the final grade.

For homework, students must answer a weekly essay question on MyAnthroLab, related to the chapter we are working on. These are submitted online and count for 16% of the final grade.

I assign one mini-ethnography paper towards the end of the semester. Students can perform an observation about behavior in a public space on campus (fraternity party, dorms, cafeteria), or visit a toy store to analyze and observe how gender roles are socialized through toys. This is worth 14% of the final grade. The textbook has several chapters on kinship, family, and gender, so by the time they are doing this assignment, they have already answered an essay question on MyAnthroLab about how gender is a social construct. This assignment prompts students to apply that idea, and to think about it ethnographically through their observations.

Fall, 2010 was the first time I used MyAnthroLab. Because I had really cut back on the amount of reading I was assigning, I wanted to include participation in MyAnthroLab as part of the final grade. I assessed the extent to which students logged on and utilized all of the assessments and additional resources in MyAnthroLab. I wanted to reward the students who were using MyAnthroLab extensively and simultaneously penalize the students who were not engaging with it, as I would a student who comes to class but never participates in class discussion. In fall, 2010, I counted participation in class discussion and use of MyAnthroLab as 17% of the final grade.

Implementation

I chose to use MyAnthroLab, first, because I was really impressed with Barbara Miller's textbook *Cultural Anthropology in a Globalizing World*. I like that the Miller textbook emphasizes globalization and I like its approach to key topics such as family, kinship, and religion.

When I saw MyAnthroLab with the textbook, it caught my attention. I am a visual anthropologist, as well as a visual learner, and I know students respond well to multimedia. I want to get students interested in thinking about the world differently. Explaining the concepts of cultural relativism and appreciation of cultural diversity through multimedia seems to be more effective than assigning 300 pages of an ethnography that only a handful of them will read. I see MyAnthroLab as another set of readings or resources for the students.

Benefits

As a professor, I am always striving to find ways to engage with current topics in anthropology, and to bring anthropological concepts to life for students through video clips, news stories, photo slideshows, and radio pieces. Theoretical concepts in anthropology can be abstract, but a short video clip or radio story from MyAnthroLab can really illustrate these theoretical issues and bring them to life for the students.

Success Stories: Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyAnthroLab

MyAnthroLab is an incredible resource, both for students and faculty members. There are images, maps, radio stories, and short videos for every chapter. MyAnthroLab has saved me class prep time by providing a multimedia library organized by chapter and theme. I especially love all the NPR stories. You can very easily find a story to fit to a particular class topic.

At the time of the first exam this past semester, a lot of the students had not yet started using MyAnthroLab. The average score on the first exam was 72%. I had been using the test bank straight from MyAnthroLab and told my class I was disappointed with their grades. After I encouraged my students to start using MyAnthroLab to prepare for their tests, the average score on their second exam went up to 84%! Students were able to see a real benefit in terms of their performance in the class, and for the rest of the semester, they were actively using MyAnthroLab. MyAnthroLab provides good study tools for the students, particularly the flashcards and the ability to take all of the different exams on each chapter. This is really valuable, because it relieves a lot of the anxiety that students have around taking exams. Because students use MyAnthroLab to study, they know what to expect on their tests.

At some point, some of our department's classes will be taught online. I would definitely be more comfortable teaching an online class with a resource like MyAnthroLab.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

An interview with
Instructor Tom Proietti
Monroe Community College
Rochester, NY



MyCommunicationLab

Course Information

I have used MyCommunicationLab since spring 2009 in my Communication 101: Introduction to Mass Media course. I teach about eight sections a year, both traditional and online. Our text is Vivian, *The Media of Mass Communication*. This course is required for communication majors, but we have many liberal arts students enrolled as well.

Assessment

MyCommunicationLab's Pre-Test, chapter exam, and Post-Test count a maximum of 10% toward the final grade. Students must complete all the work and average at least a 70%. If a student averages 90% or above, it affects his/her grade positively, and if s/he gets below a 70%, s/he fails the course. This policy encourages students to go back and fix their mistakes.

Implementation

MyCommunicationLab is a motivational tool that I use to get students to read the text. Before students read a chapter, they must take the Pre-Test. After reading the chapter, they take the chapter exam and then the Post-Test. I love these three features, especially the Pre-Test and Post-Test because they brilliantly assess what we are doing. I am not a fan of quizzes and tests, but by assigning them in MyCommunicationLab, my students get the solid foundation they need to participate fully in class discussions and assignments. I give a lot of assignments that ask students to think about things as if they worked in the industry. For example, one assignment is for students to pretend they are the vice president of development for Facebook; they must come up with a SWOT analysis and five proposals for ways that Facebook could merge with other companies, make more money, and be a smarter company.

I also show videos and features from MyCommunicationLab in class, and I recommend that students check things out on MyCommunicationLab on their own time.

Benefits

One of the main benefit of using MyCommunicationLab is that I do not have to give in-class quizzes which take up precious class time. If students miss class, they do not have to worry about making up work because the quizzes/tests are their responsibility outside of class. Another convenience of using MyCommunicationLab is the grades are all listed in the online Gradebook. This is very handy for me as the instructor, and it is also very handy for my students because they can know where they stand. I also think assigning quizzes and tests in MyCommunicationLab forces them to do the reading. Even if the reading is done at a cursory level, it is still beneficial.

One of main benefits for students is the program is asynchronous—they can do it when they want to. They can even work ahead if they want. MyCommunicationLab gives students instant feedback, so they know whether they understand the material or not. It makes them better prepared for class, so, for example, when we are ready to discuss newspapers, I do not have to go back and recreate the history of newspapers step-by-step. I do not like using PowerPoint, so what I tend to do is create in-class scenarios like “newspapers are in trouble.” I break my students into groups and have them come up with a technological and promotional plan. If students do not have any sense of the history of newspapers, it shows really quickly.

Conclusion

By assigning the Pre-Test, chapter exam, and Post-Test, students do their reading, and as a result, I think MyCommunicationLab helps to make better students.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

An interview with
Jeff McQuarrie, Instructor
Lower Columbia College, WA
Centralia College, WA



MyCommunicationLab

Course Information

I teach one face-to-face section of Speech Communication each semester using MyCommunicationLab. I typically have about 30 students per section. We use DeVito, *Essentials of Human Communication*. I will also be teaching Introduction to Mass Media in January 2012 with MyCommunicationLab. Every course at our college is web-enhanced with the ANGEL learning management system.

The first course objective is for students learn how to work in virtual groups. The globe is shrinking, technology brings us closer to people from other cultures, and we need to learn how to communicate with them. The second learning objective is for students to overcome fear and anxiety of speaking in public. And, the third learning objective is for students to understand different communication styles and how to adjust communication styles.

Assessment

MyCommunicationLab quick-review quizzes count for 10% of the overall grade, but I am considering increasing this to 20%. Although MyCommunicationLab is directly worth 10% of the grade, this is not indicative of how much we use MyCommunicationLab in the course. It's a big part of the class.

Implementation

MyCommunicationLab is connected to almost everything we do. In addition to the weekly quick-review quizzes in MyCommunicationLab, there are five or six other ways that MyCommunicationLab is tied into the course.

I put students into groups of five and each group teaches class for at least one day during the quarter. I call it "IFAD"—"Instructor for a Day." When they teach class, they are required to use electronic visual aids. Students download the graphics from the DeVito text from MyCommunicationLab, put them up on the projector, and teach the class. If they were trying to devise their own visual aids, it would take forever. This is worth 10% of the grade.

MyCommunicationLab is also used when students do a team presentation as a mock public relations firm responding to a certain scenario. This quarter, each firm has to make a presentation in which they resurrect Charlie Sheen's train-wreck career. Students use MyCommunicationLab's PowerPoints, graphics, and other resources to state their case. We have a fellow instructor dress up like Charlie Sheen and he decides which group wins. This counts for another 10% of the final grade.

The midterm and final have questions that have been taken from MyCommunicationLab. The midterm and final are each worth 20% of the overall grade.

When I assign speeches, I don't have students stand up in front of a podium like a tree—I make them walk around the class when they talk, as in a professional business setting. During their speech, they must include an electronic visual presentation with their verbal presentation. Many students pull graphics and PowerPoints from MyCommunicationLab.

When I start adding up all these factors, MyCommunicationLab has a hand in 60–70% of the final grade.

Benefits

The main reason I like MyCommunicationLab is our school is on a quarter system and quarters go quickly. We have a big textbook to cover in 10 weeks and we are told we should try to cover the entire textbook in that time. The only way to do that is to not cover every single section in each chapter. The beauty of MyCommunicationLab is it has quick-review quizzes that are broken down by section. So when I cherry-pick certain parts of the chapter, all I have to do is assign the quizzes from those specific sections. Students take the quick quizzes and the results are automatically graded. It makes an instructor's job so much easier. I don't have to write quizzes, I don't have to grade anything—this is a huge benefit. MyCommunicationLab does the work for me.

MyCommunicationLab

I am completing my degree from Northeastern University, an innovative-thinking school, and one of the things they stress is that young people don't learn the way we learn. They are super interactive, they were born with a mouse in their hands, and they get really de-motivated by a "talking head" lecturer.

I am such a big fan of MyCommunicationLab because it teaches students in the way they like to get their information when they are not on campus. What's the first thing they do they do when they get home? They grab their iPod or iPhone. It makes sense that if that's how they live their lives, they probably prefer to learn that way too. My students really enjoy using MyCommunicationLab.

Conclusion

My advice to new instructor-users of MyCommunicationLab: don't try to use it on the fly. It will be tough and you will lose credibility with the students. Play around with it at least a couple weeks before the semester starts. Take the tests and quizzes and quick reviews yourself. Build your lectures using some of the PowerPoints from MyCommunicationLab.

I am grateful to have this resource—it's huge for me. I am shocked when instructors resist it and don't take advantage of it.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MySpeechLab

An interview with
Terri Moore, Instructor
Brevard Community College
Cocoa, FL



Course Information

I teach Fundamentals of Speech Communication (three credit hours). This is an introductory course in oral communication which concentrates on improving speaking and listening both for individual and group activities. It includes interpersonal, intercultural, small-group, and public speaking. This class is a statewide-requirement for any student that graduates with an Associate of Arts or technical degree. I teach this course in three formats: hybrid, lab, and online. I no longer teach strictly traditional courses; all courses have an online component. We are using a custom version of Pearson's text *Public Speaking Handbook*, by Beebe and Beebe, and a customized version of MySpeechLab, engineered to work with our learning management system, ANGEL. The Beebe book presents well with online components and we liked that Pearson put the purchasing options and decision-making in the students' hands at a reasonable cost. The text's spiral notebook format offered our students a smaller, easy-to-use book that was more portable and affordable, as they were requesting.

Assessment

Student performance is assessed by a number of factors: participation (homework and attendance), speeches (giving speeches, presentations, and a commemorative written speech), reflective discussion forums, and two tests. MySpeechLab assignments count for about 30% of the final grade.

Implementation

MySpeechLab is a sandbox where instructors can pick and choose the tools and features they want to incorporate into the course. I use a tremendous amount of the videos—the classic videos as well as the student videos—for evaluations and for discussion forums. I also use the Watch and Explore sections to get students to look at different questions and explore and answer them. MediaShare is 100% required for my online students. Prior to this, our online teachers were having speeches delivered by students in person or via snail mail, which was inconvenient and an inefficient use of time and energy! Students in my online courses must submit three speeches via MediaShare and all speeches are visible to students online. I have not yet explored peer-to-peer feedback on MySpeechLab, but that will definitely be a component of my use in the future.

Benefits

As an instructor, the most important question I ask myself is, "Are my students learning?" And I have to say, I see my students learning so much better using online components. My students are giving me much better first speeches and they are better understanding speech concepts. Teaching a hybrid course, I cannot conceivably go over all the information that students need in class, so I tell them from the beginning that they must teach themselves. When students are absolutely expected to be independent learners, they actually become independent learners.

Conclusion

I will definitely continue to use MySpeechLab and its many wonderful tools. As the instructor, my challenge is to get to the point that I am savvy enough to teach my students how to use the tools on MySpeechLab as well. My students come from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds and many are very resistant to technology. Some have never touched a computer. If we are into the fifth week of class and some of my students still haven't logged in to MySpeechLab, I will go online and will re-open things for them. I am compassionate but firm about the necessity of using the technology. My objective is to get them to use online components so that they will keep using them in school. Looking at the trends in the country, community college is where the vast majority of students are going for their first two years. MySpeechLab allows me to nurture my students into feeling comfortable with the kinds of tools they're going to have to use at a four-year college. I tell my students, "This is an absolute: by the time you've finished my class, not only will you have accomplished your communication goals, but you will also be an online learner."

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MySpeechLab

An interview with
Professor Meredith Frank
LaSalle University
Philadelphia, PA



Course Information

Fourteen sections of Presentation Skills (three credit hours) are offered this semester. It is a traditional-format course that is required for all undergraduates except Education and Nursing majors. We use the Pearson text, *Presentations in Everyday Life* by Engleberg and Daly and MySpeechLab. The course goals are to be able to present and organize informative, persuasive and special-occasion speeches and also to be able to view and critique speeches.

Assessment

Speeches make up 60% of the final grade and papers, quizzes, exams make up 40% of the final grade. MySpeechLab counts for about 20–30% of the final grade.

Implementation

La Salle University's mission is to meet students where they are, and where they are has to do a lot with technology. I decided to use an online textbook because I knew this was where education was headed. I oversee all the Presentation Skills courses at our school and order the textbooks for all sections. A couple weeks before the semester starts, I email all our students to tell them that they are required to have online access to MySpeechLab. I make a point of introducing MySpeechLab to students from day one. On the first day of class, I visit each Presentation Skills section and give a basic tutorial to show students how to use the technology. I also give a MySpeechLab assignment on the first day of class to get the ball rolling. Some instructors are hesitant to use the technology, so it takes a firm hand to guide both instructors and students through the process.

We consistently implement MySpeechLab across all sections of Presentation Skills. Students are required to take online quizzes, watch speeches, and answer open-ended questions. With all my speech assignments, I require students to have at least one source from MySearchLab. Students must also cite the eText in all their papers.

The sample speeches are great! If I have an extra ten minutes in class, I will usually show a speech. I find that rather than just reading the words of a speech, it's great for students to actually see speeches being given. The speeches aren't all perfect, so it's helpful for students to see speeches that are delivered well and speeches that are not. This semester I have incorporated MySpeechLab videos with in-class quizzes. For example, I had students watch a speech that used Monroe's Motivated Sequence. When I gave them a quiz on this topic, I had them remember and reference that particular speech in order to answer the questions.

Benefits

MySpeechLab gives me a lot more time for interactive, hands-on learning in the classroom. Instead of lecturing, I can spend class time doing activities and showing videos. Because the textbook basically reads itself—literally when the audio chapter reviews are activated—it helps students learn independently outside of class time.

Conclusion

The students who use MySpeechLab to its fullest capacity love it, think it's great, and perform well in the course. I've found that students who are not using the MySpeechLab resources as often do not do as well in the class. Students do come to class better prepared, but I would say this has more to do with the fact that MySpeechLab helps students work more independently, which allows me to use class time more effectively.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MySpeechLab

An interview with
Keri Keckley, Instructor
Crowder College
Neosho, MO



Course Information

I typically teach eight sections of Speech 101 per semester (three credits). We use Beebe and Beebe's *Public Speaking Handbook*. The class size is about 17 students per section. This is a required course to graduate with an associate's degree from our school.

The main course objective is for students to become more professional, polished public speakers so that they may perform in work- or civic-related public speaking situations. In this course, students learn how to organize their thoughts in a logical manner and develop the self-confidence to believe in themselves as public speakers. Another important objective is for students to be able to identify what is credible research and how and where to access these sources.

I have used MySpeechLab for about two years. I am the lead instructor, and I chose to use MySpeechLab primarily because of the MediaShare application. I was looking for a safe place for students to upload their speeches that was user-friendly and did not have public access. YouTube was my only source prior to this and using this public site made me feel that I was leaving my students vulnerable. With MediaShare, I can critique each student's speech privately and then I can open up the video so the class can view it and can critique each speech publicly.

The second reason I chose the Beebe and Beebe text is because it has a focus on ethics, and our college prefers that each course includes a built-in ethics component.

Assessment

Online class: MySpeechLab online activities/exercises, a discussion board based on MySpeechLab videos, and six speeches submitted via MediaShare account for 75% of the final grade.

Hybrid class: MySpeechLab accounts for 50% of the final grade.

Traditional class: MySpeechLab does not count toward the final grade.

Implementation

I teach traditional, online, and hybrid sections of Speech 101, and the implementation of MySpeechLab varies to different degrees in each course format.

For our traditional classroom, I use MySpeechLab primarily as my instructor resource in the classroom. I show students sample speeches, diagrams, and PowerPoints.

In the hybrid and online classroom, MySpeechLab is required. With the hybrid class, most assignments are completed online because I only meet with students in person for a short amount of time. I have one hybrid class that is a 16-week course taught in eight weeks. It meets three hours a week, but students have to do three hours of work on their own time outside of class. I teach another 16-week hybrid class that meets six times during the semester so students can give their speeches to each other. For this hybrid class, the only thing I do not use on MySpeechLab is MediaShare. This hybrid class is better suited for people that do not own a video camera or do not feel comfortable gathering their own audiences.

For my hybrid and online courses, I assign exercises in MySpeechLab and have students view the MySpeechLab videos on their own time. I also assign discussion board questions related to MySpeechLab activities and students post their responses online.

I have taught Speech 101 long enough to be familiar with all the loopholes that students try to find. Many students who are highly apprehensive about public speaking gravitate towards taking the online course, because they think they will not have to give speeches in front of people. I want there to be the same level of apprehension for an online classroom as there is for a traditional classroom. One of the key requirements I build in is that students must give their speeches in front of an audience. I define an audience as five living, breathing adult human beings. Later in the semester, I require an audience of 10 people. I have had people put their dogs on the couch, their grandchildren, even stick people! I will not accept the speech

MySpeechLab

unless the audience is in place. This is an important part of doing this course correctly online. It also has to be one continuous shot. Students must pan the audience before and after their speech. I also require that online students own a digital video camera—a webcam will not suffice. I want students to give their speech in a professional setting and I want them to have that “butterfly” feeling in their belly to the same degree as students giving their speech in a traditional class. The perceived convenience of an online course actually becomes a lot harder, so for some people, the hybrid course is a better choice.

Benefits

MySpeechLab helps students succeed because every resource they need is right there in one easy-to-access intuitive tool. Once they are in and know their way around, it is great for them! There is so much there that if they want to explore more, they could spend hours and hours. It is so easy for them to manipulate and find what they are looking for and I can clearly direct them where to go. For their benefit, MediaShare is great because it accepts many file types and it is very user-friendly. Even if a student is not tech-savvy, s/he can still take this class online.

I know my students are protected, because when they upload their speeches in MediaShare, their speeches are safe. As the instructor, MediaShare gives me a controlled environment, and I am the boss of it. If necessary, I have the ability to delete inappropriate comments. (This rarely happens.) Also, I do not have to go searching for examples of poorly-created speeches, great speeches, or diagrams. There is a wealth of information available on MySpeechLab. I never run short of material to use in the course. I could have a 32-week class if I wanted!

One of my favorite features of MySpeechLab is the speech examples. Every time I have an assignment, I show students what they *should* do and what they *should not* do. This helps them know what I am, and what I am not, looking for and why.

As mentioned before, I can use MySpeechLab to different degrees in all three course formats. Teaching eight sections of speech, it is easy to get confused about where I am and where I am going. MySpeechLab helps me stay organized and on-task. At the beginning of the semester, along with the syllabus, I post a “what we will be covering in class” document on MySpeechLab that helps me know exactly what I am going to use and students can see exactly what they will be learning.

Conclusion

As the lead instructor, I give required MySpeechLab training to all of our new adjuncts and dual-credit instructors (I have 22 in total). I train them one-on-one, get them logged in, and show all the resources available to them. I care a lot about what is going on in each classroom. I taught as an adjunct for 10 years, and I understand how frustrating it is to be left on your own to come up with exercises and resources. My adjuncts get really excited when they see all that MySpeechLab has to offer.

My best advice to new instructors would be to login to MySpeechLab and investigate every nook and cranny. It will take a while, but it is a lot of fun! The instructor resources within MySpeechLab are phenomenal. There are rubrics for all different types of speeches and goals. You can take that format and personalize it to your own liking, but generally what is there is excellent. I love MySpeechLab!

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MySpeechLab

An interview with
Jessica Papajcik, Instructor
Stark State College
North Canton, OH



Course Information

I teach the course Effective Speaking (three credit hours) using the Pearson text *Principles of Public Speaking* by German and Gronbeck, and MySpeechLab. Traditional and online sections are offered. Effective Speaking is not a general education requirement, though many of our programs do require that students take this course or Interpersonal Communication.

There are five main course objectives in Effective Speaking: recognize and identify the components of an organized speech, demonstrate how to organize and present an effective and professional speech, analyze an audience, demonstrate good listening skills, and evaluate effective speaking based on criteria presented in the course.

We are a technical school. Most of our students are returning students who are coming back for either certificates or additional degrees, but we do also have traditional first-year students. Students come from a wide range of disciplines: health, engineering, business.

Assessment

Assessment differs in the online course and the traditional course and also differs by instructor. MySpeechLab counts for about 50% of the final grade in the online course and 25% of the final grade in the traditional course.

Implementation

MySpeechLab has really changed the way we conduct our course. It has expanded the options available to our instructors. Students in this day and age really require interactive multimedia as part of their core learning. Students are gaming and are online. MySpeechLab added a necessary interactive and multimedia component that had been lacking.

Most of our instructors are using the chapter quizzes and video quizzes extensively. The audio chapter reviews have also helped. Being able to hear those audio reviews really adds a different modality that students find helpful and we have many students with disabilities that find this feature particularly beneficial. MediaShare is another big feature that we use. I actually have some instructors in traditional courses who record all student speeches in the classroom, then upload them to MediaShare so students can review how they did in their speech. In our online classes, students must watch at least two of their peers' speeches on MediaShare and give constructive criticism. The use of MySearchLab is huge. Almost everyone uses this feature because it offers so many great tools for researching. The Multimedia Library is a lifesaver for me, especially in my online class, because there are so many Explore features with audio/visual interactivity. The Explore sections are phenomenal; students really like them.

Benefits

We urge our instructors to dive into using MySpeechLab because students respond really well to it. Every instructor has the freedom to pick and choose how they want to use MySpeechLab, but they must all incorporate it in some way. MySpeechLab training with our Pearson representative is offered every year for new and current adjuncts. We want to show our instructors how to navigate the site and how they can incorporate MySpeechLab into their classroom.

Conclusion

Most of the hesitation from instructors in using MySpeechLab comes from a lack of experience with technology, so urging them to use MySpeechLab is just the first step. The second step is supporting them with ongoing training, mentoring, and checking in with them often. Sometimes, as a third step, I validate MySpeechLab by talking about how I've incorporated it into my course, and what I've done that my students seem to really like. I show the Gradebook and tell my colleagues that using it will make their lives easier. Instead of grading quizzes by hand, the quizzes on MySpeechLab are all automatically graded online and they are specific to the textbook. I pull out a few different persuasive strategies—ease of use, student engagement—but offering support is the best way to encourage instructors' use.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyHistoryLab

An interview with
Dr. Nicholas Waddy
Alfred State College
Alfred, NY



Course Information

I use MyHistoryLab in History 1113: Western Civilization Since 1648 (3 credit hours). The class is a basic introduction to European history and why it matters. I find that I cannot assume any prior knowledge of European history in my students. I emphasize a lot of dialogue in the classroom and I show the occasional video, all in an attempt to sustain student interest. The student body demographic is very mixed.

For many students, this course is either a program or a general education requirement. I intended to teach this course as a hybrid class, but it was not permitted. What I did, therefore, was to turn Wednesday classes into something of a lab to assist students with the online part of the class.

I am writing a text for Pearson entitled *The Essential Guide to Western Civilization*. It has been available for a while in a preliminary version, and that is what I use in my course.

Assessment

The breakdown of the final grade is as follows: 20% from online exercises, 20% from participation, 20% from a paper, and 40% from two exams. MyHistoryLab counts for 20% of the final grade.

Implementation

I chose to use MyHistoryLab because it was packaged with the Kagan text which I used before I started to employ my own textbook. The initial logic was to use online exercises to create a hybrid class. To be frank, my main motivation was to reduce the number of days per week that I had to commute, but I also believed, and continue to believe, that it is important for students to gain experience with online learning. In addition, online exercises allow me to share material with students that I otherwise could not. I use some of the pre-packaged quizzes (mostly map quizzes) and then I design some of my own quizzes based on documents in MyHistoryLab.

Benefits

My favorite feature of MyHistoryLab is that once I set up the exercises the way I like, they run themselves, and the grades are computed automatically. This allows me to use all sorts of testing instruments that, if I had to grade them individually, would produce an avalanche of tedious work for me. In short, MyHistoryLab makes my job easier.

The obvious impact that the online exercises in MyHistoryLab have had is that since I devote one day per week to the online portion of the course, there are only two days during which I can bore my students with my long-winded analyses of European history. This is not all bad, though, because it is good to give them a break mid-week. I use fewer videos and movies, because there is no longer time for them.

What impact does MyHistoryLab have on my students' learning and success? This is an excellent question. It is hard to tell, frankly. I purposely do not make the online exercises very hard, so students tend to do well on them and this probably increases their chances of passing the course. Do they in fact learn anything from the online exercises? In some cases, I'm sure they do. Unfortunately, though, I have come to believe that some of my students simply don't believe that European history matters, so none of the information I share with them is likely to stick. Nevertheless, students like using MyHistoryLab. Their generation feels very comfortable with online learning, and I think they enjoy having a break from classroom instruction.

Conclusion

MyHistoryLab has added a new and innovative dimension to my course, while at the same time making my job easier. It's a win-win. My advice for instructors who are considering using MyHistoryLab is to go for it! Naturally, we all have doubts about online learning. But the fact is that our students live in a world where the ability to learn online will be crucial. You are doing them no favors if you refuse to dabble in new technologies. As always, students get out of a course what they put into it, but MyHistoryLab is an excellent way to deliver knowledge, and that is the bottom line.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyHistoryLab

An interview with
Professor Linda Smith
University of Alabama,
Birmingham
Birmingham, AL



Course Information

I use MyHistoryLab and the Pearson text *American Stories* by Brands et al in the course US History, 1865 to Present. This is a required course, taught traditionally and largely lecture based. I also use MyHistoryLab and the Pearson text *The West: A Narrative History* by Frankforter and Spellman in my Western Civilization class. Both classes have around 100 students. 50% are freshmen.

Assessment

The midterm and final each count for 35% of the final grade. Five MyHistoryLab assignments (quizzes and Pre- and Post-Tests) account for 30% of the final grade.

Implementation

My Pearson representative recommended MyHistoryLab to me, and I knew other faculty members at my school were also using it. I chose to use MyHistoryLab because it fits my students' desire for technology.

I use MyHistoryLab primarily for student homework. I assign the chapter Pre-Tests, Post-Tests and exams. I also sometimes use the videos. I show my students all of MyHistoryLab's documents and features at the beginning of the semester and encourage them to take advantage of its resources.

Benefits

MyHistoryLab is easy to use and I like how it automatically grades quizzes and tests. This is helpful with a large lecture class. The MyHistoryLab Gradebook's automatic grading has helped me enormously. My class enrollments have recently increased from 45 to 100 students, and grading 200 essays is not an option anymore. In addition to the quizzes and tests being automatically-graded, MyHistoryLab offers students additional help preparing for exams. Using MyHistoryLab, students receive grades throughout the course, rather than just for their midterm and final.

MyHistoryLab reinforces the material we cover in the classroom. I've found that MyHistoryLab also gives students a break from everyday lecture and serves as a wonderful aid to students whose primary learning method is something other than lecture. It also has helped students understand information from lectures they weren't able to attend.

Conclusion

Students love MyHistoryLab because it stimulates them and holds their attention through a variety of activities. They have options to choose what best meets their needs. Many will use MyHistoryLab to practice for the exams to better prepare them. There is also a lot of interesting material for those students who just want to learn—students who want to go above and beyond what is just done in the classroom.

I will definitely continue to use MyHistoryLab. It makes my life easier and my students love it because it fits their technology-savvy background.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyHistoryLab

An interview with
Professor Larry Pool
El Centro College
Dallas, TX



Course Information

I use MyHistoryLab in my online American History survey courses, History 1301 and 1302. I have been using Goldfield's text, *The American Journey*, since it first came out. My online classes are capped at 25, but they can go as high as 37, and they do every time they're offered.

We are an urban downtown campus and draw people from all over Dallas County. Demographics are roughly 1/3 African American, 1/3 Hispanic, and 1/3 Caucasian. The average student age is around 25. The online classes tend to attract non-traditional students who cannot come to campus, so they work from wherever they happen to be. I have had students take my classes from as far away as Tel Aviv, Israel, and Washington State. They are native Texans who have jobs that take them out of the country or out of the area, but they can still do all their work online.

Assessment

About 50% of the final grade comes from assigned MyHistoryLab activities and four chapter tests taken on MyHistoryLab. Comprehensive exams count for 25% of the grade. In addition to the textbook and technology, these courses feature additional reading and writing assignments. In History 1301, I assign *Huckleberry Finn*, a biography of Sam Houston, and a short novel called *Across Five Aprils*. In History 1302, I assign *The Jungle* by Sinclair, *1984* by Orwell, and Robert Kennedy's book on the Cuban Missile Crisis, *Thirteen Days*. I require written assessments on the supplemental books, which count for the last 25% of their grade. We want to emphasize what we call "writing across the curriculum." I like how MyHistoryLab's document quizzes are actually short essays, and I require students to submit written responses to those as well.

Implementation

There are two things that I want students to do when they take my class. Number one, I want them to learn the material. I want them to know more about history than what they did before they took the class. But secondly, I want them to enjoy the experience and to enjoy the subject matter. I want them to have their interest piqued. Far too often, students are bored. American History is a required class to get a degree from any state college in Texas. I understand that it's a requirement, but I want it to be an enjoyable experience for them.

How does MyHistoryLab help me achieve these goals? I assign a lot of MyHistoryLab material—documents, maps, video podcasts—and I allow students to select the assignments that they want to do—the ones that are most interesting to them. In reading the textbook, they find things that interest them. With MyHistoryLab, they can go and find out more about the subjects that they're interested in. Students like that option. Within limits, everyone is allowed to develop their own course, with their own interests. I don't assign the Pre- and Post-Tests on MyHistoryLab but I tell students about them. They have four chapter tests that they have to take on MyHistoryLab and the vast majority of students will use the Pre- and Post-Tests as preparation before they take those tests. As a result, students' test grades are much improved.

One important aspect of a history course is to introduce students to original sources. Traditionally, in the old days, you'd use a reader with lengthy, somewhat laborious documents. With MyHistoryLab, you have the same concept, except with relatively short excerpts online. Students are comfortable reading online and they can get the gist of what a document is about without it being so long that it bores them.

Benefits

Outside of the student benefits I've already explained, I like using the MyHistoryLab Gradebook to keep up with student grades. That helps me a lot.

Conclusion

One of the biggest reasons that I've stayed with Pearson is the support they provide. My Pearson technology specialist is fantastic to work with and really helped me set everything up. I really appreciate that. Any time I have a problem, I can contact my technology specialist and he helps me get things cleared up. I receive better tech support from Pearson than I do from my own campus!

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyHistoryLab

An interview with
Professor Joel Rhodes
Southeast Missouri State
University
Cape Girardeau, MO



Course Information

I use MyHistoryLab in US 107, the second half of our American history survey, which covers 1877 to the present (three credit hours). I teach one face-to-face section with 110 students every semester, mostly freshmen and sophomores. We use the Faragher textbook, *Out of Many*. This course fulfills a civilization course requirement at our college.

In this course, we want to introduce students to the character of American history and culture as a background to contemporary institutions and as a major force in world development. We try to foster some understanding of the basic people, facts, and chronology of American history. We seek to help students see how American history fits into the development of our culture within a global standpoint—how the rise of the United States, particularly in the twentieth century, has affected the rest of the planet. Finally, we want students to understand how politics, economics, and cultural changes impact one another.

Assessment

This is the first semester we are using MyHistoryLab. Due to expanding enrollment, our university made a decision to have larger sections of certain courses. One of our school's claims to fame is smaller class sizes, so when we decided to go to larger survey courses, the university wanted to try to keep some of the small-class feel as much as was applicable to large sections. As a result, we have begun a multi-stage process of course redesign that I have been entrusted to head. This was the genesis of why I started to use MyHistoryLab.

I have redesigned US 107 based on the objectives of the course, and around these objectives, I have constructed multiple student learning outcomes. I chose some applications from MyHistoryLab as a strategy to achieve the learning objectives and to assess each student learning outcome. We are still in the pilot phase. Beginning in fall of 2012, all US 107 sections will use MyHistoryLab consistently.

There are five elements of my course. An in-class midterm I created with essay and short-answer questions is worth 20%. The final exam, in the same format as the midterm, is worth 20%. Ten media assignments in MyHistoryLab are worth 20%. Six online forums, set up through MyHistoryLab, are worth 20%. I pose six questions over the course of the semester; students are responsible for one original post and one response. Finally, seven multiple choice quizzes are worth 20%. The way the course is broken down, the various components of MyHistoryLab will count for 60%.

I do have a graduate teaching assistant who does the majority of grading on MyHistoryLab. I created a rubric for her and she grades the media assignments and the online forums. MyHistoryLab automatically grades the quizzes.

Implementation

With MyHistoryLab, I use a weekly combination of online forums, media assignments, and quizzes. I assign a media assignment almost every week. It is something that supplements the lectures and discussions for the week, and, in some cases, it covers elements of a certain topic that I don't cover in class. For example, last week one of our major topics was Woodrow Wilson's presidency. I talk more about that in regard to the progressive movement, and less about World War I, so I use a media assignment—Wilson's Fourteen Points—to get students engaged and thinking about World War I in a way that I don't cover in class. MyHistoryLab has me covered in that regard.

I use multiple-choice questions from Faragher's test bank, but because the scope and sequence of my curriculum doesn't match up exactly, I develop my own quizzes by combining elements from Faragher's quizzes.

This spring, I plan to use a mastery format with seven randomized multiple-choice quizzes with 20 questions each. Students will be able to take the quizzes as many times as they want and their highest score will be counted. If they get less than the minimum score, they'll have to take the quiz again, but students will be able to take a quiz as many times as they want until they get a perfect score. In this regard, MyHistoryLab is like built-in extra credit.

Success Stories: Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyHistoryLab

Benefits

In my class of 110 students, MyHistoryLab has done a really good job of keeping students engaged, day in and day out. I think my students who are interested in more in-depth information and interaction are enjoying using MyHistoryLab.

I like the ability to use the media assignments to get students engaged with primary source documents, images, music, and interviews. I have been teaching for 21 years and I have never had the ability to comprehensively do that. I haven't had access to that material, so to be able to access it in a usable fashion is pretty awesome!

Conclusion

We are just starting to use MyHistoryLab this semester and we are learning more every day, so the benefits haven't become fully manifest yet, but so far, so good. We will have an exit survey as part of the redesign and we are curious to see what impact the history redesign will have on the attitudes of students. I'd like to think that students will find it more fulfilling than taking this course with just a textbook.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyHistoryLab

An interview with
Professor David Goldfield
University of North Carolina,
Charlotte
Charlotte, NC



Course Information

I use MyHistoryLab in a one-semester liberal studies U.S. history survey course. This three-credit course is taught face to face, and is required of all freshmen. I have about 125 students per semester. The purpose of the course is to introduce students to the major issues of American history in an interdisciplinary format, using a textbook as well as primary sources. I use the combined volume of the brief edition of my text, *The American Journey*, and I also have students read the *Christian Science Monitor* newspaper online.

Assessment

The breakdown of the final grade is as follows: MyHistoryLab assignments are worth 55%, the midterm is worth 15%, the final is worth 15%, and the *Christian Science Monitor* newspaper assignments are worth 15%.

It is a very conscious decision on my part not to weight the final grade heavily on the midterm and final exams. Sometimes students have bad days, and I think it is unfair to place such a large value on one exam. By assigning work in MyHistoryLab throughout the semester, I have a gauge on what students are learning, and students have a gauge of their understanding of the material.

Implementation

I assign the Pre-Test and Post-Test for each chapter for the benefit of my students. These are not graded, but they are required as a checkmark. Through experience, I have found that students tend to do better on the chapter exam if they take both the Pre-Test and the Post-Test.

For my benefit, students are required to take the chapter exam, which is graded. This process accomplishes several things. First of all, it addresses one of the most common complaints I hear from instructors who teach U.S. history survey courses: “Students don’t read the textbook.” If you gear the assignments to MyHistoryLab, students are going to have to read the textbook in order to do well on the assignments. Secondly, because students of today grew up in front of computers, they have a comfort level with doing things online, as opposed to sitting in a room and taking exams. My students use the textbook, but they also like having access to the eText, particularly when they are taking the chapter exam.

I divide the course into several chronological sections, and give assignments on MyHistoryLab for each part. I use one chapter for a particular assignment. For example, on my segment on the urban industrial nation, students are required to take the chapter 18 exam, and to complete the documents assignments from chapter 18, but are required to complete the map quiz and the image analysis from chapter 21.

Some other examples of typical assignments I utilize include a map assignment where students must interpret a document and a video assignment where, for example, students watch a video on the atomic bomb at Hiroshima.

Benefits

The great thing about MyHistoryLab is that it allows me to assess my students frequently without having the burden of grading 125 papers. Because I have made MyHistoryLab such an integral part of the final grade, it allows me to see student progress throughout the course of the semester. It serves as a check for me to see if I am getting across to my students, and it provides a check for my students to see if they are reading the textbook and understanding the material. Conveniently, the results from the MyHistoryLab assignments show up immediately in the Gradebook that MyHistoryLab provides. If you have a large number of students and you do not use MyHistoryLab, you can’t assess their progress frequently unless you want to do a lot of grading.

Because MyHistoryLab is so diverse and includes so many resources, I can actually teach skills of analysis and synthesis, which are essential in today’s job market. People might say that students are not learning any skills in a history course. But, with MyHistoryLab, you are definitely teaching students the importance of analysis and synthesis, and also the importance of transferring and translating what students are reading into a knowledgeable format—the key points.

MyHistoryLab

Conclusion

From my point of view, one of the best things about MyHistoryLab is that it engages the students with a wide variety of activities. Attention spans are short these days and MyHistoryLab helps students develop the skills of analysis and synthesis.

Another great thing about MyHistoryLab is that its assessment enables me to judge the quality of my own teaching, as well as understand students' progress and knowledge in the course. Am I saying things that are going over their heads? Or am I being too simple? Am I stressing the things that they need to know to understand the material a little better? It is a good check on me as well as on the students.

Finally, MyHistoryLab is an enormous timesaver for instructors. MyHistoryLab saves me time on assessment. If I did not have MyHistoryLab, there would be no way to monitor my students' progress over the course of a term as accurately as I can now. Additionally, in the current economic climate, in which instructors are being asked to do more things with less, time is money, and MyHistoryLab saves me a tremendous amount of time. Before MyHistoryLab, I used to run all over the place collecting documents, maps, and images. With MyHistoryLab, I have instant access to a wealth of multimedia at my fingertips.

Delaware Technical and Community College Wilmington, Delaware

INSTRUCTOR Professor Sandra C. Brisiel

COURSES POL 111 Politics (American Government)

LEVEL Introductory

TEXTS Living Democracy Brief National Edition, 2/e, by Shea, et al. with MyPoliSciLab

TERMS COVERED Summer and Fall 2010

CONTRIBUTION OF MYPOLISCI LAB TO FINAL GRADE 80%

TYPES OF DATA REPORTED Improvement in final course grades; improvement in retention

COURSE STRUCTURE Online and traditional

STUDENTS ENTERING PROFESSOR SANDRA BRISIEL'S POLITICS COURSE are a diverse group. Some arrive directly from high school while others have significant workforce experience and are launching a new career or augmenting professional credentials. The majority of Brisiel's students, however, have in common a sense of being intimidated by politics because they don't understand American history and politics.

With enrollments at Delaware Technical and Community College increasing and demand growing for more online courses, Professor Brisiel sought a curriculum platform that would:

- Engage students, dispel students' anxiety, and motivate them to discover the relevance of the material
- Offer an equally robust learning experience for online ('click') courses and traditional ('brick') courses
- Address a wide array of student learning abilities and function levels
- Improve overall retention rates and final course grades

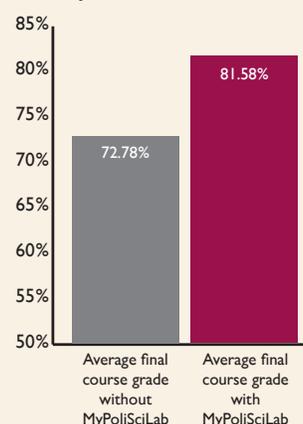
Professor Brisiel selected MyPoliSciLab and introduced it to students first as an additional resource. Based on positive student evaluations and her own observations of students' engagement with MyPoliSciLab, Brisiel made MyPoliSciLab the core curriculum plat-

"Because MyPoliSciLab breaks the material down and gives students multiple access pathways, students absorb and retain the key concepts."

—Professor Sandra C. Brisiel

form for all sections, both online and traditional, of POL 111. Students are required to complete the "Citizenship Test" as a pre- and post-test. All of the course assignments are delivered and completed through the "News and Videos" section that links media resources to course content; activities target and develop students' critical thinking abilities. Weekly online class discussions allow Brisiel to monitor students' progress and offer one-on-one assistance to students who need additional help. Assignment and exam scores are automatically recorded and tracked in MyPoliSciLab.

Improved final course grades with MyPoliSciLab



ANALYSIS

Students with MyPoliSciLab achieved significantly higher final course scores, the equivalent of a full letter grade higher than students without MyPoliSciLab.

Improved retention with MyPoliSciLab

	Without MyPoliSciLab	With MyPoliSciLab
# Students	25	24
# Withdrawals	5	3
Retention Rate	80%	88%

ANALYSIS

Retention rates with MyPoliSciLab were significantly improved compared to retention rates without MyPoliSciLab.

STUDENT RESPONSE

“I have learned a lot this semester. I have **registered to vote** for the upcoming election in November. I received a **92%** on my ‘Citizenship Test’ in MyPoliSciLab—a lot **better grade** than when I took it at the start of the term!”

LEARNING WITH MYPOLISCI LAB

According to Professor Brisiel, students find the course content challenging but accessible and user-friendly with MyPoliSciLab. She says, “Because MyPoliSciLab breaks the material down and gives students multiple access pathways, students absorb and retain the key concepts. MyPoliSciLab excels at providing effective resources that address a variety of learning abilities, freeing me to focus on the students. I track student activities through MyPoliSciLab and observe students using flash cards to test their vocabulary, viewing videos to review how concepts are applied, etc. MyPoliSciLab really serves my students well.”

She continues, “The qualitative material I have gathered regarding gains in student self-confidence with MyPoliSciLab is impressive. Students who complained about the course in the first week are online encouraging their peers and assisting them in finding material mid-semester. Students are able to track their own progress and focus their study time on areas they need to master for success on exams. This keeps students engaged and fosters student accountability.”

TEACHING WITH MYPOLISCI LAB

“The extensive and compelling media resources in MyPoliSciLab allow me to integrate ‘real time’ examples to the material in the book and build on lessons so that students understand the relationship between history, policy, and politics’ impact on them as an individual,” says Brisiel. “The immediacy of the source material in MyPoliSciLab enables me to make on the spot connections, helping students connect to why documents like the Constitution, written 300 years ago, are vitally important to their lives today.”

She continues, “MyPoliSciLab has made me step up my game in terms of what and how I present material to students. As a result of MyPoliSciLab, students will now watch the evening news and post questions/comments to the class blog relating the news coverage to topics covered that week in class. Students’ awareness and ability to think critically about course topics is dramatically enhanced through MyPoliSciLab.”

ENCOURAGING CLASS—AND POLITICAL—PARTICIPATION

“Social engagement is a key theme in our course,” says Professor Brisiel, “and MyPoliSciLab is extremely effective at building students’ competence and confidence to engage in social and political discourse. With MyPoliSciLab, students not only absorb the central concepts of American government, they can communicate and debate those ideas well. Students engage confidently in our end-of-term online debate thanks to the preparation they receive from MyPoliSciLab.”

RESULTS

Brisiel asserts, “When I saw withdrawals drop from 5 students per term to 2 or 3, I was completely on board with MyPoliSciLab. This course is required for several majors so the improved retention means the world to those students who might have failed but did not because they had MyPoliSciLab.”

CONCLUSION

Professor Brisiel reports that her experience with MyPoliSciLab has been so unequivocally positive that she has structured all of her online courses in Political Science around MyPoliSciLab.

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Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyPoliSciLab

An interview with
Dr. Laura Matysek Wood
Tarrant County College,
Northwest
Fort Worth, TX



Course Information

Along with the Pearson text *American Government: Roots and Reform* by O'Connor & Sabato, I use MyPoliSciLab in my three-credit U.S. Government course, which is required for all students in the state of Texas. This course teaches the basics of U.S. Government. Many of my students have very little knowledge about government or didn't have a U.S. Government course in high school. As the instructor, my goal is to make my students knowledgeable citizens. We talk about current events which sparks discussion. I tell them, "I don't care who you vote for, but I want you to be informed. Government affects your everyday life."

I teach on-campus students traditionally in the classroom, but at the same time, through live interactive television, I teach 20–40 dual credit students at various remote rural high schools who are able to participate in the class discussion via split-screen TV. Through the MyPoliSciLab site, they can all access the class material and, in semesters when I do group projects, they can work together.

Assessment

Four online exams completed through MyPoliSciLab are worth 400 points. Ten online assignments—eight from MyPoliSciLab (such as Comparing International Governments, Comparing Social Welfare, Comparing Constitutions, Are You Conservative or Liberal?) and two that I add, including the Citizenship Quiz as an icebreaker—are worth 200 points. An in-class current events article presentation is worth 20 points. In-class quizzes on articles I post—I edit how much the questions are worth to fit my syllabus—are worth 80 points.

Implementation

The semester is divided into four sections, each of which has two to three assignments, one exam, and one article I post. My students use MyPoliSciLab extensively to complete all of their class work. Students take multiple-choice exams through the site and have one week from the time I make it available in MyPoliSciLab to take an open book/open note exam. The exams test analytical/critical thinking and reading comprehension. I want my students to truly understand the text and apply their understanding to the exam questions. I have also used MyPoliSciLab for group projects such as the Presidential election simulation. I create groups and let them post web pages. Since students must present current event articles in class, I also encourage them to use the news feature.

Benefits

Over the years, MyPoliSciLab has continued to be updated with a great assortment of assignable material. Many of MyPoliSciLab's assignments are similar to ones I created by myself in the past, such as the Citizenship Quiz. With MyPoliSciLab, however, assignments are enhanced and even more thorough. MyPoliSciLab has allowed me to reach students with a wide variety of learning styles with real, up-to-date material on government. For example, a section on foreign policy about Iran and nuclear power is so timely. Students are fascinated and they are truly learning. MyPoliSciLab is a great timesaver. It allows me to cover more material and test student understanding on a variety of government topics without necessarily having to change what I do in the classroom. I know that I can assign a certain topic I don't have a chance to cover in class, and there will be an assignment to match it on MyPoliSciLab.

Students are stimulated by the variety of assignments in MyPoliSciLab and enjoy the interactive simulations that are both engaging and media-driven. Students can 'drag-and-drop' and learn as they go, and they appreciate that they can access the online material 24/7, from wherever they happen to be. In addition, students get their grades immediately with MyPoliSciLab, so there's no question about how well they did.

Conclusion

I love MyPoliSciLab and its great diversity of resources and assignable materials. Because I no longer have to create many of my own assignments, MyPoliSciLab has made it easier for me to prepare for class. And, it provides a great means to test student learning. I believe the great variety of assignable material allows me to reach more students. Now, students have more interest in the material and use the entire textbook.

Wayne State University Detroit, Michigan

INSTRUCTOR Marcus W. Dickson, Professor and Associate Department Chair
Nathan Weidner, Graduate Assistant

COURSE Introductory Psychology

TEXT *Psychology by Sandra Ciccarelli and J. Noland White with MyPsychLab*

TERM COVERED Winter 2010

CONTRIBUTION OF MYPYCHLAB TO FINAL GRADE 10%

TYPES OF DATA REPORTED Improvement in final course grades

COURSE STRUCTURE Traditional

PROFESSOR MARCUS DICKSON'S INTRODUCTORY PSYCHOLOGY COURSE is among the largest courses at Wayne State, averaging more than 350 students per term. Wayne State is a "research university with an urban mission," and a portion of the students in Dr. Dickson's classes each term are academically underprepared for college-level work. Determined to engage all of his students actively, Professor Dickson has embraced learning technologies that offer students multiple ways to access the course material. For the past several semesters, Professor Dickson has used clickers to implement a Peer Instruction component as well as to record real-time feedback from students, and he bases a portion of students' final grade on their work in MyPsychLab. Dickson continually refines his teaching approach and evaluates the effectiveness of his methods and pedagogical tools.

Teaching with MyPsychLab

Professor Dickson asserts, "MyPsychLab gives students an immersive learning environment. After seeing the effectiveness of MyPsychLab in the Winter 2010 term, I'm now requiring students to pass each MyPsychLab chapter Post-Test before we address the material in lecture (rather than before the exam.) Now we can spend our limited class time going beyond the textbook, or clarifying particularly difficult concepts, or applying the material in ways that the students find meaningful. This richer learning experience is a real benefit for me and for my students—and before MyPsychLab, we simply didn't have the time to go beyond the basics."

Breakdown of final course grade in Dr. Dickson's Introductory Psychology course:

Source	Points per	Occurrences	Total per source
Exams	140	4	560
MyPsychLab Chapter Post-Tests	8	15	120
Quizzes in class	5	11 (drop 1, so 10)	50
Peer Instruction/Participation	8	23 (drop 3, so 20)	160
Registering i>Clicker on time	10	1	10
Lab attendance/assignments	300	NA	300
TOTAL			1200

"The MyPsychLab

Pre-Test/

personalized study

plan/Post-Test

structure is really

effective at

prompting **active**

learning."

—PROFESSOR
MARCUS DICKSON

“It isn’t just that the smart students do well in the class and also make use of MyPsychLab; instead, MyPsychLab usage appears to be directly related to increases in performance even after controlling for initial ability.”

—PROFESSOR
MARCUS DICKSON

Learning with MyPsychLab

Professor Dickson reports, “MyPsychLab causes students to actively engage with the concepts of the course. The MyPsychLab chapter Pre-Test helps the student identify their areas of weakness, and MyPsychLab then generates a personalized study plan that helps the student make best use of their study time by focusing on the areas where they are a little weaker. In order to score the required 80% or higher on each of the 15 chapter Post-Tests, students delve into the textbook in a problem-oriented way—trying to find the answers to specific questions. Students begin to think of the content of the textbook as answers to important questions rather than a litany of information. The MyPsychLab Pre-Test/personalized study plan/Post-Test structure is really effective at prompting active learning.”

Professor Dickson continues, “Students who do not engage with MyPsychLab early on in the semester often see their colleagues in class doing better than they are. At the same time, students hear me refer to things in MyPsychLab and realize they are missing something important. The result is that these students are motivated to use MyPsychLab and to engage on a deeper level.”

“Students tell me that MyPsychLab is a challenging but helpful tool that supports their learning,” states Professor Dickson. “Given that students commonly refer to my class by saying ‘it was hard but I learned a lot,’ I am pleased to hear MyPsychLab characterized in those terms.”

Results

Not content with casual or anecdotal reviews of MyPsychLab’s effectiveness, Professor Dickson, with the assistance of graduate assistant Nathan Weidner (and following university IRB approval), sought to quantify the extent to which MyPsychLab improved students’ learning.

Final grades in Professor Dickson’s course arise from calculating points earned on quizzes and exams, in lab, through Peer Instruction/participation, and in MyPsychLab.

Professor Dickson and graduate assistant Weidner examined the correlation between points earned on the required MyPsychLab Post-Tests and total points earned in the course that were unrelated to MyPsychLab (e.g. exams, quizzes, Peer Instruction ‘clicker’ points) and unrelated to the lab portion of the course. That is, MyPsychLab-earned points were examined alongside points related to the course components that were instructor-led.

This analysis returned a raw correlation of .69 with a sample size of over 250.

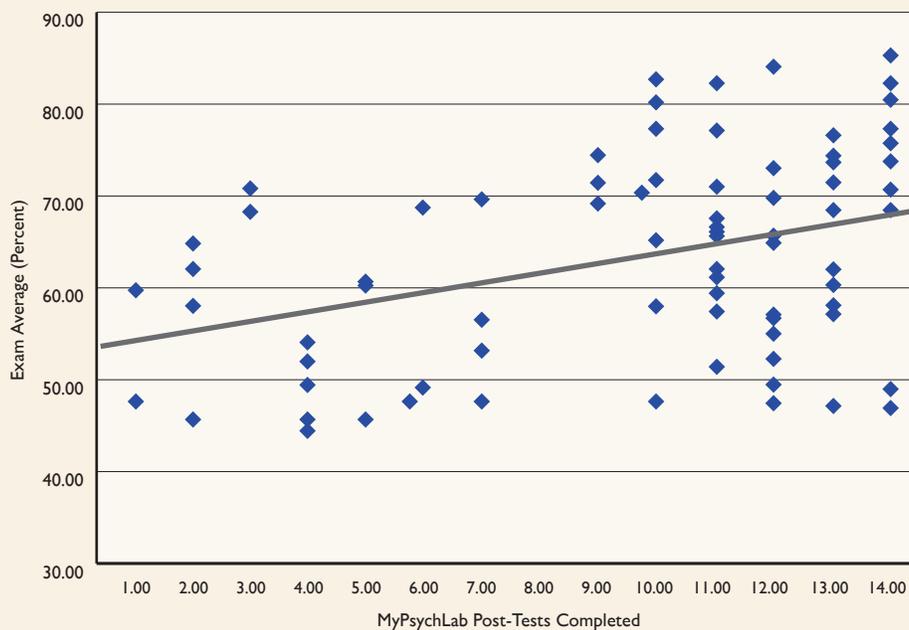
Refining analysis to exclude most conscientious students

Impressed but still curious, Dickson and Weidner further scrutinized the data. Reasoning that students who completed all 15 of the chapter Post-Tests were probably highly conscientious and likely to succeed regardless, Dickson and Weidner excluded those highly motivated students. They wanted to know whether those students most in need of assistance were truly being helped by MyPsychLab. The new correlation was .59, still statistically significant ($p < .01$.)

Drilling down on the results, Dickson and Weidner ran regressions and found that for every additional chapter Post-Test a student completed, their grade on the course exams increased on average by over 1%. In other words, students completing 14 out of 15 chapter Post-Tests were scoring more than one and one-half letter grades higher (about 17%) on course exams than students doing none of the Post-Tests.

In short, even after excluding the most conscientious students who would likely succeed with or without MyPsychLab, results show a statistically significant improvement in course grades for students completing MyPsychLab Post-Tests versus students who did not. Students completing all 15 of the MyPsychLab Post-Tests improved their final course grade by over one and one-half letter grades.

Quantifying MyPsychLab's effectiveness: Correlation between MyPsychLab Post-Tests completed and grades on course exams



Quantifying MyPsychLab's effectiveness: Correlation between MyPsychLab Post-Tests completed and grades on course exams

Controlling for cognitive ability

One further analysis attempted to control for cognitive ability using hierarchical regression. Specifically, Dickson and Weidner attempted to see whether they could predict students' overall class performance based on the students' use of MyPsychLab, after controlling for students' ACT scores. In other words, they controlled for cognitive ability (as measured with ACT scores), and regressed non-MyPsychLab points on number of MyPsychLab Post-Tests completed. To be conservative in the analyses, they excluded from the sample the most conscientious, self-reliant students (those who completed all of the available MyPsychLab Post-Tests) and the students showing no significant effort in class (those who completed no MyPsychLab Post-Tests through the entire semester). As expected, cognitive ability predicted performance in the class ($r=.38$). But even after controlling for cognitive ability, the data still showed a significant performance improvement the more students made use of MyPsychLab. Specifically, even using this conservative estimate, MyPsychLab accounted for 13.2% additional variance in class performance than ACT scores alone.

The data demonstrate that MyPsychLab usage appears to be directly related to increases in learning performance even after controlling for initial ability. In other words, the students most in need of assistance achieved significant increases in performance when they made use of MyPsychLab.

Student evaluation of MyPsychLab

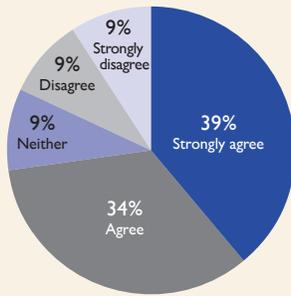
On the last day of class, Professor Dickson asked students to what extent they felt MyPsychLab had been helpful to them. Nearly 75% either agreed or strongly agreed that MyPsychLab was helpful to them.

“All the **data** aren't in yet on exam scores and final grades, but right now, partway through the semester, it's looking like the average **exam score** is up significantly from the winter 2010 data, without making any other **significant** changes in the course structure.”

—PROFESSOR
MARCUS DICKSON

MyPsychLab was helpful to me:

STUDENT SURVEY RESPONSES



Students **like** using MyPsychLab. Nearly 75% of the students cited MyPsychLab as **beneficial** to their learning.

Conclusion

MyPsychLab was analyzed qualitatively and quantitatively, with the conclusion being that MyPsychLab, along with other elements in the course redesign, improves student results. Student grades are improved. Students completing most of the online assignments scored on average more than one and one-half letter grades higher than students doing none of the Post-Tests.

Just as important is the qualitative data unearthed through students surveys. Students *like* using MyPsychLab. Nearly 75% of the students cited the program as beneficial to their learning. The motivation provided by MyPsychLab translated into better prepared and more engaged students in lecture.

Epilogue

The analyses reported in this case study are from 2010 and represent the most recent full-semester data available. However, as this case study goes to press, Dr. Dickson reports that he has made a small change in the way he uses MyPsychLab, but that the small change has had a big effect. In short, while he used to require that students complete the

On average, for every additional chapter Post-Test a student completed, their grade on the course exams increased by more than 1%. In other words, students completing 14 out of 15 chapter Post-Tests were scoring more than one and one-half letter grades higher than students doing none of the Post-Tests.

MyPsychLab study plans (the chapter Post-Tests) prior to the exam that covered those chapters, he now requires students to complete the Post-Tests prior to the day that he first starts lecturing on a chapter. So instead of having three or four Post-Tests due at one time, just before an exam, Post-Tests due dates are spread throughout the semester, and students are motivated to read the chapter in detail prior to coming to class. What's been the result of this change?

Dr. Dickson reports, "I'm able to use my class time in a different way now. I spend much less time going over definitions and basic concepts that are covered in the text, because students have grasped that material through reading the chapter and by exploring the chapter in response to the study plans. Now I spend my class time going over concepts that I know most students struggle with; providing examples to clarify topics; adding in additional material that takes a topic further, or referring to current news stories that relate to a topic; and by enhancing the use of Peer Instruction, a system where students help each other learn in class. It's a totally different feeling in the class. All the data aren't in yet on exam scores and final grades, but right now, partway through the semester, it's looking like the average exam score is up significantly from the winter 2010 data, without making any other significant changes in the course structure."

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University of North Carolina—Charlotte Charlotte, North Carolina

INSTRUCTOR Sue Spaulding

COURSE General Psychology

TEXT *Understanding Psychology* by Charles G. Morris and Albert A. Maisto with MyPsychLab

TERM COVERED Spring 2011

CONTRIBUTION OF MYPYCHLAB TO FINAL GRADE 30%

TYPES OF DATA REPORTED Improvement in student engagement and participation; correlation between time spent in MyPsychLab and final course average; savings in classroom and teaching resources

COURSE STRUCTURE Hybrid

FRUSTRATED WITH STUDENTS' RELUCTANCE to engage actively with course materials, Professor Sue Spaulding and her three University of North Carolina—Charlotte colleagues embarked on a redesign of their General Psychology course into a hybrid format using MyPsychLab. Professor Spaulding identified a set of ambitious goals for the redesigned course:

- To motivate students to take more responsibility for their learning outcomes
- To give students access to sophisticated educational technology resources
- To serve more students
- To maximize limited space resources
- To deliver equivalent learning at reduced cost

The redesigned course was launched in pilot form in spring 2011 with two hybrid sections and one traditional section. For the hybrid sections, one of two weekly face-to-face class meetings was replaced with students' working independently online in MyPsychLab. The remaining face-to-face meeting was changed from a standard lecture to a more interactive session featuring demonstrations and class participation. Students in the traditional section were encouraged to earn extra credit by working independently in MyPsychLab.

Teaching with MyPsychLab

Professor Spaulding reports that she and her colleagues (who, together, boast over 85 years of experience teaching the Introduction to Psychology course) were invigorated by the process of creating a MyPsychLab-based hybrid course.

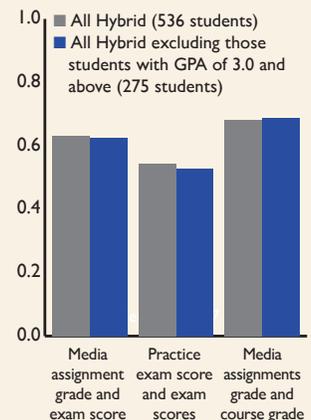
"MyPsychLab is so flexible and the course creation process is easy," says Spaulding.

"Customizing my course was a pleasure. I am impressed with the breadth of high-quality media assignments and activities MyPsychLab offers."

Learning with MyPsychLab

Students in the hybrid sections worked independently in MyPsychLab, completing the

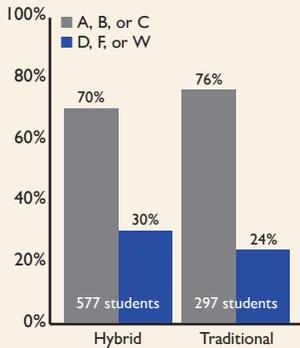
Effectiveness of Hybrid Format



ANALYSIS

The correlation between time spent in MyPsychLab and improved performance held up consistently even when high-achieving students were excluded from the data.

Grade Distribution



ANALYSIS

Negligible difference in grade distribution between the hybrid and traditional sections indicates that the goal of equivalent learning experience in hybrid format was met.

Student Satisfaction

Students in all sections of the spring 2011 General Psychology course were asked to complete a survey on the effectiveness of MyPsychLab.

	Total students	Hybrid students	Traditional students
Number of students	531	332	199
MyPsychLab contributed to my success in the course?	55%	80%	12%
Would recommend MyPsychLab to friends/other students?	68%	78%	51%
Wish other Psychology professors used MyPsychLab?	66%	77%	47%
Prefer hybrid format to traditional more or much more?		64%	NA
MyPsychLab added to the value of this course—agree or strongly agree?		81%	NA

ANALYSIS

Students indicated a strong preference for the hybrid format using MyPsychLab and identified MyPsychLab as a key contributor to their success in the course.

assigned media assignments and following the personalized study plan generated by MyPsychLab in response to students' Pre-Test results. Students were encouraged to take the chapter Post-Tests as many times as needed before the day of each online exam.

Professor Spaulding was surprised to find that not all students are as tech-savvy as she expected. However, as the semester progressed, she noted that some of the most timid students became proponents of MyPsychLab once they experienced the program. Professor Spaulding asserts, "We began to see a clear correlation between time spent in MyPsychLab and students' satisfaction with it. And more importantly, as students worked in MyPsychLab, we began to see them engaging with course concepts more deeply and asking substantive, informed questions during class discussions."

Results

A total of 874 students were enrolled in the spring 2011 pilot course: 577 in the two hybrid sections and 297 in the traditional section. Professor Spaulding and her colleagues compared student performance and course satisfaction between the two formats.

Refining the approach

For the fall 2011 term, Professor Spaulding and her colleagues enacted several refinements.

- Student participation is now recorded with the use of clickers and counts toward students' final grade, improving attendance and participation in class discussions.
- Exams are identical for all sections of the class, paving the way for further analysis of student performance between hybrid and traditional sections.
- Part-time instructors, when needed, will be required to follow the course design Spaulding and her colleagues have created, eliminating the possibility of wide discrepancies in student experience that were an issue in the past.

Conclusion

"In our pilot of the hybrid course using MyPsychLab, we met our most important goals and we learned a number of things that have helped us refine our approach, laying the groundwork for continued improvement in student performance," states Professor Spaulding.

"First of all, we delivered an equivalent, or better, learning experience using MyPsychLab versus the traditional format. Comparing students' grades using MyPsychLab to students' grade results before MyPsychLab was implemented, we don't see a dramatic improvement in the numbers—yet. But we see a significant improvement in students' engagement, understanding, and participation with MyPsychLab. And that enthusiasm is mirrored in the experience we, as instructors, have had with MyPsychLab."

Spaulding continues, "In addition to the benefits for students and instructors, MyPsychLab has enabled us to save on classroom and teaching resources. In our pilot term, we were able to free up two 300-seat lecture halls, conducting four sections in the space previously used by two. We reduced our staffing from four paid graduate teaching assistants to one and added four undergraduate teaching assistants who earn course credit for their work."

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Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania Bloomsburg, PA

INSTRUCTOR Marion Mason

COURSE General Psychology

TEXT Psychology by Ciccarelli & White with MyPsychLab

TERM COVERED Spring 2011

CONTRIBUTION OF MYPYCHLAB TO FINAL GRADE 53%

TYPES OF DATA REPORTED Improvement in exam grades with increased usage of MyPsychLab
Student survey evaluations of MyPsychLab's effectiveness

COURSE STRUCTURE Traditional

PROFESSOR MARION MASON TEACHES a large section of the general psychology course (230 students) without the help of Teaching Assistants for discussions or out-of-class activities. Her students, primarily first- or second-semester freshmen, include a significant number of academically underprepared students, many first-generation college students, and relatively few psychology majors. These circumstances provide unique opportunities to teach students better study habits along with key principles in psychology.

Professor Mason has used MyPsychLab since the spring of 2009 and selected it to:

- GIVE STUDENTS EXPERIENCE WITH DIGITAL TOOLS: "I often tell my students that their future job probably hasn't been created yet, so the best thing I can do for them is teach them to find information, evaluate information, and learn to teach themselves. MyPsychLab is the perfect technology for modeling those skills."
- MOTIVATE STUDENTS TO ACTIVELY ENGAGE WITH THE COURSE CONTENT: "I chose MyPsychLab because of the integrated eText and learning resources. Using the assessment tools in MyPsychLab pushes students into the eText. Once there, students can follow up with simulations, demonstrations, and other learning tools."
- CUSTOMIZE THE LEARNING EXPERIENCE FOR STUDENTS: "I like the ability to assign activities using the calendar, keeping students paced with the class materials. This keeps students from procrastinating and increases their exposure to the material."

Powerful features, easy to use:

"MyPsychLab is much easier than other course management tools I've used," Professor Mason says. "The 'Help' button in MyPsychLab is genuinely helpful, offering a template and explaining topics clearly and completely. The new version of MyPsychLab has a very clean interface with great navigation; the registration process for students is smooth and easy. And if you need to transfer grades from MyPsychLab to another course management software package, the process with MyPsychLab is easy, quick, and painless—with excellent support available should you need help."

She continues, "I wish all my classes had MyLab products! With so many students and

"Frequently I hear students remark about how much the MyPsychLab homework helped them understand the material and perform well on in-class exams."

--Professor Marion Mason

such a range of learning needs and styles, I rely on MyPsychLab to perform grading and to track students' progress. The calendar feature and customizing options allow me to set

“One of the things I value most about MyPsychLab is the way it helps me to offer individualized instruction to a very large number of students.”

—Professor Marion Mason

up my course before the semester. I can focus my time and energy on meeting students' needs in lecture and outside of class rather than on grading homework assignments. MyPsychLab frees me to be available to my students.”

RESULTS

From Recommended to required

Professor Mason comments, “I started using MyPsychLab in spring 2009. But for the first two semesters, I only recommended that students use it. As typically happens, the best students opted to use MyPsychLab, but the entire class didn't participate. In fall 2010, I increased the stakes by requiring MyPsychLab. Students were awarded 53% of their overall class score to do weekly assignments. Recently, I looked at these results.”

There was a significant difference between the two groups on exam scores, $F(1, 745) = 9.489, p = 0.002$. But there wasn't a significant difference between the two groups on the final exam scores, $F(1, 745) = 2.114, p = 0.146$

Professor Mason explains, “During the semester, students immerse themselves in chapters and topics in a more extensive way than they do for the comprehensive final exam. It makes sense that spending time with MyPsychLab would show such direct benefits (to exam scores).”

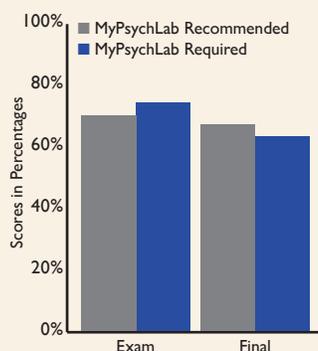
She continues, “As I noted above, the recommended (green bar) students were the more motivated students. It was gratifying to see, therefore, that when I included a larger sample of the students in 2010, that the scores were remarkably consistent.”

With evidence at hand of MyPsychLab's effectiveness, Professor Mason wondered to what extent effort influenced student success.

Professor Mason reflects, “The final exam presents a different circumstance in that it is comprehensive. I do not re-open the chapter exams in MyPsychLab, so aside from the last two chapters in the textbook, students are reviewing their notes and textbook for the comprehensive part of the final. It makes sense that MyPsychLab has less influence on the final.

She concludes, “Reviewing this data helps me to tweak my course. Just as going from recommended to required had a beneficial effect on encouraging more student participation, I can now consider how and when to set assignments to encourage more participation.”

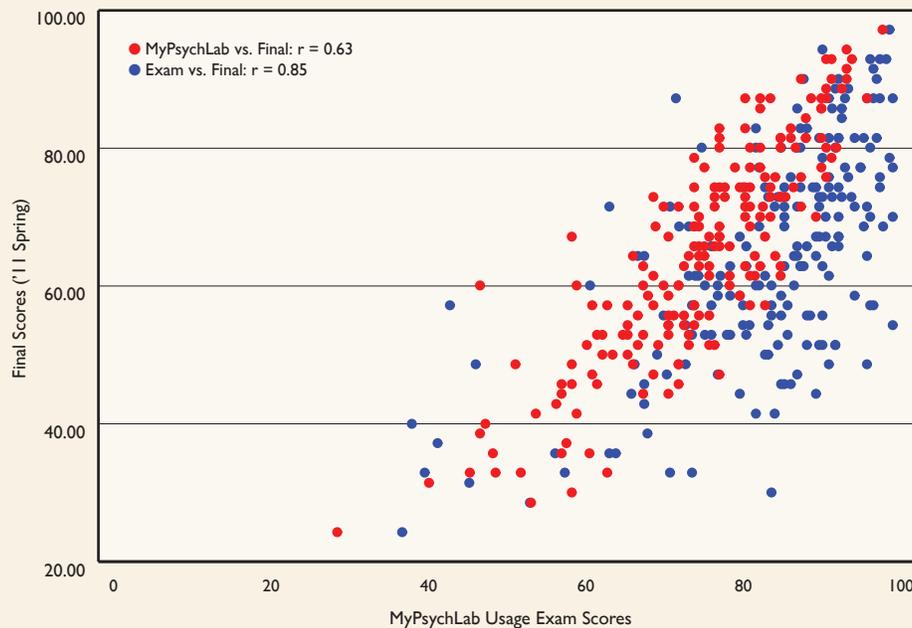
Comparison of student results when MyPsychLab recommended and when MyPsychLab required



Comparison of student results when MyPsychLab recommended and when MyPsychLab required

	Recommended	N	Mean	SD	Median	Min	Max	SE
Exam		348	69.49	14.00	70.67	22.67	96.00	0.75
Final		348	66.78	15.35	68.33	18.33	98.33	0.82
	Required							
Exam		399	72.60	13.51	74.00	27.33	98.67	0.68
Final		399	65.12	15.74	65.71	0.00	97.50	0.79

Correlation between student exam scores and student scores in MyPsychLab to student final exam



Analysis: Exam scores were highly correlated and MyPsychLab scores also were reasonably highly correlated with the final scores.

Teaching with MyPsychLab:

Professor Mason says, “MyPsychLab gives me tremendous control over my course. It takes time to understand precisely how much work I should assign to students to keep them motivated and challenged but not overwhelmed. The many customizable features in MyPsychLab allow me to adjust the work flow in response to students’ needs.”

She goes on to say, “One of the things I value most about MyPsychLab is the way it helps me to offer individualized instruction to a very large number of students. For the underprepared students, MyPsychLab is like a personal tutor. For the highly-motivated psychology majors, MyPsychLab offers tremendous depth, allowing them to pursue topics far beyond what we cover each week in lecture.”

“Students recognize the benefits of MyPsychLab and they want more of that experience in their subsequent courses. MyPsychLab reinforces attention, concentration, and involvement with the course material. It provides sound pedagogical techniques with the convenience of 24/7 availability.”

--Professor Marion Mason

Learning with MyPsychLab:

“MyPsychLab builds student confidence and rewards persistence,” insists Professor Mason. “The generally low confidence level of my students is an obstacle. I assign the chapter exams and set the preferences so that students can take a quiz as many times as they choose within a learning unit (each time getting a different set of randomized items) and MyPsychLab records only their highest score. In this way, students who are motivated but underprepared or afraid of college-level work can take control of their final grade. The result is that as soon as I unlock a learning unit, the students are in MyPsychLab

“MyPsychLab gives me tremendous control over my course.

The many customizable

features in

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--Professor Marion Mason

“MyPsychLab is much easier than other course management tools I’ve used. The new version of MyPsychLab has a very clean interface with great navigation; the registration process for students is smooth and easy.”

--Professor Marion Mason

trying to get those practice quiz grades as high as possible. The practice with the questions helps students on the exams—and that further increases their confidence. This is extremely important to my students and makes my section of General Psychology the most popular.”

Professor Mason notes, “An unexpected benefit of the many learning tools in MyPsychLab is that curious students explore the features and report back on tools that helped them study most effectively. I didn’t realize until receiving this feedback that students highly value the audio features. Now I know to tell each group of new students to start listening early in the semester!”

Student survey responses

Students in Professor Mason’s spring 2011 General Psychology were asked to evaluate the effectiveness of MyPsychLab.

- MyPsychLab had a significant impact on my course grade: 30%
- Wish other Psychology professors used MyPsychLab? 75%
- Would recommend MyPsychLab to other students? 85%

Conclusion

Professor Mason sums up, “My section is the only one currently using MyPsychLab. Students who know they need extra help seek out my section because they understand that MyPsychLab can help them to succeed in the course. I even receive emails from students in the other sections seeking to transfer in. I usually teach General Psychology with MyPsychLab in the fall and Lifespan Psychology with MyDevelopmentLab in the spring. Students routinely ask me if I plan to use MyLab products in Lifespan because they are looking forward to it! Students recognize the benefits of MyPsychLab and they want more of that experience in their subsequent courses. My students find MyPsychLab very helpful and would be disappointed if I stopped using it.”

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Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyPsychLab

An interview with
Professor Richard Hass
University of Delaware
Newark, DE



Course Information

I use MyPsychLab in my Introductory Psychology course (three credits) with the text *Psychology and Life* by Gerrig and Zimbardo. I am currently teaching two sections, with 300—600 students in each section, in a traditional lecture-hall format. This is a large survey course. Students learn about psychology as both a science and a practice. I designed the course around the central theme of human behavior as adaptation. I start with the idea that human behavior is partly a product of things that we are set up to do by nature, and then describe how other parts are built-in through our experience. I come back to the theme of behavior and behavioral change. I teach my class at a level that is accessible to non-majors, because I want to get people who may never take a psychology class again to appreciate and understand at least some of it.

Assessment

Because this is a large lecture class, students take four unit tests in class (50 multiple-choice questions) and four completion-based quizzes through MyPsychLab. They must answer 60% of the questions correctly. Quizzes are worth 15% of the final grade. For extra credit, students can complete up to two more Post-Test quizzes, on which they must score 80% or higher.

Implementation

I chose to use MyPsychLab, because I wanted to incorporate something that I felt comfortable with that was also useful for the students. A lot of other books have online simulations, but it is the combination of MyPsychLab's quizzes, resources, eText, and organization that appeals to me.

I structure the course into units, with four chapters per unit. For each unit, I assign a quiz on MyPsychLab. Quizzes are taken at home and are open-book. I choose the quizzes from the chapters I think are the most challenging. It is a way for me to get students to do some beneficial work, because I know they have attempted to read through and answer some questions about the chapter.

I also use MyPsychLab as a vehicle to introduce students to *Discover Psychology* because it links them through the MyPsychLab portal. This is one of my favorite features.

I use the Gradebook to check on student progress. It gives me a timestamp so I can see when students are working, how often they are working, and what their success rate is. If a student claims to be doing work, I can go in and check to see the amount of time they are spending on MyPsychLab.

With such a large enrollment, it is really hard to personalize the resources students are getting. MyPsychLab enables me to do this. It is easy for me to direct a struggling student to practice with MyPsychLab's flashcards, run through a multimedia presentation, or watch a video and answer some questions. It works for me, and it works for the students.

Benefits

I started using MyPsychLab because students were complaining that the exams were not capturing the full breadth of their knowledge. They also wanted more practice tests to prepare for exams. MyPsychLab delivers content that is tied to my lectures and to the exams. It gives students an opportunity to put some effort in and get rewarded for it.

MyPsychLab has definitely changed the way I teach my course. Before using MyPsychLab, I put a lot of the onus on myself to explain everything. Being a new professor, you are very conscious of what you say in class and you want to test your students on that information. Since this is a large lecture class (the majority of students are freshman), they need to be challenged in a way that is different from a smaller, upper-level class. MyPsychLab allows me to cover more in a semester, to ask students to do more, and to give them a more representative experience of both college and psychology. I feel that MyPsychLab makes me do my job better—it has actually made me get a little tougher! There are certain times when I cannot cover everything in class, so I tell the students to use MyPsychLab's chapter quizzes, exams, and eText. Then the onus is on the students to do some work. It makes my life easier, but I think it also does the students a service. Students like it and they have responded well to the change.

Conclusion

Last semester, students said they really liked MyPsychLab and that it helped them do better. A good percentage of the class was doing all of the chapter exams and the Post-Tests, not just the ones I assigned. This semester I am surveying the students about their MyPsychLab expectations and experience, once at the beginning of the semester and once before finals. I will ask them what they liked and what they did not like. It will give me a good look at who was using it and why.

My advice to other instructors is to not be afraid to use MyPsychLab as you would any kind of study guide or textbook. Make assignments and utilize the Gradebook. It is easier than Scantron because you do not have to submit the grades to be corrected. Make yourself familiar with MyPsychLab so that when you know a student is struggling, you can direct them to the flashcards, simulations, and practice quizzes.

For me, MyPsychLab works really well with my large lecture course. In the future, I would like to explore more of the multimedia content linked to specific questions for more of a hands-on approach. I am thinking about increasing my use even more. I like the technology and I like how it is changing and growing. I am very pro-MyPsychLab!

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyPsychLab

An interview with
Mary-Ellen O'Sullivan
Southern Connecticut
State University, CT
Housatonic Community
College, CT



I have been teaching at several Connecticut state colleges and universities for approximately 20 years and was introduced to MyPsychLab about seven years ago. Subsequently, I have been using MyPsychLab exclusively for my courses in general psychology / introduction to psychology at Southern Connecticut State University (SCSU) and Housatonic Community College (HCC).

Course Information

I teach three to four traditional sections per semester, 30 to 40 students per section. The textbook I prefer to use is *Psychology: Core Concepts* by Zimbardo, Johnson, and McCann. The student population consists mostly of freshman, with some students taking this course as a requirement.

My course objectives are to provide students with a general overview of psychology, as well as a good foundation in psychological theory to further enhance learning. For those students who are not interested in taking additional psychology courses, my goal is to provide an understanding of behavior and mental processes that could give them insight regarding real-life situations. Introductory psychology students generally have a pre-conceived idea of what psychology is and my task is to make it clear what psychology actually is!

I was first introduced to MyPsychLab at the community college level and remember thinking that there was no excuse for student failure with this system. I was amazed by the flexibility of what it could do and what was included/available—the amount of multimedia to support the lecture, the online quizzing capability, and the inclusion of a complete eText. Students would now have the resources to access their respective course text and quizzes, and could communicate with the professor at any time, no matter where they were.

Assessment

Assigned homework and quizzes in MyPsychLab count for 10% of the final grade.

Implementation

I require MyPsychLab for all my courses, at both the community college and university levels. In class, I typically utilize the Multimedia Library as well as the Explore and Simulations assets, especially when I lecture on a difficult concept. For example, if students are staring blankly at me when I am trying to explain *neuro-transmission*, I will go into the Multimedia Library and look for several simulations to demonstrate action potentials and how *neurotransmitters* cross the *synapse*.

Also, I use the Multimedia Library (videos) as homework. I assign quizzes that reinforce the concepts that were discussed in class. I demonstrate the use and location of the Pre- and Post-Tests and urge the students to complete the tests. This, in my opinion, is another great tool for the students to track their progress. However, at this point it is not a class requirement. It should be noted that the times and frequency that the students access MyPsychLab are completely transparent. I have noticed that some students use the Pre- and Post-Tests infrequently and/or not at all. Based on this, I plan on assigning the Pre- and Post-Tests for a grade. The Pre- and Post-Tests definitely help the students to focus on the chapter material and also give them an additional means of assessing their knowledge. By requiring the Pre- and Post-Tests, I believe that students will have an easier time testing when the course exams are given.

Benefits

I start off the course by telling my students that, “Learning psychology is like learning a foreign language.” They are going to be faced with so many new vocabulary terms and new concepts. The only way to succeed is to practice, practice, practice! MyPsychLab allows them to do a lot of practicing. They can take the Pre- and Post-Tests and find out where their weaknesses are. By having students complete some of the quizzes in the Multimedia Library and some of the chapter exams, they are getting used to the way that psychology is being presented to them and they are getting to know the language of psychology.

MyPsychLab

I am a firm believer that you cannot just sit in class and then walk away and study for a test. You have to work with the material as often as possible, and MyPsychLab allows students to do that in a variety of ways in addition to reading their notes or listening to me lecture. Using MyPsychLab gives another dimension to classroom lectures because I show the Simulations and Explore sections in class.

My foreign students love MyPsychLab, especially the chapter flashcards. Flashcards can be used in a variety of ways to help them build their vocabulary. They can even download them on their phone! I have had foreign students come in and tell me, “I just love this program!” They can break down the chapter and familiarize themselves with the material.

MyPsychLab helps make some of the administrative parts of my job easier when I use a course management system. Setting up the system is easy, and when students register, it goes right into the Gradebook. In the past, getting the final grade was a real issue, and now all the grades are right there. This was one of the biggest reasons I wanted to use MyPsychLab. The course management system also allows me to post on the website if I forget to mention something in class. The calendar is great, too.

I do go online and see which students are using MyPsychLab. My course management system tells me who has not been online in a while. I might tell a student, “You did not do well on a quiz, but you are not going online to MyPsychLab. You are not going to ‘get’ the material until you work with it.” I can tell that students who use MyPsychLab more, and take the time to take the Pre- and Post-Tests, do much better than other students who do not spend time in MyPsychLab.

Conclusion

I would recommend that a new or prospective MyPsychLab user connect with a MyPsychLab Faculty Advisor to go over the basics of the program. I would also advise a new user to start off slowly and to add more and more of the technology each semester.

When I was first introduced to MyPsychLab and the Zimbardo text at Housatonic Community College, I was so enthusiastic that I decided to use it where I also teach at Southern Connecticut State University. I have no plans to stop using MyPsychLab. Pearson is always on the cutting edge—they are always trying to improve their materials. MyPsychLab makes teaching interesting and it is an enjoyable program to work with.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyPsychLab

An interview with
Professor Diane Finley
Prince George's
Community College
Largo, MD



Course Information

I use MyPsychLab in the three-credit course General Psychology, also known as Introduction to Psychology. I teach two to three online sections per semester with about 25 students in each section. Our department offers 45–50 sections each semester and 35 sections in summer. This is a “high enrollment course.” It also fulfills one of the general education requirements and is required as a prerequisite by a number of majors on campus, including Allied Health and Education.

We use *Psychology: A Framework for Everyday Thinking* by Lilienfeld et al. We chose the Lilienfeld text specifically because it is only 14 chapters. Our average term is 14 weeks, so we can cover one chapter a week and don’t have to cut anything out.

We use a customized edition of MyPsychLab that incorporates a workbook we created. This workbook is inserted after each chapter in both the printed text and the eText. Students read a chapter in the text and immediately do the workbook activities that follow.

The study guide that comes with the Lilienfeld text serves as the basis for our workbook activities. In order to create our customized workbook, I went through the study guide, chose the activities that would best benefit our students, and modified them as necessary. We also placed a number of resources in the front end of our custom workbook, including tips on how to study, a questionnaire to get students to understand how many hours they have to spend in school, a couple of PowerPoint presentations on psychological perspectives, and primary sources. These tools are convenient for both faculty and students.

Several common course objectives have been approved by the institutional assessment committee. Basically, they require students to be able to think critically; to understand the basic perspectives and concepts in psychology; to understand research issues so that they become educated consumers of research; and to understand the role of culture in our lives. We broke down these course objectives into 20 specific course learning outcomes that correlate to specific content. We’ve linked these to the APA undergraduate guidelines.

Assessment

We have a common multiple choice final exam that must count for at least 25% of the total grade. All instructors are required to use the customized workbook. Workbook and MyPsychLab activities count for at least 10% of the final grade. Students can earn four to seven points per chapter for their work on MyPsychLab. We also have a required information literacy assignment that has to count for east 10% of the final grade.

Our department has set mandates on 45% of points that count toward the final grade. This results in less variability across all of the sections (over 100 sections each year) and gives us consistent ways to measure our course objectives.

Implementation

I have used MyPsychLab ever since it came out, but this past year, I looked at every activity, and I made some choices about what students must do. I went through each chapter, picked the activities that are most relevant to our course learning objectives, and created a chart to indicate which ones students must do. We have a master Blackboard site for our faculty, so I post a lot of that information on the site.

For example, in chapter one, Scientific Thinking, students must complete the Diversity in Psychological Inquiry activity, the Critical Thinker activity, and the Psychologist at Work activity under media assignments. Those three activities relate to the chapter objectives and course objectives. I also recommended some multimedia activities.

I have noticed a number of students do take the Pre- and Post-Tests. When you bring up the Gradebook, you can see everything, including how many attempts they’ve made and when they’ve made the attempts. There is a lot of info in the Gradebook that can help you.

MyPsychLab

Benefits

When I first began teaching online, I had videos I could show to my face-to-face students in class, but online students never had access to them. MyPsychLab's resources give me easy access to videos and simulations for all of my students.

I like that the video clips in MyPsychLab are short. Our department is trying to get away from showing 50-minute films in a 50-minute class. In MyPsychLab, the videos are broken down into five- to six-minute segments, which is perfect for showing in class. I think a lot of the multimedia activities are interesting, and students enjoy watching the videos.

MyPsychLab gives our instructors different options in terms of what material they want to assign.

Because many of the MyPsychLab assignments are focused on mastery learning, students have the opportunity to retake them until they get 100%. This improves students' understanding, and they can also earn some extra points.

Students have a lower cost alternative when they purchase the eText/workbook that is on www.mypsychlab.com. It allows them to get the materials they need at a lower price.

Conclusion

My best piece of advice to a new instructor user is to go through everything MyPsychLab has to offer. Schools have different objectives for their students. For example, they could be dealing with nursing students or biology students. You have to go through and choose what is going to work for you and your students.

I did an informal observation this summer and found that students who completed the MyPsychLab activities and earned the full MyPsychLab points seemed to do a little bit better on the quizzes and tests. It's nothing scientific; but for myself, I want to get a sense of how students were doing with MyPsychLab.

This summer, I didn't use discussion boards in the online classroom—I just assigned the workbook and the MyPsychLab activities (which counted for 25% of the final grade). The scores on the final exam actually averaged a bit higher than in the spring, so clearly the material helped them do well on our common final, which is our goal.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyVirtualChild

An interview with
Professor Mary Hughes Stone
San Francisco State University
San Francisco, CA

Course Information

I use MyDevelopmentLab with MyVirtualChild in the course Developmental Psychology – Lifespan Development. I have also used this program in Child Development and, in the fall, I will teach Adolescent Development using MyDevelopmentLab with MyVirtualTeen. I have about 120 students per section. Students taking this course are either psychology majors or child and adolescent development majors. This is a traditional lecture course, worth three credit hours. We use one of two texts, *Child Development* or *Development Across the Lifespan*, by Robert Feldman. The course objectives are for the student to attain an understanding of lifespan development from prenatal development through death, to understand the supporting theoretical models, and to understand the terminology and concepts associated with lifespan development.

Assessment

12.5% of the final grade is completion of the MyVirtualChild program, 12.5% is a paper on an area of interest in developmental psychology related to MyVirtualChild, and 75% of the final grade is traditional testing.

Implementation

Last semester, I decided to use one of the activities suggested in the MyVirtualChild User's Manual. I had students choose a topic that compelled them while they were raising their Virtual Child, such as traumatic brain injury, divorce, sibling relationships, birth order, etc. Students had to find a peer review journal article on this subject, then write a paper relating the scholarly article to their experience as a virtual parent with their Virtual Child. Using the MyVirtualChild program enabled my students to explore an area of interest in developmental psychology related to their Virtual Child, and enabled me to correct and return their papers in a timely way. I have over 300 students per semester, and I do all paper grading myself. This assignment is ideal for my course because it provides an engaging learning experience for my students and it is manageable for me to assess and give feedback.

Benefits

I have been using MyDevelopmentLab with MyVirtualChild for over five years. Before using MyVirtualChild, I would have my students visit an on-campus preschool/child study center for observation. This was not a great situation because I felt it was too intrusive to the preschool, I did not have enough time to prepare and monitor my students, and it was not an ideal way for them to actually observe children and their issues. MyVirtualChild affords my students the opportunity to acquire the same kinds of perspectives and viewpoints as they would from an observation with real children, plus the Virtual Child becomes personally relevant for each student.

We are a large urban campus and many of our students commute. Some have families and work part-time or full-time. In the past, when I did live observations at the pre-school, it was difficult for many students to schedule their free time into the school's observation time. With MyVirtualChild, students can work on the program whenever it is convenient for them. MyVirtualChild optimizes student success, because it allows them the flexibility to complete all the requirements and have the same experiences within their own schedule.

In the first four weeks of class, I try to call on everyone and ask how things are progressing with their Virtual Children, how they are raising their child, and if they are raising it with anyone else. We talk about relationships and parenting. MyVirtualChild lets students add their own cultural context to the program. I ask my students how they named their child. Some name their child based on their cultural heritage, some just like the name, and some do research on names. Students get to hear from their fellow classmates about their cultural perspectives, whether they are mainstream American or Latino or Filipino, and get a full complement of the cross-cultural issues and perspectives in a very real way. It is a more natural, organic process of sharing cross-cultural experience than students would receive from their textbook alone.

I have a pretty heterogeneous class. Some of my students still do not have good study skills. I encourage them to use MyDevelopmentLab's study tools. If a student gets a poor grade on an exam and comes to talk to me or my TAs, we give them tips on how to study more effectively.

My TAs are very encouraging and can give first-hand advice on how they personally used the program to succeed, taking Pre- and Post-Tests and using the flashcards to study. Some students are very reluctant to approach me, and are more open to approaching a fellow student, so the TAs are a great peer resource.

I had a student who had received a failing grade on an exam come to me for help. I encouraged him to use the available resources and the flashcards. I recommended that he print the flashcards out, put them on a binder ring, and carry them around with him so he could study at different times. He did this and he raised his score by thirty points! In large lecture classes, students are often alone when it comes to studying. MyDevelopmentLab serves as a great support system in this type of situation.

Conclusion

MyDevelopmentLab has resources that students can access if they cannot attend office hours or if they are reluctant to approach a faculty member. It gives them a starting point to ask questions and help them learn their weaknesses. For students who work or have families, MyDevelopmentLab is conveniently available 24/7. My students really like using the technology and I like using a program that engages my students and helps them be more successful.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyVirtualChild

An interview with
Henry "Skip" Keith
Instructional Director
Delaware Technical &
Community College
Wilmington, DE



Course Information

I use MyVirtualChild and MyDevelopmentLab in the three-credit course Human Development, taught online. The book in use is Feldman's *Development Across the Lifespan*. About two sections are offered per semester, and the online course is capped at 25 students.

Human Development is a required course for allied health students, including nursing students. Drug and alcohol counseling students have it as choice for one of their required courses. I also have many students registered at other colleges who are taking this course while home for the summer.

Most of our students will be working in the health and science community—they will be practitioners. My course is geared towards application and critical thinking, not just rote memorization. This is one of the primary reasons that I like MyVirtualChild—it gives students a place to try and apply what they are learning; a frame of reference for both those who have never been parents and those who have been parents. It has worked well.

I host one optional orientation meeting in-person to go over the whole course. With assistance from my Pearson rep, I have provided my students with documents that walk them through the registration process for MyVirtualChild and MyDevelopmentLab and include a list of common technical problems. I would definitely recommend using them!

Assessment

MyVirtualChild counts for 55% of the final grade. This includes completing the program and five written assignments. The written assignments are taken from the three questions the program asks at each of the five benchmarks. The questions prepare the students to think about application of the different theories. I require a minimum of four pages, double-spaced.

Four multiple-choice exams count for 45% of the final grade. I have incorporated multiple-choice exams into the course because most of our students will be taking certification and licensure tests and they need to get comfortable with this type of test format.

Implementation

For the online course, I use MyDevelopmentLab as an additional resource. It is my goal to provide students with as many resources as possible for their diverse learning styles. I like MyDevelopmentLab because it has auditory and visual resources. MyDevelopmentLab's practice tests give students multiple attempts to improve their competency and self-assess. The students who do make use of MyDevelopmentLab tend to test better, and I tell my class that.

We require a 75% competency for all objectives—failures cannot be averaged in to the final grade. I allow students one attempt to show that they have raised their competency around the assessment, but if they fail another objective, they fail the course. Recently I have been looking at ways for students to complete assignments in MyDevelopmentLab to show that they have increased their competency.

At the end of the MyVirtualChild program, I require students to respond to the eighteen-year-old questions and the two personal questions. The instructor's manual recommends that this be used as extra credit but I make it mandatory so that I can get feedback about their experience. It has provided me with some interesting information about how the MyVirtualChild assignments have impacted students, their thinking, and how they see themselves. That is why I like it.

Benefits

One of the challenges of a required human development course is that students question why they have to take the course. I spend time talking with my students about why this class is important and why it is required. I tell them, "Apply what you learn to your patients, clients, and use it for yourself, as a practitioner."

Students do not always think about the consequences of real-life issues. I like MyVirtualChild because it includes scenarios

MyVirtualChild

which cause students to think about child development and the kinds of things that result from a combination of genetics and environment. The curve balls in the program mimic life and, hopefully, they get students to think more broadly.

Conclusion

MyVirtualChild creates a frame of reference for students, especially for young students who have not had kids or do not have a lot of experience with children. If you work through the MyVirtualChild program, you understand that having a child is a huge commitment. It is often romanticized, and we need to educate young people. The MyVirtualChild program gives students the application to understand a child's development. Most of my students have honestly reported that they got a lot out of the program and they were glad it was part of the course.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyVirtualChild

An interview with
Professor Gwynn Mettatal
Indiana University South Bend
South Bend, IN



Course Information

We use MyVirtualChild in the course Psychology of Childhood and Adolescence (three credits) in the department. Generally three to four sections are offered per semester with 30–35 students in each section. I teach one section per semester in a face-to-face classroom. One of our instructors is developing an online version of the course that will include MyVirtualChild.

Students taking this course are sophomores through seniors. Usually about 50% of our class is comprised of Elementary Education majors, 25% are Psychology majors or minors, and the remaining 25% are taking it as an elective. Over half of our students are full-time, traditional-age, commuters, but a significant minority is older, and many are parents with one or more children of their own.

Course Objectives

- Describe normal child development and its common variations
- Describe and discuss the major theories of child and adolescent psychology and the current status of those theories
- Understand the research methods used in this field
- Describe the most important research studies in the field, as well as some of the newest findings
- Describe the practical implications of the theories and research for parents, teachers, and others
- Apply this knowledge to a variety of situations

Assessment

I usually have four essay-and-multiple-choice exams, worth 100 points each. The four MyVirtualChild papers are worth 25–50 points each, so they count anywhere from 25% to 40% of the final grade, depending on the semester. I like to have a significant portion of the points come from written work done outside of class so that students have a chance to think more reflectively about the material.

Implementation

I have used MyVirtualChild every semester since fall of 2007. I was one of the first adopters. In most semesters, I have required it of all students. Students are allowed to “raise” their child however they want. Most try to make the best choices possible, but some have deliberately made “bad” choices to see what would happen. I tell them that their grade will depend on how well they can apply course concepts to understand their child’s development, not on how well their child turns out.

Child Psychology courses can be organized in two very different ways: chronologically (infant, then toddler, and so on, finishing with teens) or topically (physical development at all ages, then cognitive development, and then social development). MyVirtualChild is designed for a chronological class—you raise your child chronologically and answer questions as they arise. I teach my course with a topical orientation, so this format doesn’t work for me. After several semesters of experimentation (including a year teaching chronologically), I have found a way around this problem.

My solution is that I have students raise their child all the way to age eighteen at the beginning of the course, which takes about eight hours. (They ignore the questions that pop up periodically.) I tell them, “This is how most people raise their kids, without taking Child Psychology first.” I encourage them to get advice from friends, parents, or parenting manuals, and I also encourage them to raise the child with the input of a spouse or partner. I have them turn in a short paper answering a few questions like, “How did your child turn out, who did you ask for help, did you have any technical problems” so I know that everyone has raised their child.

Then I chose some of the questions given by the program (and listed in the Instructor’s Manual) for each major topic. After the students take the exam about physical development, they write a paper answering questions about physical development, citing as many course concepts as possible. (The program allows them to review their child’s development, but they cannot change anything.) I added the question “Now that you know more about this physical development, what is one thing you would have done differently as a parent?”; I also ask, “What’s one idea that you think is important that I didn’t ask about and why?” and “What are three ideas that you think are important to remember from this unit?” It ends up being a four- to five-page paper covering the most important concepts from that unit. We continue through the semester with a paper after each exam. I grade the papers using a rubric that assesses how thoroughly and accurately students use course concepts in their answers. They must cite their text or a particular lecture for each concept. We occasionally have discussions during class involving the Virtual Child. For example, when I

am discussing theory of mind, I can ask how many students had children who told lies. (All of them do!) One of my colleagues has what she calls “backyard meetings” where the students pretend to be parents hanging out in the backyard chatting about their children.

Benefits

I chose to use MyVirtualChild because it seemed like an engaging, interactive way for students to apply core concepts to an (almost) real situation. The program has exceeded my expectations, and continues to improve every semester. This program is extremely engaging for almost all students. I make it clear to students that the program uses their decisions to change the child’s outcome. This gives it a game-like quality, and sometimes students become very caught up in their “child’s” progress. The first semester I had a student who came to class every day telling what his child was doing. His group members teased that they were going to make up a tee-shirt that said, “My Virtual Child is better than your Virtual Child!” I was worried that parents would find the simulation too artificial, but they have enjoyed seeing what will happen if they continue in their current parenting practices. One grandparent raised his child the way he *wished* he had parented his kids!

Students have often said they’ll be talking about their Virtual Child and people don’t realize that it isn’t a real child. One woman told me that her six-year-old son asked, “When is this boy going to come play with me?” Some students have let their teenagers help raise their Virtual Child, leading to some very insightful discussions. A few have purchased MyVirtualChild access codes as gifts for expectant parents.

My favorite feature is that the program uses an initial questionnaire to feed in a student’s own characteristics so that the Virtual Child has a genetic component. Several semesters ago, I had a student with high functioning autism. At the start of the semester he said, “This program is really good because I’ll probably never have a child of my own.” After he finished raising his child, he came to me and said, “I think my child’s autistic.” As we reviewed the child’s behaviors, I had to agree that she was probably on the autism spectrum, although very high functioning. We looked back at the options he chosen, and saw that whenever the choice was for his child to do something social (like play with friends) or to do something cognitive (like go to the museum), he always chose the cognitive option. He realized that as the parent, he was providing both the genetics and the environment that would lead to these characteristics—the double whammy that often happens in real life.

Although my assessments focus on the correct application of concepts, one powerful benefit of the program is that it shows students how genetics, parenting choices, and outside factors can combine to influence child outcomes. For example, Virtual Children may have accidents, be diagnosed with a learning disability, or get in with a bad group of friends. Parent reactions can make some difference in those situations, but cannot always erase the problem. On the other hand, students can see where their parenting practices *do* have a big impact, through their child’s behaviors and reports from doctors, teachers, and others.

My favorite story about the power of MyVirtualChild concerns a student who had a two-year-old son. He had seemed very resistant to the ideas of authoritative parenting, and alternatives to spanking. In his final paper, which focused on the impact of parenting style, he said he was shocked to realize that he had parented his Virtual Child (*and* his real child) just as his parents did, even though he had been trying to parent differently. He realized that he was being cold, controlling, and punitive, particularly when his Virtual Child became a teen. He was sad to see the poor relationship between himself and his virtual son, as well as his virtual son’s shallow relationships with others. Among his comments, “I was shocked, in hindsight, by how much like them (his parents) I really am... Thank god for this class right now before my son gets old enough for me to start making those same mistakes with him... I am so grateful for having learning this lesson now and with a computer kid before it was too late with my own son... all young adults should have to go through MyVirtualChild before having children.” He ended by saying, “Thank you from the bottom of my heart. My son will thank you one day as well.”

Conclusion

MyVirtualChild is a terrific addition to a Child Psychology course! If you decide to use it, I would recommend that you raise a child yourself first to understand how the program functions and how it can fit into your class. Better yet, raise *two* children, varying your parenting choices. This lets you appreciate the power of the program. I would encourage downloading the Instructor’s Manual. It’s very thorough, gives details about the program, teaching suggestions, as well as all of the student questions and scoring keys. The MyVirtualChild program requires no technological input by the instructor—I just put information about the papers in the syllabus and the rest. If students have technical problems, the website has a phone number as well as a live chat feature. You can set up a classroom identification number so that you can track student progress, but that is not required.

The developers have been very responsive to suggestions and concerns. Almost every semester, the program has featured improved graphics, added instructive information, or incorporated more situations and choices. I always look forward to seeing what will be new each year!

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyFamilyLab

An interview with
Professor Larry Rosenberg
Millersville University
Millersville, PA



Course Information

I teach several sections of Sociology of the Family on-campus during the academic year, as well as five online sections during intersession and in the summer. I rely more on MyFamilyLab for the online course than for the traditional on-campus course.

Sociology of the Family covers patterns in family life and how they have changed over time. I emphasize how larger social factors such as social movements, wars, politics, and the economy affect family life and changes. Discussion includes multicultural aspects of the family, such as differences by race and ethnicity. I also want students to be able to interpret data, such as census data, about subjects such as poverty, family size, types of families, divorce, etc.

Most students are traditional college age, but some are older, particularly in the online course. Millersville is a small state university in a rural area. Most students are from Pennsylvania, many from rural areas, some from urban areas. The caliber and GPA of students varies.

Assessment

For my online course, discussions count for 25%, assignments count for 25%, and two tests count for 50% of the final course grade. The on-campus course has a different breakdown and also includes a paper.

Considering only the online course, MyFamilyLab is necessary for many of the assignments and for test preparation. Many assignments and some discussions require students to view videos on MyFamilyLab and then compare material from the videos with the text, articles on reserve, and/or their own observations. I also recommend that students take the Pre-Tests and Post-Tests and use other MyFamilyLab material as they work on each chapter and when they study for tests.

Implementation

I have been using Benokraitis' text for years. However, when I started teaching online, using MyFamilyLab seemed like a very good way to help transform my traditional on-campus course to an online course. I also needed to keep up with my increasingly "connected" students who are more interested in doing their work online, at times that suit them.

I use MyFamilyLab primarily for videos that are required for assignments or discussions, and for recommended review/study. I enjoy including media assets such as ABC News videos—20/20 and Primetime—because they are generally well produced, timely, and on subjects that are interesting and well related to the course.

Benefits

MyFamilyLab helps bring my courses up to date by using more online resources. Using the technology has made teaching online more manageable, because of the relatively easy-to-use material that is coordinated with the text. MyFamilyLab makes it convenient for students to find course content for assignments and to access review material.

Conclusion

I will continue to use MyFamilyLab. I think it is a good resource and like having it available for students to use as a supplement to the on-campus courses. For the online courses, it is very important to have a site such as MyFamilyLab that has media and study resources that are integrated with the text.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MyFamilyLab

An interview with
Carol Holdt, Senior Instructor
Portland State University
Portland, OR



Course Information

I have been using MyFamilyLab for one year in my online Marriage and Intimacy course, an upper-division course within the American Family theme. Since I have been teaching this course fully online, it has become particularly popular and easily fills to capacity each term.

At Portland State, most of my students tend to be working, and many of them are parents—not average college students. We are a commuter college. Most students have busy lives with a lot of responsibility and this course is very applicable to their daily life experiences. Marriage and Intimacy is not required for sociology majors, but it is required for the Child and Family Studies major.

Assessment

Weekly discussion assignments using MyFamilyLab count for 20% of the final grade. In addition, some students use the practice tests and other resources on MyFamilyLab, which positively affects their writing and test scores. There are also two exams and a three-part writing assignment.

Implementation

My course is set up with weekly modules. Every week, I assign something for students to read, view, or listen to in MyFamilyLab. Then I provide specific questions for them to address in their group discussions. I also incorporate MyFamilyLab's research and writing resources for the major writing assignment of the course. I use the Pearson Test Bank for students' weekly quizzes.

My favorite feature is the Multimedia Library. I am so impressed with the audio and visual clips. They add a lot of functionality to my course. On busier weeks in the term, I tell students to visit the Multimedia Library. If they find an Explore, Listen, or Watch feature that interests them, they share it with the class, saying why they chose the piece and how it is relevant to the course. Students really like this!

Benefits

MyFamilyLab has definitely been a positive addition to my course. I am really happy with it. I usually have 300 students per term, and I do not have a lot of free time. MyFamilyLab makes my life much easier! Students have many more options, too. The tools in MyFamilyLab help them study and prepare for exams and also make the course more interesting.

One of the challenges of teaching a course that incorporates links from external websites is having no control if a site changes or is no longer active. I know all the Pearson resources are stable; it is much more reliable than our in-house Blackboard. As an instructor, that kind of stability and reliability are important to me.

Conclusion

Students have said, "These labs are great!" They are becoming increasingly familiar and comfortable with Pearson MyLab technologies and have used them in their other classes. I am very happy with what I do use in MyFamilyLab and in the future, I would like to utilize even more features. I definitely will continue to use Pearson products.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MySocLab

An interview with
Professor Myriam Levy
Los Angeles Mission College
Los Angeles, CA



Course Information

We have been using MySocLab for close to five years. I teach several courses using MySocLab, including Introduction to Sociology. The Pearson text in use is *Society in Focus* by Thompson and Hickey. We also use MySocLab for the courses Social Psychology, Family: A Sociological Perspective, Research Methods, and Social Problems. We offer both traditional and online versions of Introduction to Sociology, which is a general education requirement at our community college.

Assessment

For the face-to-face Introduction to Sociology class, there are three exams, four web assignments posted on MySocLab, and two papers. MySocLab counts for about 25% of the final grade. However, if students aren't using the lecture outlines posted on MySocLab, that will drastically affect their performance because they won't know what I am going to cover in class and what will be on the exams. In a different course I teach, students are required to do four web exams on MySocLab. They might also be required to do discussion boards and other web assignments that count toward their final grade. It varies for each class.

Implementation

I enjoyed using MySocLab so much for my online classes that I decided to transition to using it for my face-to-face classes. On a day-to-day basis, I use MySocLab to post web assignments, extra credit, and lecture outlines which students print and bring to class for note taking. I also post review sheets for exams on MySocLab. Students are required to complete at least four web assignments, such as posting a discussion board or an essay through MySocLab. In some of my other classes, students use MySocLab to take online tests outside of class, which frees up more time in the classroom.

Special Project Highlight

Every year, my students and I participate in a citywide event called "Denim Day," an educational awareness day about sexual violence prevention. I post all of the assignments related to the event to MySocLab. Students complete on-campus activities such as interviewing students and campus security officers and conducting library research. Students then post their findings on MySocLab—pictures, video, surveys, reports, etc. To complete the learning experience, students participate in a discussion board where they share what they learned from participating in the event.

Benefits

MySocLab is my sidekick in and out of the classroom. It's both a time-saving tool and a great educational support. Because my entire class is logged on to MySocLab, it makes communication easy. Now they're logging themselves in to MySocLab to check messages I post about the class, assignments that are due, test review sheets, reminders about related events, and their grades. If I'm running behind on a lecture, I'll put an assignment on MySocLab and ask students complete it by the end of the week—and it just gets done! MySocLab is also a solution to the problems that ensue from diminishing resources and budgets. In the past, I would have compiled a packet for my students, but our college no longer has a printing budget. As a creative, affordable solution, we use MySocLab. It's really the only way we can continue to teach and still have a proper academic environment. In the end, it's a win-win situation.

Conclusion

The best advice I would give instructors is that they should be completely trained on how to use the MySocLab program. I was trained a few years back and can pass on my knowledge to others, but I've also had Pearson come in to train my faculty. We also have instructors complete a class on how to teach online. There's a whole pedagogy involved—constant communication with students, reminder emails, posting grades frequently so students know how they're doing at all times, and giving realistic assignments so you can keep up with grading. Our school's distance education committee has requirements to ensure a quality online class. Students today are very technologically savvy; it's amazing how well they respond to using MySocLab.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MySocLab

An interview with
Professor Keith Whitworth
Texas Christian University
Fort Worth, TX



Course Information

I use MySocLab in my traditional Introductory Sociology course. The course is a requirement for sociology majors, as well as for other majors. The student demographic consists of traditional, residential students. I teach two sections every semester; each section has about 45 students. I've been teaching at TCU for 12 years and I've been using MySocLab ever since it came out.

Assessment

Ten MySocLab assignments count for 15% of the final grade.

Implementation

I use MySocLab for two main purposes: as a student study aid and for assignments. I highly encourage students to do the Pre- and Post-Tests, the practice quizzes, the crossword puzzles, and the other available study aids that are on MySocLab. I communicate that this will help them prepare for the exams. Though I don't tell them upfront, I take some of the exam questions from MySocLab verbatim. After the first exam, I ask students, "Did you notice that these questions are straight from MySocLab?" I'll get quizzical looks from many, but after they realize what's going on, students start using the online review materials.

The second way I use MySocLab is for "Exploration" assignments that are required for every chapter we cover and are posted online within eCollege. Each assignment is different and involves MySocLab. For the assignment in chapter one, students select the "Watch" section on MySocLab and view the video "Understanding Society and Social Behavior." Then they have to answer questions based on the video such as, "What is the importance of sociological theory to understanding a society and social behavior?" Next, they have to go into a section in MySocLab called "Visualize" to view major specialties in sociology. Then they answer the question "Which of the specialties most interests you and why?" I have them combine all four questions into the Exploration assignment and then upload it to eCollege.

MySocLab is great because it provides the content for me to create assignments. From each chapter, I pick out something from MySocLab that is pertinent to what we're going to talk about in class and will stimulate students to think about the material. For example, in Chapter 3, students watch the video entitled "Culture: Making Meaning." Students then complete the questions, "How do you define culture from your own perspective?" and "What do sociologists mean by 'culture'?" It's a real benefit for students to view these interesting interviews with articulate individuals who are prominent in the field. These videos allow students to interact with and learn from sociology professors at reputable universities.

Benefits

Because my class is not just a straight lecture-based course, students are happy when I switch things up with MySocLab, keeping class fresh and interactive. Students do their Exploration assignments outside of class time, but I also use MySocLab video and audio clips during class time. It's useful in class because they've already interacted with the material for homework and now we're going to talk about it in class and go over it again.

Every semester I'll experiment with using different multimedia items on MySocLab. For example, in Chapter 8, students have to go to the "Listen" section and choose "Low Wage America", an NPR interview clip. MySocLab presents different ways to utilize all the different learning styles—viewing, listening, manipulating a map. It keeps it interesting for the students because they don't know what's coming up for that next assignment. It makes the course more interactive and engages students in myriad ways.

Conclusion

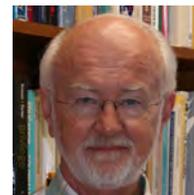
The biggest impact MySocLab has is that it provides the students an opportunity to engage with the material outside of the classroom. I find that valuable because when they're working throughout the week on their assignments, they're able to engage more in the classroom because they've thought about these videos or interviews. It takes the content to another level because the students have to come prepared. I believe that the discussions in the class are more valuable and richer because students are engaging with MySocLab.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MySocLab

An interview with
Professor Jim Jones
Mississippi State University
Mississippi State, MS



Course Information

We've been using MySocLab for the past two years in our traditional, lecture-based Introduction to Sociology course (three credit hours). We have about 800 students (10—12 sections) a semester and both faculty and doctoral students teach the class. Students are mostly freshmen, brand new to campus and college. The course is required for Sociology majors and fulfills the social science elective for our General Education requirement. We use a custom version of Macionis' *Sociology*. We selected chapters out of Macionis' text and then added additional readings.

In this course I try to cover the gamut, but, essentially, I want students to take away some understanding of a sociological perspective, a sociological imagination. I hope that after taking the course, students see things more sociologically than they did before.

Assessment

Exams are worth 45% of the final grade. These include multiple-choice and essay questions, as well as bivariate tables for which I require students to identify and interpret the independent and dependent variables. In addition, the exams require students to draw and explain a conceptual map. Four papers are worth 20% of the final grade. The first paper is on social networking, the second is on a simulation activity we do in class, and the third and fourth papers are on social stratification. For the third paper, students have to present and interpret Census data from a U.S. state over a 50-year period to report changes in social class and occupational mobility. For the fourth paper, students must present a synopsis of the last four generations of their family—what they did for work and how much education they had. MySocLab Post-Tests count for 20% of the final grade. For each chapter we cover, students must first read and study the chapter, then take the Pre-Test. Based on their Pre-Test results, they must figure out what they need to review and re-read, then take the Post-Test. Their average score on the Post-Tests counts for 20% of their grade. Finally, attendance and class participation count for 15% of the final grade.

Implementation

The primary way we incorporate the technology is by assigning MySocLab's Pre- and Post-Tests for each chapter. I am most impressed with the Pre-Test analysis. Based on students' answers, the technology indicates what specific sections of the chapter they need to study in order to get the questions correct. This is very helpful in reviewing for exams.

I often play some of the videos or audio segments from MySocLab in class. The fact that there is content from other sociologists on MySocLab gives credibility to the field and helps students understand that people other than me share the sociological perspective. I also really like Social Explorer because there are a variety of assignments for each chapter and not everyone will have the same assignment. I plan on using more of the automatically graded resources on MySocLab in the fall for homework. Several times during the semester, I go over the resources on MySocLab to help students remember what's available to them. I encourage them to use study materials such as the flashcards and crossword puzzles, which are quite useful.

Benefits

With MySocLab, I no longer have to give quizzes in class. The Pre- and Post-Tests are taken online, independently, outside of class time. I set deadlines and the tests get graded automatically. Using MySocLab has also provided helpful multimedia materials for use in teaching the course.

Conclusion

The students who use the Pre-Tests, Post-Tests, and study plan correctly really make good use of it and they get good grades. It really pays off for them. They take the Pre-Test, maybe score 70 or 80 and then come back and do much better on the Post-Test. This next semester, I'm excited to integrate MySocLab even more into the curriculum for the department. We'll ensure all students have access codes to the technology and we will make sure all Post-Tests are required. With this approach, MySocLab will be even more effective in the future.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MySocLab

An interview with
Professor Chris Von Der Haar
Indiana University
Bloomington, IN



Course Information

MySocLab is used for our three-credit Introduction to Sociology course, along with Henslin's *Essentials of Sociology: A-Down-to-Earth Approach*. This is a traditional course, required for majors; it also fulfills a social science requirement. This course represents the largest enrollment in our department, with over 400 students in each section. About four years ago, my Pearson representative showed me MySocLab and I was just so amazed at what it offered. I actually requested to teach the course because I wanted to use the MySocLab technology!

Assessment

Four multiple-choice exams count for 88% of the final grade. Six assignments and attendance count for 12% of the final grade.

Implementation

MySocLab's Pre-Tests, Post-Tests, and chapter tests are totally indispensable for me. They work better than anything I've used in the past. In the course of teaching Introduction to Sociology since the mid-eighties, I've noticed that students today don't read. Students used to be able to study independently with just a regular textbook, and I would get 100% scores on exams. But that hasn't been the case for at least ten years. In the recent past, students would come in to my office hours and think their bad grade was the teacher's fault. They didn't know what they did wrong. Well, they didn't study and they didn't read their textbook! They weren't willing to put the effort in. I can't tell you how frustrated I was and how much time I was wasting. I had no way to hold them accountable. Now, using MySocLab's Pre-Tests, Post-Tests, and chapter tests, I can hold students totally accountable. I tell students to print them off so they can carry them around to study and review the questions. If they have problems, I tell them to bring in everything they've printed off and if they say "I don't have it," then I tell them what they must do before they come in to see me. It's not even necessary that I require MySocLab because once I tell students my policy, they know what they have to do. Since using MySocLab, I have had very few students coming in to my office hours because they quickly learn that if they do what I say, there's no excuse for getting anything less than an 80 on any of my exams. An A is possible for every student in a class like this if they put the time in.

Benefits

MySocLab is a godsend! When it comes to large lecture courses, MySocLab makes a huge difference. It makes the class totally manageable. Students come to class and they're enthused to talk about sociology. They're happy with the book and they love the technology. It's not just that they're getting a passing grade because the teacher has curved it—they actually *know* the material and they're ready to go to the higher level. Students who were doing poorly and then got with the MySocLab program saw their exams scores increase by two letter grades. By completing the Pre-Tests, Post-Tests, and chapter tests, and by following all the advice to revisit specific parts of a chapter, students told me they were able to understand the material and apply the concepts, rather than just memorize definitions. I have had students repeatedly tell me that they went from a D to no less than a B. Another student went from a D to a solid A! Also, MySocLab gives international students who have a language obstacle the opportunity to get comfortable with the language and the vocabulary before they take a test. They're getting As and Bs and they love it as well. They're very comfortable with it. Before using MySocLab, I always had to curve the grading by at least ten points. No one ever got a perfect score on the exam. With MySocLab, on a 60-question exam, the highest grades are 59, 59, 59. You can see why I'm enthused. Students don't come in to my office and complain anymore. They're happy with their final grades!

Conclusion

In the past, I have used The Intersections Collection but I realized that at least half of the articles are available in MySocLibrary and those come with the quizzes as well. These fabulous original excerpts are everything that you would want in terms of popular, valuable writings by sociologists. I also did not know the extent to which I could use Social Explorer. It's an extraordinary feature! Students can look at Census data for their hometown and their college town, and it just makes it real to them. I plan on using both MySocLibrary and Social Explorer for next fall. Textbooks have been a hard sell for my department. However, I think word of mouth spread that students in my classes this semester loved both the textbook and the technology and they are going to demand it for their other classes. The effectiveness of MySocLab shows in the enrollments for my classes next semester, in my students' improved grades, and in their enthusiasm in class.

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MySocLab

An interview with
Instructor Bridget Christensen
Southeast Community College
Lincoln, Nebraska

Course Information

I've been teaching for nine years and have used MySocLab for the past three quarters in my Introductory Sociology course. We use the Pearson text *Society: The Basics* by Macionis. Eight to twelve sections are offered each year with about 25–30 students in each section. We offer both traditional and online versions.

Everyone at this campus is a commuter. On our general campus, I would say at least one third are non-traditional students.

Assessment

Two exams are worth 20% each, attendance is worth 10%, class participation is worth 10%, and class projects (including two papers) are worth 30% of the final grade. Finally, one in-class quiz on major theories is worth 5% and ten MySocLab Post-Tests are worth 5%.

Implementation

Our Pearson representative told our department about MySocLab. Because some of our students are interested in online learning resources, I decided to go ahead and look into it. I'm so happy that I did because I really like it.

My classes take ten chapter Post-Test quizzes on MySocLab. I cover more than ten chapters in the semester, but I assign the quizzes only for the chapters where we cover the most information. In addition, students are required to do one research project. I tell them they can use all of the resources that are available to them through the textbook as well as on MySocLab.

I've also been using the supplementary resources for both instructors and students—like MySocLab's multimedia video clips—to help with my lectures. I recently used the video clip about group think. I have always lectured about how that material applies to the Space Shuttle Challenger Columbia and MySocLab includes a brief, five-minute clip that encapsulates my lecture in a far more entertaining way.

Benefits

We are on a quarter system and in-class quizzes really eat up class time that would be better spent on lecture and group exercises. I like the fact that students take MySocLab quizzes on their own time. Furthermore, the quizzes get graded and entered into the MySocLab Gradebook automatically, which is wonderful because I don't have to spend extra time outside of class grading quizzes!

I think students like the videos because the multimedia really grabs their attention. I use other online resources that aren't in MySocLab; however, with MySocLab, I don't have to search for resources that match material we are covering in class because it's already been done for me. That's nice!

Conclusion

I will definitely continue to use MySocLab for my upcoming courses. MySocLab appears to improve my students' test scores. It seems that the test scores of the students who use the resources on MySocLab and take the Post-Tests are higher than those of the students who opt out of doing them.

MySocLab is convenient for me and saves me time with grading. Also, with MySocLab, I have easy access to so much more information beyond the book to help students understand and get interested in the concepts we're covering in class. Students today are so much more media-centered than former generations. I think what makes MySocLab so appealing to students is that there's more to the class than just the textbook.

“One of the best things about the MyLab products is that they engage the students with a wide variety of activities.”

—David Goldfield

University of North Carolina, Charlotte