Welcome Letter

Dear Educator,

At Pearson, we define efficacy as a measurable impact on improving someone's life through learning. We are embarking on a global education initiative and dedicating ourselves to the pursuit of efficacy and improved learner outcomes.

The following pages highlight exemplar, data-driven case studies from two- and four-year institutions, as well as a list of proven MyLab best practices and tips for getting started with your own implementation.

Looking for more case studies? Visit Pearson's Results Library, an online repository of hundreds of data-driven case studies quantifying the positive impact of Pearson's digital learning solutions on learner outcomes. The Results Library is a comprehensive database cross-referenced by institution type, course format, state, and more; and it's easy to access at www.pearsonmylab.com/results.

We extend our deepest gratitude to all of the contributing instructors. Each instructor voluntarily, and without compensation, participated in preparing their case study and remained available for follow-up interviews. Such efforts are invaluable. We invite you to contact us with any questions about this report and to share your ideas, best practices, or a case study of your own. Pearson is happy to provide both consultation and data collection tools to help you measure the impact of a MyLab, Mastering, REVEL, or other digital learning solution in your course.

We look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

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Although each institution, course, and classroom is unique, instructors in higher education face a number of common teaching and learning challenges. This solutions-based table of contents will help you quickly and easily identify case studies that are most closely aligned with your course goals and challenges.

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Pearson’s Standards for Efficacy Research

At Pearson, we believe that learning is a life-changing opportunity and that education should have a measurable, proven impact on learners’ lives. That’s what Pearson’s efficacy program and tools are all about. Pearson is putting the pursuit of efficacy and learning outcomes at the center of its global education strategy, and you can read more at efficacy.pearson.com. When we publish our annual report in 2018, we will, in a rigorous and externally audited way, report on the progress we’ve made in improving learner outcomes.

Why Pearson Is Interested in Efficacy Studies

Learner outcomes have always been important to Pearson—our fundamental purpose is to help people make progress in their lives through learning. We already have many examples of products that can demonstrate their impact on learners, but going forward our aim is to ensure that our every action, decision, process, and investment is driven by a clear sense and a full understanding of how it will make a measurable impact on learning outcomes.

It is becoming increasingly possible to determine what works and what doesn’t in education, just as it is in healthcare. A growing body of research and evidence, advancements in technology, and our enhanced ability to harness the power of data offer huge opportunities to generate improvements in learning.

Pearson, as the world’s largest learning company, has both the potential—and the responsibility—to pursue and lead the conversation. And toward that goal, we actively seek out educators who wish to explore educational research questions and investigate the efficacy of our digital solutions and services.

Pearson’s Efficacy Research Team

Our global efficacy team is headed by Sir Michael Barber, a leading authority on education systems and reform. The North American Efficacy & Quality team is composed of more than 30 professionals dedicated to helping educators deliver desired learner outcomes.

We provide practical advice about the tracking and analysis of student data as part of the implementation of a Pearson digital solution. Experts in psychometrics, educational statistics, and journal publications are available to support instructors who want to (1) conduct efficacy studies, (2) provide our editorial staff with detailed reports on the quality of our online content, and (3) inform our software engineers of new methodologies for collecting and processing the student-learning data within our digital solutions.

How Pearson and Instructors Work Together

Every research project is unique. The process takes time—generally a semester or longer. Instructors interested in conducting studies should expect an interactive and rewarding partnership.

How Pearson Can Help Instructors Get Started

Pearson can provide templates, guidelines, questionnaires, checklists, and samples on course redesign, efficacy studies, data collection, and more. To maintain objectivity, Pearson does not offer compensation for participation in efficacy studies.

Research Standards

Pearson adheres to Software & Information Industry Association’s guidelines for evaluation of 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
Background

From 2010 to 2013, the governor of Missouri and Missouri’s public four-year institutions established a major course redesign initiative. The institutions partnered with the National Center for Academic Transformation (NCAT), utilizing the successful models and lessons learned from NCAT’s course redesign programs. Our Introductory Psychology course, which serves over 2,500 students each year, was selected as Missouri State University’s representative in this initiative and was one of the first to go through this redesign process.

Challenges and Goals

Despite being a popular course, Introductory Psychology had delivered less-than-satisfactory learning outcomes for many students. The course, before redesign, was lecture-based and typically taught by approximately 65 percent full-time faculty and 35 percent adjunct instructors. While there were common general education goals across all sections, each instructor was responsible for the choice of content and delivery of course material. This produced significant variability in what material was covered from section to section and led to “course drift” and inconsistent outcomes.

The goals we identified included improving student learning, reducing course drift, incorporating best practices teaching strategies, increasing course completion rates, and reducing institutional costs. Five full-time faculty members worked together as a team throughout the planning, pilot, and implementation of the course redesign. All sections were redesigned using the same syllabus, textbook, online course materials, and staffing plan.

Implementation

The redesign included significant changes to the staffing structure. The traditional course had one instructor per section. The redesigned course utilizes seven staff members per section including one full-time instructor, one Senior Learning Assistant (a graduate assistant or adjunct instructor), and five Undergraduate Learning Assistants. So, although the redesigned course seats 300 students per section compared to 153 in the traditional course, the ratio of staff to students decreased from 1:153 to 1:43.

To improve learning outcomes, we transformed the traditional course into a blended or hybrid course with a flipped classroom. In this model, students read their text and complete the MyPsychLab chapter study plan and media assignments prior to class, allowing for more active learning during class time.

Assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>48 percent</td>
<td>Unit exams (four)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18 percent</td>
<td>MyPsychLab chapter study plan and media assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16 percent</td>
<td>Comprehensive final exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.5 percent</td>
<td>Participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 percent</td>
<td>Study session attendance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 percent</td>
<td>Research participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.5 percent</td>
<td>Introduction letter + online training and quiz</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results and Data

Student learning gains have more than doubled, as measured by increases in a comprehensive pre- to posttest before redesign vs. after redesign with MyPsychLab (Figure 1). Further, more students are achieving overall course grades of A or B with MyPsychLab compared to previous semesters without MyPsychLab (Figure 2), indicating that many more students are now demonstrating mastery of the material. Additionally, despite having an already relatively inexpensive traditional course at $73...
Because students are reading the textbook and actively engaging with the material in MyPsychLab outside of class, they’ve started coming to class better prepared and more willing to participate in class discussions.

The Student Experience
One of the challenges we faced before the redesign was the inability to identify and proactively reach out to struggling students early in the semester. In the redesigned course, early intervention teaching strategies, were introduced. The combination of frequent online assignments in MyPsychLab, used formatively to identify students’ areas of weakness, and a staffing structure that allowed for more frequent and personalized monitoring of student progress, resulted in clear gains in learning.

Because students read the text and actively engage with the material in MyPsychLab outside of class, they come to class better prepared to participate in discussions. As a result, we now focus on more difficult concepts (based on students’ performance on MyPsychLab assignments) and incorporate more active learning strategies (e.g., use of clickers, classroom demonstrations, online activities) into the seated class period. The students report they find these methods more engaging, and data indicates they are achieving greater mastery of the course content.

Conclusion
After three years, and through the use of a number of quantifiable measures, we have clear evidence of the efficacy of our redesigned course. Further, we’ve accomplished the majority of our initial goals. Reducing the number of students who receive a grade of D or F, or who withdraw from the course, proved to be the most challenging goal; however, data from the past two semesters shows substantial reductions. Overall, we created an innovative class utilizing many best practices in teaching. We developed a course that reduced course drift, was implemented at a lower cost than its traditional counterpart, and—most important—resulted in greater student learning. Looking forward, we plan further research in an effort to better understand the impact MyPsychLab is having on specific groups, including low-income and first generation students.

References
MyReadingLab

School Name  Milwaukee Area Technical College, Milwaukee, WI
Course Name  Introduction to College Reading and Study Skills
Course Format  Blended (half lecture and hands-on learning activities, half MyReadingLab)

Key Results  Using MyReading Lab, students are improving their Lexile level an average of 125 points from the beginning to the end of the semester. Students who complete more than 21 topic posttests show the most significant improvement on the Mastery Check post-assessment.

Submitted by  Cynthia Galvan, Prepared Learner Initiative Reading and English Instructional Chair and Assessment Coordinator
Meredith Reeves, Professor
Course materials  College Reading & Study Skills, McWhorter; MyReadingLab

Background  Milwaukee Area Technical College (MATC) is a public two-year comprehensive technical college based in the city of Milwaukee, Wisconsin, with three satellite campuses. Enrollment in 2012–13 was 43,000. MATC emphasizes hands-on, job-focused skills training. When recent graduates were asked their primary reason for attending MATC, one-third said they needed job training with quick employment, one-third wanted to change careers, and one-sixth were preparing for further education.

Students are placed into College Reading and Study Skills based on their Accuplacer score. This fifteen-week, three-credit course is designed to provide learners with opportunities to develop and expand their comprehension, vocabulary, reading and study skills. Learners apply reading skills to academic tasks and read to acquire information from a variety of sources. In the 2013–14 academic year, fall and spring enrollment combined was approximately 800 students (~25 sections each semester with up to 20 students per section). A student must pass the course with a C or better to continue on to college-level course work within their program major.

Challenges and Goals  MyReadingLab was adopted in 2009 because there was a need to measure student outcome assessments at the college. These assessments evaluate the course and how well instructors are teaching. We believed that initial and final Lexile scores from MyReadingLab’s reading level area would work well for this purpose. In addition to having a solid data point, we felt MyReadingLab would provide effective skill-building exercises to help students become better readers and succeed in their academic and professional careers.

MyReadingLab is used in all sections of the course, but usage varies by instructor. To study the impact of different MyReadingLab implementations on student success, we measured data points such as Lexile level change, the impact Lexile readings have on Lexile level increases, the effect of topic posttest completion on the post-assessment, and the change from Path Builder diagnostic to Mastery Check post-assessment scores across all sections.

Implementation  [This section highlights the implementation of Professor Meredith Reeves. Professor Reeves’ sections showed the most improvement from Path Builder diagnostic to the Mastery Check post-assessment and from initial to final Lexile levels when compared to data from other sections. As a result, we are highlighting her effective implementation. See “Results and Data” for more information.]

The College Reading course at MATC is a blended course format, meaning half lecture and hands-on activities and half MyReadingLab. MyReadingLab assignments parallel each textbook chapter. We typically cover all 17 chapters, usually one per week, but as we progress through the textbook, shortened chapters allow us to cover two per week. When I lecture, I incorporate active learning strategies and group activities to increase students’ retention and understanding of the material. We complete MyReadingLab “Activities from Your Textbook” together as a class.
Students begin work in MyReadingLab by taking the Path Builder diagnostic and finish work in MyReadingLab by taking the Mastery Check post-assessment. Students have some class time to work on MyReadingLab, but the majority is completed as homework.

At the beginning of the semester, I hand out a worksheet listing all 27 reading skills topics students are required to complete in MyReadingLab. I find it is helpful for students to keep track of their progress with a physical and visual checklist. Fourteen topics are due before midterm, and 13 topics are due after midterm. I ask students to write down the posttest score they earn for each topic, provided it is 70 percent or higher. If students master a topic on the Path Builder, they record that as an “M.” Students complete their Learning Path modules three weeks before the end of the semester. I assign the Study Skills modules when we have time at the end of the course or to students who complete their Learning Path early.

I also assign the initial Lexile Locator diagnostic in class and ask students to complete two to three Lexile readings per week. Students record their initial and final Lexile scores on the worksheet and turn it in to me at the end of the semester to receive completion credit for their work in MyReadingLab.

In addition to MyReadingLab homework, students are given the following assignments:

- **Active reading strategy card:** I teach students how to take effective study notes; we use a laminated active reading strategy card, which summarizes the technique. I stress the importance of completing the study notes for assigned chapters before I lecture on a chapter. The card is durable, and students tell me they use it in many of their other college courses.
- **Vocabulary box:** Students create vocabulary cards related to their future career.
- **Vision board:** Students prepare a visual representation of their goals and dreams for the future on one PowerPoint slide and present it to the class around midterm. This gives the instructor and students an opportunity to learn more about one another.
- **Chapter 8 project:** Students locate six different graphics/visual aids (three displaying data related to their future career and three related to current events) and complete the assigned questions for each. Students present two of the graphics to the class.
- **Final project:** Students give a PowerPoint presentation that identifies and defines five strategies that they learned throughout the semester. Students demonstrate each strategy and give an example of how they will use each strategy in their future career.
- **Service learning:** Students get extra credit for donating children’s books to our book drive. I donate the books to a local elementary school. It is my intention to have students promote literacy in our local schools or at the child care center on campus.

### Assessments
* (Professor Reeves’ sections)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Component</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>65 percent</td>
<td>MyReadingLab and textbook assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20 percent</td>
<td>Participation, assignments, and quizzes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 percent</td>
<td>Final project</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 percent</td>
<td>Vision board</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Best practices
To make sure students are staying active in MyReadingLab and not falling behind, I log in to MyReadingLab at least twice a week to check student progress. I send weekly emails to individual students regarding their progress in MyReadingLab and the course, and I provide weekly course updates on Blackboard. I also send “shout outs” to the entire class when someone scores 100 percent on a posttest or to students who are making good progress.

—I am an ESL student, and Ms. Reeves’ style of teaching allows me to work at my own pace while improving my reading and speaking skills. MyReadingLab is great because the lessons are presented in different ways, and this helps me understand what I am reading.”

—Student
Results and Data

For the class sections that were active in Lexile Reading Level work during fall 2013 and spring 2014, students who completed an average of 18 reading selections showed an average increase in Lexile level from 940L to 1065L, a difference of 125L (Figure 1).

We wanted to find out if the number of Lexile readings a student completes has a direct impact on their Lexile level improvement from the beginning to end of the semester. Figure 2 shows a steady increase in Lexile levels as the number of readings a student completes increases. This has been useful information to show our students how their efforts will lead to success.

Because our instructors are implementing MyReadingLab in different ways, we wanted to study how the number of topic posttests completed in the reading skills Learning Path connects to success on the Mastery Check post-assessment. Figure 3 illustrates that the more topic posttests a student completes, the better the chance they have of achieving a higher Mastery Check score. When we looked at what sections were doing the best on the Mastery Check, we noticed students from Professor Reeves’ sections had some of the highest scores. Figure 4 compares Path Builder and Mastery Check scores in Professor Reeves’ sections to all other sections with Path Builder and Mastery Check data.

“To make sure students are staying active in MyReadingLab and not falling behind, I log in to MyReadingLab at least twice a week to check student progress.”

—Professor Reeves
The Student Experience

Although there is sometimes resistance from students who are uncomfortable using a computer, for the most part, students are agreeable to doing their course work online. MyReadingLab compels students to be engaged with the material. In addition, Professor Reeves’ students have noted that:

- “This class provides many opportunities for me to learn the information, and I do not feel rushed. After Ms. Reeves teaches the strategies and we practice the strategies, we then work independently in MyReadingLab.”

- “I enjoy using technology so MyReadingLab is easy to use and has helped me feel more confident when reading my college textbooks.”

- “I enjoy using MyReadingLab because I can see the progress that I am making and it helps me do better in my other courses.”

Conclusion

We believe that the MyReadingLab implementation Professor Reeves set in place for her sections led to better results on the Mastery Check post-assessment and increased Lexile levels. We will use these results to persuade other instructors to follow suit in their own sections, and to employ Professor Reeves’ best practices, such as emailing students to stay on track, giving students a checklist to fill out as they make progress on their Learning Path, etc. Although some instructors have trouble embracing technology, it is clear that when an instructor implements MyReadingLab in a way that is clear, consistent, and worth a significant portion of the course grade, students are more likely to do their assigned work and succeed in the process.
### Key Results
Better scores by students on MyReadingLab assessments consistently correlate with higher point increases when retaking the Compass exam, and more students are now passing the Compass and taking credit-bearing courses earlier.

### Background
Students scoring from 61–80 points on the Compass reading exam must take and pass Introduction to College Reading, a non-credit course, before enrolling in credit-bearing Composition 1. We offer 12–20 sections of this introductory course each semester, so a large number of students are taking developmental courses before proceeding on to their regular coursework.

### Challenges and Goals
We felt that having a self-paced, personalized digital program supplement our textbook and lectures could help students move forward more expeditiously. With so many students to serve, we decided to implement a blended learning classroom format that involved the use of computer-based instructional tools, so all instructors adopted MyReadingLab with a common eText.

### Assessments
- **35 percent** Compass retest (81+ score needed to receive full credit)
- **20 percent** MyReadingLab module posttests (26), Lexile Locator, text chapter exercises
- **20 percent** Unit tests (4)
- **15 percent** Reader’s workshop (response journal, activities, papers, visual projects)
- **10 percent** Vocabulary

### Implementation
Our first class meeting each week consists of a traditional lecture complemented by a mini-lesson from our textbook. This is followed by a dedicated computer lab day where students spend 50 minutes working through their MyReadingLab modules. I believe that having built-in lab time with an instructor present is vital to our students’ success, so I float around the room and help individual students as needed. For our third class meeting, we read and discuss a novel in depth to give students a well-rounded reading experience that includes longer and more sophisticated texts. During this meeting, I connect specific lessons in the textbook and in MyReadingLab to the novel.

In the lab meeting students take the Path Builder diagnostic and work intensively on their areas of weakness, according to their individualized Learning Path. They also work through all 26 MyReadingLab modules during the semester. However, even if students master a module on the Path Builder, they must still take the module posttest to demonstrate that they truly understand the content. For content not mastered on the Path Builder, students must work through the module’s Overview, Model, Animation, and Recall. If they achieve 100 percent on the Recall, they may then skip the practices and go directly to the posttest. We set mastery on the posttest at 80 percent and give the students three attempts to pass it.

MyReadingLab’s Item Analysis component in the Gradebook provides me with a good overview of students’ strengths and weaknesses. If I see that the class is not doing well on a certain topic, I will provide additional instructional support. We spend the final week of the semester prepping for the Compass retest, and I use MyReadingLab diagnostically at this time to guide my instructional decisions. Because we’re using the Bridging the Gap text-specific version of MyReadingLab, I assign many of the text exercises in MyReadingLab for homework; we also sometimes do them in class. The reading selection component encourages students to write more than ever.
As part of assigned MyReadingLab work, students take the Lexile Locater and do at least nine readings by the end of the semester. I give extra credit to students who do more than nine readings. Although this does not tip the scales on their final grade, it is a good incentive to read and will undoubtedly help improve their Compass posttest score. Finally, we have four unit tests that include Compass-style questions and passages, as well as skills learned in MyReadingLab. Students quickly come to see the relationship between doing their MyReadingLab work and succeeding on the Compass retest.

Results and Data

- Students who score well in MyReadingLab are more likely to have a larger increase on their Compass posttest (Figure 1).
- Students’ scores on the Compass test after the course increased by an average of 11 points (Figure 2).
- Over 73 percent of the students passed the Compass exam after taking this course with MyReadingLab.

The Student Experience

I have high expectations for my students because I’m trying to help them improve four to six years in reading skill level in a single semester, so I demand a lot from them. After completing this rigorous course, many students tell me that MyReadingLab was the most important thing helping them successfully retake the Compass exam.

Conclusion

As a department, we feel MyReadingLab is a success. We have seen evidence that, if students faithfully complete their MyReadingLab work, they are more likely to pass both the course and the Compass exam and be able to move ahead to credit-bearing courses.
Submitted by
Nikki Ware, Assistant Professor Transitional Education

Course materials
*The Master Reader*, Henry; MyReadingLab

We redesigned our developmental reading courses in response to the Kentucky Community and Technical College System’s (KCTCS) general directive to create courses that could accelerate students’ progress through remediation and on to college-level work. This initiative, a response to Senate Bill 1 (2009) urging all Kentucky schools to carefully examine how to improve postsecondary retention rates, asked each school to devise an accelerated developmental education curriculum as part of a general effort to assist underprepared students.

The following chart details course placement and acceleration options:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RDG 20 Compass at Midterm</th>
<th>RDG 20 Canvas at Finals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85-84</td>
<td>Accelerate to RDG 30 for second half of semester or next semester (or continue in second half of RDG 30)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-82</td>
<td>Accelerate to RDG 30 for second half of semester or next</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≤69</td>
<td>Continue in RDG 20 for remainder of semester*</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RDG 30 Compass at Midterm</th>
<th>RDG 30 Compass at Finals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85-84</td>
<td>Reading requirement completed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-82</td>
<td>Take RDG 30 next semester, providing grade of A, B, C</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≤69</td>
<td>Take RDG 20 again</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Compass at Finals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RDG 30 Compass at Finals</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>85-84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70-82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>≤79</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Assessments
33.3 percent | Attendance and participation
33.3 percent | In-class assignments, homework, and quizzes
33.3 percent | MyReadingLab modules (16)

Pass/Fail | Final exam / Compass reading test*

*Passing grades of A, B, and C will be awarded only to students who pass the Compass with a score of 70 or above.
Implementation
During the first half of the semester, students focus on seven key Reading Skills modules as well as material on Reading Level and Test-Taking Skills in MyReadingLab during lab days and cover corresponding topics in their text during classroom days. The goal is to prepare the students to score higher on their Compass retest at midterm and move immediately on to the next course in the sequence or to have completed their reading requirement and be ready for college-level work. During the second half of the semester, they work on vocabulary development and gain extensive practice reading non-fiction texts typical of material assigned in academic courses across the college curriculum. During this segment of the semester, students also work through nine additional modules in MyReadingLab. To demonstrate mastery on the MyReadingLab modules, students must score at least 70 percent, and they have two chances to get their best score. We provide a pacing guide so students know when the assigned modules must be completed.

Results and Data
- Students’ Compass scores improved an average of 9.09 points in fall 2013, an excellent improvement rate allowing 250 students (of 368) to pass the redesigned courses (Figure 1).
- At midterm, 44 students advanced one or more levels and 43 students tested out of developmental reading completely (Figure 2).
- At the end of the term, 70 students advanced one or more levels and 46 tested out of developmental reading completely. Six students accelerated through the two courses in one semester. In all, the redesign enabled 209 students to accelerate through one or more courses, saving them significant time and money (Figure 2).

The Student Experience
Because many of the students who are required to take developmental reading also have jobs, family, or other life obligations, the opportunity to complete RDG 20 or 30 in 8 weeks is an attractive option. It motivates students to apply themselves vigorously to the assigned coursework. Also, the redesigned courses help students save money: many of them now do not have to pay for as many developmental courses, and our Pearson rep works with us to provide one MyReadingLab access code and a single textbook that accommodate both RDG 20 and 30.

Conclusion
Our redesign was a team effort, spearheaded by a colleague with a background in assessment who drafted the plan we implemented. Our associate dean was also very supportive. Although it has taken some time and effort to get the entire staff on board, we tweak these courses as we go and make accommodations when appropriate. We will be meeting again at the end of this semester to evaluate the redesigned program and discuss other possible adaptations that might improve it further.

We are pleased with our results from fall 2013. We have seen clear evidence that our students can accelerate through or even test out of developmental reading in 8 weeks, and the time and money they save motivates them to push forward. Academic departments across our campus are eagerly waiting to enroll these students into a wide variety of credit-bearing courses, and with our accelerated format, more and better-prepared students are now moving into those courses sooner.

“In all, the redesign enabled 209 students to accelerate through one or more courses, saving them significant time and money.”
MySkillsLab

School Name  MiraCosta College, Oceanside, CA
Course Name  English Skills Lab (developmental reading and writing)
Course Format  Lab-based, self-paced

Key Results  With MySkillsLab, placement rates into credit-bearing courses have increased from 32 percent to 42 percent in English 100 (college-level writing) and from 46 percent to 60 percent in Reading 100 (college-level reading).

Submitted by  Angela Senigaglia, English Instructor
Course materials  Custom workbook, MySkillsLab

Background  MiraCosta’s Adult High School Diploma Program (AHSDP) prepares adults for higher education and increased employability in a supportive, challenging, accessible environment that respects and honors diversity. The program is designed for students 18 years of age or older who wish to complete the requirements for a high school diploma or prepare to take the GED. Courses are tuition-free; students pay for course materials only.

Challenges and Goals  The goal of English Skills Lab is to help students achieve reading and grammar competencies and be better prepared to enter into credit-bearing college courses. We chose to use MySkillsLab because it allows AHSDP students to work independently and at their own pace to gain the reading, writing, and grammar skills they need to take the program competency tests. Also, MiraCosta’s 2013 AHSDP Self-Study Postsecondary Report states that, “the institution is actively engaged in integrating new technology into the instructional program of the school.” Because technology literacy is critical to helping our students succeed in college and in life, using MySkillsLab gives them important experience in navigating the online world.

Implementation  The course is taken through the Computer Learning Lab. After a mandatory orientation session, students develop their individual schedule of attendance to meet the requirements for earning five high school credits. Student must complete the assigned work within the term and participate in a minimum of 48 hours of instruction.

Over eight weeks, students must spend at least six hours per week in MySkillsLab. They may come to the lab at any time, log in to the attendance tracking system, and complete their hours. Depending on their TABE score, students may need to take the reading and/or writing Path Builders (we use the shortened 55-question versions), after which they follow their individual Learning Paths. We set mastery for the posttest at 70 percent, and students have two chances to pass.

In a typical computer lab session, students work independently in MySkillsLab and take their posttests (we allow students to work on everything except the posttests outside of the lab). They answer questions in the workbook, record their post-test scores in the workbook, and present their workbook to the instructor on duty. Since this is an independent course with no lecture, this “mini-meeting” with the instructor serves as a checkpoint and holds students accountable. The workbook confirms that students are doing their work and not just clicking through the material. Students also complete writing assignments in MySkillsLab because we believe it is important for them to have practice with composing on the computer.

To give students a fast track to the competency tests, we allow them to take the Skills Check within the MySkillsLab modules to demonstrate topic mastery and test out of certain topics. Students who do not do well on the competency test the first time are assigned more work in MySkillsLab before they retake the test.

Often students need more than eight weeks to complete the course, so we allow them to enroll up to four times. We always start each term by having students take the Path Builder so they can see their improvement from term to term. After retaking the Path Builder, students pick up where they left off in their MySkillsLab Learning Path and in the workbook.

Assessments  
80 percent  MySkillsLab posttests and writing assignments
20 percent  Competency tests (4)
“Students who complete their MySkillsLab coursework and take the college placement test are placing in much greater numbers into English 100.”

Results and Data

Students who complete their MySkillsLab coursework and take the college placement test are placing in much greater numbers into English 100.

At the end of the 2011–12 school year, approximately 32 percent of AHSDP students who took the college placement test placed in English 100: Composition and Reading. By 2013–14, 42 percent of students were placing into English 100 (Figure 1).

Additionally, while 46 percent of students placed into Reading 100: Critical Reading and Thinking in 2013, this figure rose to 60 percent in 2014, following a greater programmatic emphasis on the reading portions of the MySkillsLab program (Figure 2).

Evidence of the program’s success is that, while enrollment for the English Skills Lab course has steadily increased, our retention rate has also risen as students adjusted to the increased rigor of our curriculum. In fall 2012, we offered eight sections of English Skills Lab and had a 70 percent retention rate. By fall 2014, we had increased to 10 sections per semester with a retention rate of 85 percent (Figure 3).

Benefits

The course tools in MySkillsLab allow me to see how much time students spend working in the program, which informs my conversations with students about how their study efforts correlate with success or failure. While most students work in the computer lab, many want tools available outside of class. MySkillsLab allows students to access their work whenever and wherever they want.

Conclusion

Because we’ve seen such success with this course, we are working with MiraCosta’s testing center to offer MySkillsLab as a non-credit boot camp for other students who want to take advantage of this opportunity. We hope more students will be able to use MySkillsLab to prepare for and succeed on the college placement test, going directly into college credit-bearing courses from the start.

Finally, one of my long-term goals is to increase the number of AHSDP students enrolling at our college. We communicate clearly to the students that their work in English Skills Lab prepares them to succeed as college students. MySkillsLab has proven to be a rigorous and effective program; I feel confident that students leave our program ready for the future.
MySpanishLab

CASE STUDY

School Name  Metropolitan Community College, Omaha, NE
Course Name  Elementary Spanish I
Course Format  Hybrid, online, face-to-face

Key Results  Final exam area scores in the hybrid course format average three percentage points higher than in the online course format and eight percentage points higher than in the face-to-face course format.

Submitted by  Dallas R. Jurisevic
Course materials  ¡Arriba!, Zayas-Bazan; MySpanishLab

Background  Metropolitan Community College is an open institution with five campuses. We are on an 11-week quarter system. The average age of our students is 27. We offer an Associate’s degree in Spanish, and many students take Elementary Spanish I (7.5 credits) as a prerequisite.

Elementary Spanish I is the first of two introductory courses where students begin to learn the fundamentals of Spanish. We cover comprehension, pronunciation, speaking, listening, reading, writing, vocabulary, and a study of Spanish-speaking cultures. Most students enrolled have had little to no experience with the Spanish language. Elementary Spanish I is offered as a traditional class, online, and as a hybrid of the two. Students in hybrid courses meet face-to-face for half the amount of time as traditional courses; the other half is replaced with online study and learning activities.

Challenges and Goals  I selected MySpanishLab for our elementary Spanish courses because I wanted to make online and hybrid courses as effective and engaging for students as the traditional lecture-format courses. My doctoral research focused on Web 2.0 technologies that facilitate interactive information sharing, user-centered designs, and collaboration on the Internet. I wanted to know who benefits the most from these tools and if every class format should use these tools. The results of my thesis indicated that student achievement significantly improved in the Web 2.0-enhanced courses with MySpanishLab.

Implementation  One of my best practices for getting started is giving students step-by-step instructions, with screen shots, on how to register for and navigate MySpanishLab. It is critical to their success and helps them start strong. We use the course calendar in MySpanishLab to help students keep track of their scores.

For each textbook chapter, students are assigned one exam, one composition, Student Activities Manual (SAM) homework, and oral practice activities. On average, we require 20–25 SAM activities a week. We assign almost all of the computer-graded MySpanishLab activities, including listening, reading, writing, short answer, fill-in-the-blank, and crosswords. Some instructors set daily due dates, while others set due dates for the end of each week. Students in the hybrid class complete oral practice activities in person with their instructor; online students record their voice, and the instructor grades their recording.

Hybrid and online students participate in one or more discussion boards per chapter, based on the Vistas Culturales videos. This is enjoyable for students because they get to talk about culture and interact with one another. Instructors interact individually with students online at least every 48 hours, and students are required to collaborate with peers on class assignments each week using chat tools in MySpanishLab.

Benefits  MySpanishLab benefits both teachers and students—it offers one place where students can find all the resources they need. Before MySpanishLab, we constantly had to update our course materials. Now, the process has been automated by the publisher, which has taken a load off instructors. MySpanishLab has made teaching more effective in all course formats. Instructors can now spend more time on one-on-one instruction, intervening when students need individualized attention.
"MySpanishLab offers an engaging environment where learning happens effortlessly and naturally."

Assessments
45 percent Exams (4)
20 percent MySpanishLab homework; compositions (5)
20 percent Participation activities
Hybrid: culture presentation
Online: discussion board posts
15 percent Final exam

The Student Experience
MySpanishLab allows students to practice, attempt activities more than once, and receive immediate feedback. The learning process is tailored to the needs of the student, effectively deepening their learning. MySpanishLab offers an engaging environment where learning happens effortlessly and naturally. Student feedback has been positive: “I liked how the teacher did not lecture in class, but let us do that [type of work] outside of class in MySpanishLab in a fun, hands-on way.”

Results and Data
Figure 1 reports data from my initial research and shows that student achievement significantly improved in the test course using MySpanishLab. The pre- and posttests were identical and included sections on listening, speaking, writing, and reading.

We no longer give pretests because we want to focus on longitudinal data and variance across modes on the posttest/final exam. Figure 2 compares final exam results in our face-to-face, online, and hybrid Elementary Spanish I course formats. We look at certain question sets on the final exam to assess students’ reading, listening, speaking, and writing skills as well as students’ understanding of culture. These questions match up with our expected course outcomes. We use the data to modify our instruction, support, and types of activities assigned/covered to improve weaker areas the following quarter. All course formats currently use MySpanishLab, but based on the data in Figure 2, which shows higher scores in the hybrid sections (on average three percentage points higher than online and eight percentage points higher than face-to-face), we have focused our energy on moving more face-to-face classes to the hybrid format. In the spring of 2015, adjuncts will begin teaching hybrid evening courses.

Conclusion
Student engagement, active learning, and motivation are key factors affecting student performance, especially in online learning. Tools such as MySpanishLab enhance the importance of community and facilitate communication and collaboration between students and instructors in a more immersive, engaged way.

With MySpanishLab, we can continue to offer online and hybrid courses that are robust, effective alternatives to the on-campus classes. We plan to incorporate podcasts, voice discussion boards, video share, and social media such as Vine, Epub, and Instagram to further enhance students’ learning experience.
School Name: Texas Tech University, Lubbock, TX
Course Name: Spanish Elementary Review
Course Format: Hybrid, flipped classroom

Key Results: One hundred percent of instructors teaching the flipped method report that the quality of students’ communication skills has improved and that they have seen a noticeable increase in student engagement and communication during class time. Ninety-five percent of instructors would elect to continue teaching the flipped model.

Submitted by: Marta Tecedor Cabrero, Director of lower-level Spanish courses

Course materials: Unidos, Guzmán, Lapuerta, and Liskin-Gasparro; MySpanishLab

Background: Texas Tech University is a public research university with more than 33,000 students. Students in the College of Arts and Sciences need six credits of language courses (sophomore level or above) to graduate; a student enrolling in the first-year sequence will have a total requirement of 11–16 hours of language instruction. Annual enrollment in elementary and intermediate Spanish is between 1500–2000 students with 20 students per section. As of fall 2014, there are 100 students majoring in Spanish and 320 minoring in Spanish.

Challenges and Goals: When I arrived at Texas Tech in the fall of 2013, I was informed that the instructional approach in the elementary and intermediate courses was not working. A communicative method was in place, but instructors were struggling to implement instruction that engaged students in learning of language. Thanks to my time as a PhD student at the University of Iowa, I had experience redesigning a curriculum and teaching with the flipped model. I spearheaded the flipped classroom approach with Unidos and MySpanishLab in fall 2013 for these key reasons:

- to increase communication in the classroom;
- to teach grammar with a functional/inductive approach;
- to help instructors adopt and change the way they were approaching instruction;
- to provide pedagogical continuity between the elementary and intermediate courses.

A secondary goal of the redesign was to improve the student experience in elementary and intermediate Spanish so that we might increase the number of students minoring and majoring in Spanish. Finally, I wanted to promote learning autonomy, one major advantage of teaching with the flipped method, while providing appropriate training for both students and instructors.

Implementation: Working with the coordinators for elementary and intermediate Spanish, we first flipped the classroom in our Spanish Elementary Review course. This five-credit, one-semester review is designed for students who have ideally had at least two years of high school Spanish. We cover chapter preliminar through Chapter 4 in Unidos. Class is held three hours each week and there is no designated lab time.

In the flipped classroom format, students work on grammar structures and vocabulary topics in MySpanishLab before coming to class. We set clear expectations that students must take responsibility for studying and learning the basic rules of grammar, tenses, and verb endings. The instructor then reviews the assigned material at the beginning of class, allowing the balance of class time to be devoted to students actively communicating in Spanish and using their knowledge from pre-class work.

“With this new format, I do not teach grammar concepts but instead focus on making sure that the students are practicing what they learned in the online platform and using those skills to communicate effectively. I am also teaching culture which was difficult to do with the old methodology since we did not have enough time.”

—Instructor
“One of the reasons why I would continue teaching with this model is simply because the students have exponentially more opportunities to express themselves in the target language. Further, the environment of the class is much more social, which improves the dynamic of the class, allowing the students to increase their confidence and diminish the anxiety that comes with speaking in a foreign language.”

—Instructor

For each vocabulary or grammar topic, we assign graded and non-graded activities in “MySpanishLab” that are due at midnight the night before class. Non-graded activities include: interactive presentations, vocabulary tutorials, grammar tutorials, and Amplifire Dynamic Study Modules. Graded work includes Apply activities (maximum of four, per topic, per day), comprehension-based Piénsalo activities, two listening and two reading activities per chapter, games, and a practice test. If there are more than four activities, we select those that contain listening and/or have more than a binary choice such as true/false. Extra MySpanishLab activities are used later in the week as review of that week’s topic. Students are allowed three attempts to achieve their highest score on MySpanishLab homework.

Students are given five vocabulary quizzes during the semester. Each quiz evaluates students' knowledge of the corresponding chapter’s vocabulary, which is taken from the vocabulary section in Unidos and the vocabulary tutorials in MySpanishLab for that chapter.

Although students start learning grammar in MySpanishLab, we sometimes do short reflective activities in-class for more difficult grammar points. If students need additional help, we encourage them to take advantage of virtual or face-to-face office hours, as long as they have done their homework first.

The instructor experience

In order for instructors to be successful implementing the flipped classroom, they must be thoroughly prepared for the shift to becoming a “communication facilitator.” Without coaching, they will continue to teach the way they always have and/or ignore the new form. We have developed a thorough training program to assist with the transition. Before the semester begins, we have individual instructor meetings to talk about teaching the flipped method with Unidos. When instructors know how the material has been explained to students, they can better use class time. We also prepare them for class by providing all necessary classroom materials with instructions and PowerPoint slides that incorporate a road map of each chapter and a brief review of the material. Instructors are also coached on how to approach office hours and are provided semi-structured interview scripts.

Over the course of the semester, we have one team meeting each week to discuss how things are going and to answer questions. We let instructors know that they can create their own course materials as soon as they respect the philosophy of the program. Ongoing training includes:

• Coaching instructors on how to use MySpanishLab’s infinite resources in a balanced way.
• Teaching instructors how to coach students in the new flipped classroom format.
• Talking about the links between MySpanishLab activities, in-class activities, and assessment.
• Discussing study strategies, skill strategies (listening and reading), and test-taking strategies.
• Practicing development of in-class activities.
• Training instructors how to grade oral and writing activities for consistency and to minimize grade inflation using real examples.

“The students liked the energy this method brings to the class—they have no time to be bored. If the class is fun and constantly keeps them active they tend to remember more and learn better.”

—Instructor

Assessments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>15 percent</td>
<td>Chapter exams (3)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 percent</td>
<td>Final oral exam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15 percent</td>
<td>Final written exam (includes listening assessment, writing assessment, reading comprehension)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 percent</td>
<td>Participation (12)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 percent</td>
<td>MySpanishLab assignments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 percent</td>
<td>Vocabulary quizzes (5)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 percent</td>
<td>In-class oral activities (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 percent</td>
<td>Writing activities (2)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 percent</td>
<td>Midterm oral exam</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Benefits
This computer-enhanced course with MySpanishLab offers the following advantages:

- **Self-pacing.** Students can take the time they need to do the online portion of the course as long as assignments are completed before the deadlines.

- **Immediate feedback.** The computer grades electronic homework exercises instantly, tells students which items or activities are wrong, and makes suggestions on what to study before attempting the exercise again.

- **Opportunity for improvement.** The program is designed so students can attempt the exercises/activities as many as three times in order to earn their desired grade. The students who do the work in advance (and take advantage of the system) do better on their first try. My sense is that students who get closer to 100 percent on their first attempt are the students who are studying correctly.

- **Easy access.** Students can do online assignments from any computer with Internet access.

> “I tell students that this method requires them to be more active in their learning and that they have to take a proactive approach to be successful and learn. I encourage them to come see me during my office hours to keep the lines of communication open at all times.”

—Instructor

Results and Data
Qualitatively we are seeing very positive feedback from an anonymous instructor survey that was answered by all twenty instructors teaching the redesigned course over the summer of 2014. The following percentages reflect instructor’s perceptions since the transition to Unidos and the flipped classroom in Elementary Spanish:

- 100 percent of instructors agree that “the quality of students’ communication skills has improved.”
- 100 percent of instructors have noticed an increase in student engagement/communication during class time.
- 95 percent of instructors say, “If given the choice, I would continue teaching with the flipped classroom model.”
- 90 percent of instructors agree that they “can now use classroom time more effectively.”
- 73 percent of instructors say “students exhibit more confidence speaking in the classroom.”
- 93 percent of instructors perceive an improvement in students’ speaking abilities.
- 73 percent of instructors perceive an improvement in students’ listening abilities.
- 57 percent of instructors perceive an improvement in students’ writing abilities.
- 53 percent of instructors perceive an improvement in students’ reading abilities.
- 50 percent of instructors think “students’ reactions to the new ‘flipped classroom’ format have been positive.” (25 percent of instructors reported “no change.”)
While our initial focus has been on evaluating instructors’ response and perceptions of the flipped model, we have also begun to collect and study results of student scores. Figures 1 and 2 show success rates and final exam scores from our first year of implementation. The initial end-of-year results show a modest pattern of improvement in success rates and a pattern of growth from first to second semester. These scores represent comparisons of different student cohorts from only one year of implementation and are therefore inconclusive. Our expectation is that we will see increased gains over time and we look forward to studying these results with more detailed analysis, collecting data on student perceptions of the model as they advance through successive levels, and investigating how the switch to a flipped classroom will impact program enrollment as well as the number of students choosing to minor or major in Spanish.

“Overall I think this method helps to improve students’ oral, speaking and listening abilities. However it is important to work on their expectations. Many of them want to get an A without doing the work.”
—Instructor

The Student Experience
Students have an orientation to MySpanishLab on the first day of class, but this is not enough. The instructor must continue to coach students on how to be successful throughout the semester. We cannot assume that the flipped classroom method is implicit. Students are not used to studying in advance of class time, and as a result, we have seen a huge increase of students coming to office hours.

It’s very common for students to get high scores on their MySpanishLab homework, but not on their chapter exams. Our goal is to coach them through the process of thinking about how they can be successful in the course. We might ask, “How are you studying?” only to learn that the student is getting help on the homework from a friend. More often, however, the student doesn’t know why they’re doing poorly. When we ask to see their notes and they don’t have any to show us, that is a telling sign.

It is typical for students to prepare for the next day of class at close to midnight the night before. Many students work part- or full-time jobs and they watch the interactive presentation in MySpanishLab, but they don’t read the textbook. We have found that it is important to ask the student, “What are you going to do to get an A?”

Office hours are important to help students understand the importance of studying, writing, and reflecting. Instructors don’t always want to tell their students how to study well, but the reality is that many need to be told, even if they are in college. For the majority of students, this extra coaching has been helpful.

Conclusion
Following our first semester of flipping Elementary Spanish Review, we flipped the next two levels of Spanish. We launched Intermediate Spanish 1 with Unidos (chapters 5–8) in spring 2014 and Intermediate Spanish 2 with Unidos (chapters 9–12) in summer 2014. Both of these courses are 3-credit hours each, taught face-to-face.

After one year of implementation, our initial results provide clear evidence of positive perceptions from instructors. Overall, instructors report satisfaction with the flipped model. Developing a flipped classroom method takes time and effort. Instructors must be acclimated and students must be prepared to succeed in this different culture of learning. Although we did experience some road bumps at first (we lacked comprehensive training in spring 2014), with persistence and determination, we feel we are succeeding with the new model. Over the next couple years, we look forward to seeing how switching to the flipped classroom impacts overall enrollment and the number of Spanish minors/majors in the program.

“Students come to class prepared. They have studied verb conjugations and grammar and are ready to engage in speaking activities. It takes them less time to understand what I explain in class.”
—Instructor
### Key Results
A redesigned course using a hybrid format allows the University of Georgia to serve more students while seeing improved classroom interaction, increased student engagement, and more active communication.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>University of Georgia, Athens, GA</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Name</td>
<td>Elementary Spanish (4 credit hours)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Format</td>
<td>Hybrid, flipped classroom</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Submitted by  
Raúl Vázquez, Instructor

Course materials  
Unidos, Guzmán, Lapuerta, and Liskin-Gasparro; MySpanishLab

### Background
In fall 2012, rising enrollment at the university and an increased classroom cap size caused difficulty in scheduling and reserving enough classrooms. The Department of Romance Languages decided to redesign our Elementary Spanish sequence, changing it from a face-to-face course meeting four days a week to a hybrid format course meeting just three times a week. Credit hours did not change.

### Challenges and Goals
We knew hybrid classes would automatically solve the issue of classroom space, but we decided we also wanted to improve the quality of classroom interaction—this became our main goal. Before the redesign, homework was completed online while all instruction and assessment were conducted in the classroom. We expected students to review material before coming to class, but we had no way to hold them accountable. Often, they skipped this review because they knew the information would be covered in class. Twice a week, TAs led communicative activities to practice material learned the previous day. Students didn’t have much to do outside of class except the homework.

We were using MySpanishLab mostly as an online workbook for assignments, and we knew we were not taking advantage of all it had to offer. Our redesign process allowed us to critically assess our program’s needs, identify assessments and instructional materials that would work well in a hybrid course format, evaluate available products and resources, and then pilot a product. We chose Pearson’s Unidos with MySpanishLab, which employs a “flipped classroom” approach and is thoroughly integrated with a broad array of online activities, assessments, and instructional tools.

### Implementation
Instead of listening to classroom lectures and then practicing Spanish outside of class afterward, students now complete multiple assignments in MySpanishLab before coming to class, like watching grammar tutorials or videos online. We purposely assign a completion grade for this pre-classroom work so students come into class better prepared and ready to participate and communicate actively. With Unidos we are now able to make them accountable for acquiring the foundation they need to truly engage with the Spanish language.

### Assessment
- **75 percent**  
  In class: chapter quizzes (4), midterm exam, final exam, daily class participation, compositions (2)

- **25 percent**  
  MySpanishLab: homework, interactive presentations, vocabulary/grammar tutorials, auto-graded activities, online oral tests (2)

### Results and Data
In our spring 2013 hybrid pilot sections we did not see any major difference in student grades from the traditional sections. However, since we were able to make better use of classroom space and student grades did not decrease, we considered this a positive result (Figure 1).

In our fully redesigned semester in fall 2013, we did see A grades increase by nine percentage points (Figure 2). Although DFW rates were higher in the redesigned semester, we understand that the redesign transition takes time for both instructors and students to adjust to the change.

Our hybrid format has allowed us to accommodate more students with flexible class schedules and additional sections. We added one more section of 29 students in the redesigned fall 2013 semester. In spring 2014, our enrollment increased by another section of 33 students to 196.
“The MySpanishLab activities provided extra practice on topics I needed help with, and the quizzes even gave me specific feedback on what I needed to get better at and how to do it! Both the textbook and MySpanishLab corresponded very well with the in-class material, and finishing these digital homework assignments first helped me in class. I’m a big fan of the online portion of this class.”

—Student

After the redesign, students began asking better, more purposeful questions that included informed examples. With a knowledge base from online work completed at home, students became more confident in their language skills and more likely to actively participate.

Best practices
Communication among instructors was crucial throughout the redesign pilot. We held regular meetings with the department’s language coordinator, and we met once a month with the other instructors to field questions and receive feedback about our pilot to identify missing elements or to consider new ideas. We wanted everyone to be informed, engaged, and excited about teaching a hybrid course so when the entire program moved to this model in fall 2013, every instructor and TA knew what to expect and was looking forward to the change.

Our graduating PhD students also benefited: when interviewing for teaching jobs, many found their experience teaching hybrid courses made them more attractive candidates.

“Face-to-face class time is now more productive because we use it to engage in realistic communication activities rather than simply lecture to review grammar and vocabulary.”

Conclusion
All Elementary Spanish courses are now hybrid, and we will continue to reevaluate and improve the program. Since we now know what students can do in the classroom and online, we are considering adding quizzes to the online work, as they take valuable class time to proctor. The success of our course redesign has encouraged us to “think big.” We will soon offer Elementary Spanish completely online to accommodate students who are away from campus during the summer, and we hope to continue to increase the university’s enrollment.

Moving to the hybrid format challenged instructors to become more active in the classroom with the new focus on group work and conversation. Even though we now meet just three times a week instead of four, face-to-face class time is now more productive because we use it to engage in realistic communication activities rather than simply lecture to review grammar and vocabulary. Our classrooms are very different and much more productive than they were a year ago.
MyWritingLab

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>Florida International University, Miami, FL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Name</td>
<td>Criminal Justice and Public Policy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Format</td>
<td>Face-to-face</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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Key Results

Requiring advanced work in MyWritingLab has helped students in a senior-level capstone course do well on their final essay, with 91 percent of students receiving a passing grade on this final requirement.

Submitted by
Rosa Chang, Instructor

Course materials
Last Call, Okrent; Making Sense of Criminal Justice, Mays and Ruddell; MyWritingLab

Background

This capstone course introduces senior Criminal Justice students to a range of important crime control policies, integrating material covered throughout the Criminal Justice curriculum. It requires students to thoughtfully and critically assess the consequences of specific criminal justice policies on the system and society. In addition to understanding crime control methods, literature, strategies, analysis, research, and practice, students are also expected to be able to:

- Create logical, evidence-based final essays assessing the effectiveness of policing and prosecution strategies.
- Produce written work that is grammatically correct, well-organized, and properly formatted.

Challenges and Goals

In the past, students had not performed very well on their essays. Because these are senior students and writing is a major component of the course, I decided to assign MyWritingLab to strengthen their critical thinking and writing skills.

Implementation

I give students three weeks to work on the key MyWritingLab topics they will need to master to satisfactorily complete their required final essay. I assign this work at the very beginning of the semester so that students receive a solid review before they even begin the writing assignment for the course. Beyond reviewing basic MyWritingLab topics like punctuation, mechanics, and usage, which they have already covered earlier during their college work, they also work on advanced topics, including “Reading Critically and Rhetorically,” “Writing Arguments,” and “Conducting Research and Documenting Sources.” Students can take the Skills Checks to test out of some topics, and I give them three chances to pass the MyWritingLab posttests for each assigned module.

Students send rough drafts of their essays to Pearson Tutor Services via MyWritingLab, where they receive personalized feedback from experienced writing instructors on content development, organization, and using sources properly. This gives them invaluable advice on their writing while it allows me more time to concentrate on the Criminal Justice concepts I want to present fully. Then, they submit both their reflection sheets and this rough draft feedback to me through Blackboard, our university’s LMS, so I can monitor how they might revise their work and how they are progressing toward final drafts.

Assessments

- 31 percent Exams (2)
- 24 percent Final essay
- 21 percent Debate presentation
- 8 percent Discussions
- 6 percent MyWritingLab topics
- 5 percent Course policies quiz
- 5 percent Reflection sheet with rough draft feedback (draft submitted via Pearson Tutor Services)

Key Results

Requiring advanced work in MyWritingLab has helped students in a senior-level capstone course do well on their final essay, with 91 percent of students receiving a passing grade on this final requirement.
“It is important to me and to my department that students meet both the content and skills objectives for this senior capstone course, and I am pleased to say that MyWritingLab is helping us meet important student learning outcomes related to writing.”

Results and Data

- Forty out of 44 students received a passing grade on the final essay, a pass rate of 91 percent.
- Students’ high scores on important MyWritingLab topics related to college writing and critical thinking clearly helped them create better organized essays that offered well-reasoned and documented arguments.
- Students who scored 80–100 percent on MyWritingLab posttests had an average essay grade of 84 percent versus 75 percent for students who scored less than 80 percent on MyWritingLab posttests (Figure 1).

Conclusion

Requiring MyWritingLab helps students improve their general writing skills and develop more coherent and professional final essays. For example, I now see students turning in more polished early drafts of their papers. Further, MyWritingLab modules on key topics like “Context and Purpose” and “Drawing Conclusions” help them master more sophisticated skills to make their final essay arguments compelling. It is important to me and to my department that students meet both the content and skills objectives for this senior capstone course, and I am pleased to say that MyWritingLab is helping us meet important student learning outcomes related to writing.

“Students submit their rough drafts to Pearson Tutor Services via MyWritingLab, where they receive personalized feedback from experienced writing instructors on content development, organization, and using sources properly.”
Submitted by
Michelle F. Blake, Instructor

Course materials
*Writing Today, Brief Edition*, Johnson-Sheehan and Paine with MyWritingLab (Composition I); Custom course pack with MyWritingLab (Composition II)

Background
In Composition I, students learn what it means to be an effective writer, developing the skills to communicate clearly, to respond thoughtfully to issues of diversity, and to think critically and analytically. In Composition II, students use writing to critically analyze, make sense of, and communicate experience, and to construct a more advanced, research-based argument. Both courses prepare students to become competent academic writers, use efficient and effective research techniques, and employ MLA documentation style.

Challenges and Goals
I adopted MyWritingLab because it solves a number of course challenges. It places students’ own writing at the heart of the course, both at home and during class discussions. Also, it affords students multiple opportunities to receive feedback on their writing: from peers, Pearson tutors, and the instructor. Last, completing the MyWritingLab Learning Path exercises improves students understanding of and ability to use written academic English.

Implementation
Although MyWritingLab assessments are technically only a small percentage of students’ final grades, the program is at the center of how I both teach and manage the courses. I post all assignments in MyWritingLab; students complete and submit all exercises, quizzes, informal writing, peer review, outlines, drafts, and revisions in MyWritingLab. Likewise, I use MyWritingLab to deliver feedback to students on their work and to respond to their questions. The only hard copies that students submit are the final drafts of their major papers.

In both courses, students first take the Path Builder diagnostic in MyWritingLab. Then, I assign four of eight modules on the Learning Path. Both courses cover Composing Clear and Effective Sentences; Using Punctuation, Mechanics, and Spelling; and Improving Language and Style. In Composition I, I also require Writing and the Writing Process, and I assign the Conducting Research and Documenting Sources module in Composition II. Students are given three chances to score above 80 percent on the posttests. In both courses, the average of the posttests counts toward course grades; however, the Mastery Check serves as the final exam. While I do not set hard due dates for MyWritingLab assignments, students must complete the Learning Path by the end of the term, so I provide a pacing guide to help them work through their topics in a timely manner.

In Composition I, students must seek feedback from an outside tutor, either through Pearson Tutor Services or our school’s writing center. In Composition II, using a tutor is not required, but students who provide documentation of their work with a tutor receive extra points. A valuable part of MyWritingLab, the Pearson Tutor Services gives students the opportunity to submit three papers for review by qualified writing experts and receive substantive, concrete feedback.

Assessments
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Composition I/Effective Writing</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>62.5 percent</td>
<td>Papers (4)</td>
<td>Attendance and participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 percent</td>
<td>MyWritingLab posttests (36)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.2 percent</td>
<td>Non-paper assignments (12)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 percent</td>
<td>Grammar quizzes (2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 percent</td>
<td>MyWritingLab Mastery Check</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.3 percent</td>
<td>Final portfolio</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Key Results
After working through the MyWritingLab Learning Path modules, students averaged ten percentage points higher on the post-assessment, showing substantial improvement from the Path Builder diagnostic to the Mastery Check.
“MyWritingLab helps students succeed at both of my goals—strengthening grammar and study skills and also producing clear, effective writing.”

Since transitioning from MyCompLab to MyWritingLab, I have especially enjoyed using the Item Analysis feature of MyWritingLab’s Gradebook, one of my favorite features. By simply clicking the “IA” button next to any assignment, I see a quick overview of how students performed, question by question. I use this Item Analysis right before class to focus the class discussion on wherever students need the most help.

Last, the grammar component in MyWritingLab is exceptionally well done—students master grammar concepts by completing their personalized Learning Path. And while students may not appreciate this at first, the data shows that they are clearly improving their grammar skills from the beginning to the end of the semester.

The Student Experience
Some students complain that MyWritingLab seems time-consuming or tedious. However, one student clearly gets the reason I assign the MyWritingLab Learning Path: “I thought the posttests on MyWritingLab were just busywork, but they did help improve my writing.”

Conclusion
My message to instructors considering MyWritingLab is that, in terms of both instructional materials and course management, its real power is allowing students to have consistent, ongoing interaction with their own writing. MyWritingLab helps students succeed at both of my goals—strengthening grammar and study skills and also producing clear, effective writing.
## Key Results
Success rates in the redesigned courses average 12 percentage points higher than the traditional course over the past three years and have increased each year. In 2013–14, the redesigned writing course had a 78 percent success rate; the redesigned reading course boasted an 84 percent success rate.

### Background
St. Petersburg College is the fifth largest state college in Florida serving 35,000 students each year. In the recent past, approximately 40 percent of students would place into developmental English and/or reading courses. However, a Florida law passed in 2013 requires many fewer students to take the placement test.

### Challenges and Goals
With so many students in need of developmental education, we were eager to improve students’ results and learning experience. Specifically, we felt we needed to find ways to address the following concerns:

- dissatisfaction with pass rates in developmental courses;
- need to improve retention of developmental students;
- need to accelerate students’ advancement into college-level courses;
- desire to improve students’ preparation for success in Composition I.

In 2010, the state of Florida made funding available for course redesign through a developmental education initiative grant. St. Petersburg College launched the first redesigned developmental reading and writing courses in spring 2011 on five campuses with 189 students. These redesigned courses transitioned from 16-week, 4-credit hour courses with 22 students per section in online, hybrid, and traditional formats to accelerated 8-week, 2-credit hour courses meeting in computer labs twice a week with no more than 15 students per section. For the 2013–14 academic year, enrollment held strong at 240 students in upper-level developmental writing and grew to 407 students in upper-level developmental reading. We have continued to offer the traditional 16-week courses.

We based the redesign of our courses on NCAT (National Center for Academic Transformation) principles, which allowed our new courses to include:

- diagnostic standards for placement into specific instructional modules;
- individualized pedagogy grounded in best practices;
- the opportunity to exit developmental coursework into college-level courses in the same semester;
- personalized, accelerated learning instruction to assess and address students’ individual weaknesses.

### Implementation
We adopted MyWritingLab and MyReadingLab for these new developmental courses and had students complete the MyLabs’ diagnostic Path Builders, which we then correlated to Florida’s standard core competencies. The Path Builders prescribe an individualized Learning Path for students so they focus their work on areas assessed as “deficient,” allowing each student to generate a personalized instructional and assessment plan with multiple attempts for posttest mastery (which we define as 80 percent or better). Faculty lectures are supported through our learning management system. All sections have close ties to our Learning Support Commons.

### Benefits
The advantages of MyLab implementation include: diagnostic assessment, consistency of course design, training support for adjunct faculty, and reduced costs for students through access codes.

These features in the redesigned courses enable some students to exit early if they satisfactorily demonstrate they have remediated their deficiencies. Some students finish in four weeks
“The redesigned courses with MyReadingLab and MyWritingLab are addressing students’ remediation needs quickly and effectively, enabling more students to advance out of developmental studies and into credit-level courses.”

and go into a 12-week Composition 1 course, although most go into 8-week Composition I. Students who do not complete in 8 weeks have the option of continuing to work with the faculty and Learning Support Commons to complete the course.

Assessments
Redesigned reading course:
40 percent MyReadingLab assignments (at 80% mastery)
20 percent In-class assignments/quizzes
20 percent Midterm exam
20 percent Final exam

Redesigned writing course:
40 percent MyWritingLab tests and essays (at 80% mastery)
20 percent Midterm grammar exam
20 percent Research portfolio/persuasive essay
20 percent Final persuasive essay

Results and Data
• Success rates in the redesigned writing course have risen 9 percentage points over the last three years and are now at a high of 78 percent (Figure 1).

• Success rates in the redesigned reading course have risen 11 percentage points in the last three years and are now at a high of 84 percent (Figure 2).

• In 2013–14, the redesigned writing course and reading course have success rates 11 percentage points higher than the standard developmental writing and reading courses (Figures 1 and 2).

• Persistence data is impressive. Tracking students in the redesigned writing course from spring 2011 to spring 2012, 72 percent passed the course on first or second attempt and 63 percent completed and passed Composition I by spring 2012. This is a significant improvement. Although we have not tracked persistence data any further, we have plans to do so.

Conclusion
Course redesign offers many new academic pathways for students, and our redesign process will be ongoing. We want to advise students better throughout the process, provide completely online delivery of our redesigned courses, and further support the professional development of our faculty as they gain expertise with the redesign model. Nevertheless, in examining the student performance results of the old and new courses side-by-side, we see clearly that we are meeting our goals. The redesigned courses with MyReadingLab and MyWritingLab are addressing students’ remediation needs quickly and effectively, enabling more students to advance out of developmental studies and into credit-level courses swiftly, cost-effectively, and with a level mastery that fosters their success in subsequent courses.
Students who used MyVirtualChild were more engaged and performed better on exams than students who did not use MyVirtualChild.

Knowledge of Child Development: Knowledge of child development was assessed using unit exams and cumulative final exams. Exams included factual and applied multiple-choice questions and short-answer questions that could be answered in one paragraph or less. To enable cross-semester comparisons, students in both sections took the same exams.

Student Perceptions of MyVirtualChild: Students who completed MyVirtualChild assignments were asked to answer 16 Likert-type questions using a scale from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree), plus answer five open-ended questions. Questions were designed to assess self-efficacy and satisfaction with the program. Self-efficacy questions evaluated student perceptions of their understanding of themes in child development as a result of completing the MyVirtualChild simulation. Satisfaction questions asked about their enjoyment of the assignment and whether or not they preferred MyVirtualChild over other types of assignments.

Assessments

MyVirtualChild Section

58.8 percent Three exams (300 total points)
19.6 percent Final exam (100 points)
19.6 percent MyVirtualChild (100 points)
2.0 percent Oral presentation (10 points)

Section without MyVirtualChild

53.6 percent Three exams (300 total points)
17.9 percent Final exam (100 points)
17.9 percent Paper (100 points)
8.9 percent Participation (50 points)
1.8 percent Oral presentation (10 points)
Results and Data

Group Differences in Student Engagement: Results from a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) with students who completed the course indicated the following (Table 1):

- Students who used MyVirtualChild attended class for a significantly higher number of days than students who did not use MyVirtualChild.
- Students who used MyVirtualChild were significantly more likely to complete the course (94 percent) than students who did not use MyVirtualChild (78 percent).
- Students who used MyVirtualChild were more likely to indicate that they would recommend the course to other students.
- There were no group differences in students’ ratings of the course in general, the professor’s teaching effectiveness, or their overall evaluation of the professor.

Knowledge of Child Development: Results from a one-way ANOVA indicated the following (Figure 1):

- Students in the MyVirtualChild section scored significantly higher on the Unit III (Early Childhood) and Unit IV (Middle Childhood) exams and received a marginally higher final course grade.
- There were no significant differences on the Unit I and Unit II exams or on the final exam.

Note that students did not begin using MyVirtualChild until the second unit. Also, the parenting forums occurred during the third and fourth units of the course.

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**Table 1. Differences in Standardized Course Evaluation Responses**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Without MyVirtual Child</th>
<th>With MyVirtual Child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mean</strong></td>
<td><strong>Standard Deviation</strong></td>
<td><strong>Mean</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Professor's teaching effectiveness</td>
<td>1.51 .51</td>
<td>1.45 .57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Overall evaluation of the professor</td>
<td>1.42 .50</td>
<td>1.42 .56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Recommend this course to other students? (1=definitely not, 5=definitely yes)</td>
<td>1.71 .78</td>
<td>1.36 .55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance (number of days out of 22)</td>
<td>15.46 5.14</td>
<td>19.46 9.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 1. Academic Performance Measures with and without MyVirtualChild (without MyVirtualChild n = 47, with MyVirtualChild n = 46)

“Results indicate that students in the MyVirtual Child section were more engaged and performed better on exams covering course content addressed in the MyVirtualChild program than students in the non-MyVirtualChild section.”
Student Perceptions of MyVirtualChild: Student evaluations of MyVirtualChild were overwhelmingly positive (Table 2).

- Average scores for the perception of how MyVirtualChild reinforced understanding of key developmental themes were all in the “agree” to “strongly agree” range.
- Students consistently indicated that they enjoyed using MyVirtualChild, found it easy to use, and would recommend it to other students taking a child development course.
- Students indicated that they preferred MyVirtualChild to other types of assignments, including term papers, oral presentations, and group projects.
- One notable exception was that students were mixed on whether or not they would prefer MyVirtualChild over live observation of real children, although several students indicated that both live observation and MyVirtualChild would be a great option.

The Student Experience
In addition to the student survey results, student evaluations included the following positive comments about MyVirtualChild:

- “It was fun—an interesting way to see development first-hand without having to raise a real child.”
- “I learned a lot about parenting and decision-making. It asked me questions that I’d never thought of before and that I think will really help me in real life.”

Conclusion
Results indicate that students in the MyVirtualChild section were more engaged and performed better on exams covering course content addressed in the MyVirtualChild program than students in the non-MyVirtualChild section. I am encouraged by this initial study. My goal is to strengthen the evidence for the effectiveness of MyVirtualChild by refining my methodology and collecting and analyzing data in subsequent semesters.
Writing, Critical Thinking, and Learning

Derek Bok, former Harvard University President and one of the nation’s most respected education experts, has said, “Many students graduate college today without being able to write well enough to satisfy their employers. Students lack the ability to reason clearly or analyze complex problems.” A complex process, academic writing requires students to plan and organize ideas effectively, to communicate these ideas in clear, concise language, and to analyze and apply information to solve a problem or make a compelling argument. Virtually any meaningful writing task requires students to think critically, a central component of “deeper learning” or “higher-level learning,” by which we mean the ability to retrieve conceptual knowledge and to evaluate these concepts, connect them to others, and produce discourse that puts knowledge to work for some important purpose.

“Writing is both a process of doing critical thinking and a product that communicates the results of critical thinking.”

—John C. Bean, Engaging Ideas

A number of recent publications connect critical thinking, writing, and improved learning. For example, Brown, et al. Making It Stick: The Science of Successful Learning, demonstrates that when learners are asked to work hard to generate their own answers to questions, rather than simply identify a key term or check a box in a multiple choice format exam, they learn the material more deeply. In another study, Engaging Ideas: A Professor’s Guide to Integrating Writing, Critical Thinking, and Active Learning in the Classroom, 2nd edition, John C. Bean argues that when students are forced to struggle with their writing, they are, in fact, learning to struggle with thought. Writing allows students to move beyond simply memorizing and reciting basic course content so they can engage in deeper learning. The case studies that follow show improved student performance after the implementation of Pearson’s Writing Space, as students learn how to think and how to learn.

“Deeper learning is simply what highly effective educators have always provided: the delivery of rich core content to students in innovative ways that allow them to learn and then apply what they have learned.”

—Alliance for Excellent Education

Pearson’s Writing Space

A feature of Pearson’s MyLab and REVEL products, Writing Space is designed to help students master course content while developing critical thinking skills through writing. Writing Space provides a single place to create, track, and grade writing assignments; supply writing resources; and quickly and easily exchange meaningful, personalized feedback with students. Its built-in Turnitin feature can also check students’ work for improper citation and plagiarism.

Research also highlights the importance of the way writing assignments are constructed, including both quality prompts and valid grading rubrics. Educators who have implemented Writing Space report that the program’s embedded prompts and rubrics make this typically challenging and time-consuming aspect of assigning and grading writing easier.

“Good writing assignments evoke a high level of critical thinking, helping students wrestle productively with a course’s big questions.”

—John C. Bean, Engaging Ideas
MyArtsLab with Writing Space

School Name  
Harper College, Palatine, IL

Course Name  
Art History

Course Format  
Face-to-face

Key Results  
Data indicate a positive correlation between MyArtsLab with Writing Space scores and exam scores. Engaging students with interactive media and incorporating writing led to a better understanding of course content as indicated by an average increase in exam scores of seven percent.

Submitted by  
Stephany E. Rimland, Associate Professor

Course materials  
Art History, Stokstad; MyArtsLab

Background  
Harper College is an accredited, two-year institution with just over 5,500 undergraduate students. Fifty-four percent of students receive financial aid (approximately twenty percent fewer than the national average for two-year public institutions).

This course covers the history of art from the medieval age to the end of the eighteenth century. Focusing on major artistic styles, and works of art and monuments, the course follows the historical development of the visual arts produced by western civilizations. A wide range of students take this course, including both traditional and non-traditional aged students, and art majors and non-majors.

Challenges and Goals  
I decided to implement MyArtsLab with Writing Space as a way to engage students and prepare them for success on their exams and final research papers. My exams measure students’ ability to identify artists, artworks and architecture, and the important changes and developments made within different cultural and historical periods. The exams consist of multiple-choice questions that assess students’ basic understanding of course content and two comparative essays, which require demonstration of higher-order thinking skills. The exam essays are designed to prepare students for their final research paper by providing a foundation in academic writing and critical reasoning. Because MyArtsLab assignments encourage students to read the book more carefully and interact with course material outside of class, I believed I would see improved class results with its implementation.

Implementation  
I’ve been using MyArtsLab for three semesters. Although it contains a wealth of resources, I decided to start slowly when integrating MyArtsLab into my course. I started by requiring weekly “Closer Looks” and “Architectural Panorama” media assignments. Closer Look assignments model how art historians talk about a work of art and teach students to focus on key details they might not otherwise see. They provide engaging facts and include audio to help with pronunciations of unfamiliar names and terms. The Architectural Panorama assignments provide 360-degree views of major monuments featured in the textbook.

I’ve steadily increased my use of MyArtsLab. Because an important part of my course involves developing students’ writing and critical thinking skills, this past semester I used Writing Space’s instructor-created assignment functionality to assign, track, and grade my students’ final research papers. I inserted a customized rubric directly into the Writing Space component of MyArtsLab which made it easy to grade my students’ final research papers and to provide personalized feedback to them all in one place.

Benefits  
• Students come to class better prepared for discussions.
• Closer Look and Architectural Panorama media assignments provide an easy way to assign and grade frequent assessments throughout the semester.
• Assigning the final research paper in Writing Space allows me to track and grade student papers.
• Writing Space automatically checks students’ work for plagiarism using the built-in Turnitin feature.

Assessments  
60 percent  
Exams (three)

40 percent  
MyArtsLab (Writing Space; Closer Look and Architectural Panorama media assignments)
“The Closer Looks and online assignments greatly improved my understanding of art history. It was an extremely helpful supplement to reading the textbook because it was interactive.”

– Student

Results and Data
Since implementing MyArtsLab, I’ve observed, and data supports, improvements in exam scores (Figure 1). I’ve assigned the same exams each semester, making it easier to measure MyArtsLab’s impact on student learning. The data from fall 2014 also shows a positive correlation between student performance on MyArtsLab’s Closer Look and Architectural Panorama media assignments and their performance on exams (Figure 2). Because Closer Look and Architectural Panorama media assignments are designed to address specific topics in each chapter, not the entire chapter, I expected a correlation somewhere in this range. In addition, student performance on the final research paper has improved (Figure 3).

The Student Experience
When students were asked to provide one “best practice” to share with other students, use of the eText and media assignments were two of the most common responses. One student in my class provided the following advice: “Definitely utilize the Closer Looks. I also find it helpful to listen and follow along with the text at the same time.”

Conclusion
The data indicate that MyArtsLab—in particular, the Closer Look and Architectural Panoramas—is having a positive impact on student learning in my course. The program allows me to emphasize and elaborate on specific topics. Because MyArtsLab assignments are graded (required), students come to class more prepared for vigorous class discussions—a much more active form of learning than a traditional lecture format. In addition, Writing Space has made the process of assigning a research paper as an end-of-semester summative assessment easier and more efficient by providing built-in tools like Turnitin.

MyPsychLab with Writing Space

**School Name** | Dakota State University, Madison, SD
---|---
**Course Name** | General Psychology
**Course Format** | Flipped, face-to-face and online

**Key Results**
Writing improves students’ ability to retain information over time. After implementing Writing Space, test scores increased by more than seven percent.

Submitted by
Gabe Mydland, Assistant Professor

**Course Materials**
*Psychology: An Exploration*, Ciccarelli and White; MyPsychLab

**Background**
The students who take this introductory survey of the field are not psychology majors, and this may be the only college-level psychology course they take. Because of this, one of my four key learning outcomes for the course is for students to be able to critically and purposefully apply course concepts and theories to contemporary issues.

**Challenges and Goals**
I’ve used MyPsychLab for years as a means of engaging the students and implementing a “flipped classroom” approach. Assigning videos and other media activities tied to specific learning objectives in our textbook, combined with weekly quizzes administered through my school’s learning management system (D2L), allows me to provide more active learning experiences in the classroom. As a result, our class time is devoted to applying important concepts rather than simply repeating what students have already read outside of class.

In addition to my focus on critical thinking and application of course content in class, I have always wanted to assign writing as a way to help students move beyond simple memorization of facts. Writing asks students to engage in higher-level thinking, leading to deeper understanding and long-term retention of the material. Having approximately 100 students per semester—about 70 in my face-to-face section and 30 in my online section—made it challenging for me to assign and grade writing in the past. Without TAs to help, there was no way I could provide timely and meaningful feedback on my students’ written work. Because of this, I decided to integrate MyPsychLab’s Writing Space assignments into the course for the first time this past semester. Writing Space’s auto-graded assignments give students instant feedback on the structure and content of their essays, as well as instruction on the more mechanical aspects of writing. It also checks students’ work for plagiarism with its built-in Turnitin feature.

**Implementation**
Writing Space assignments ask students to recall what they have read in their textbooks and then apply this knowledge to real world situations. For example, in the Learning chapter, students are presented with a scenario in which they must create a one-month behavior modification program based on the principles of operant conditioning they have studied. This type of writing assignment helps students develop a deeper level of understanding: they must understand both the basic concepts and how these fit together to provide a realistic solution. Further, they get valuable practice honing a range of written communication skills as they put forth these proposals for programs informed by concepts they have learned.

Students completed seven writing assignments throughout the semester, which counted for a total of ten percent of their overall grade. Because I don’t cover every learning objective in the textbook, I was sure to assign topics that my students would also be assessed on later in their quizzes and tests. I also implemented regular media assignments, including simulations and videos within MyPsychLab.

**Benefits**
Auto-feedback writing assignments allow me to integrate writing into the course where in the past this had not been possible. Writing helps students retain course content over multiple weeks and multiple learning objectives.

**Assessments**
- **30 percent** | MyPsychLab (Writing Space’s auto-feedback assignments; media assignments)
- **25 percent** | Weekly quizzes
- **20 percent** | Flipped classroom group assignments
- **15 percent** | Tests (four)
- **10 percent** | Quick quizzes
“It’s great to see students’ progress in their learning and finally reach the point where they really “get it.”

Results and Data
I was curious to see how the addition of Writing Space’s auto-feedback writing assignments would impact student grades on both low-stakes “quick quizzes” and “weekly quizzes,” as well as grades on higher-stakes tests covering learning outcomes from several chapters. Because the first writing assignment wasn’t due until after the first test was completed, this analysis focuses on tests 2, 3 and 4. Student scores on tests 2–4 increased 7–8 points compared to the previous semester without Writing Space (Figure 1). Interestingly, students’ scores did not increase on the first test, which was taken before they began the writing assignments.

The results also indicate that performance on writing assignments is a strong predictor of success on test scores. Students who passed more writing assignments performed better on their tests (Figure 2). In addition, there was no correlation between the number of writing assignments passed and student performance on weekly quizzes. This points to the fact that the weekly quizzes usually require students to memorize smaller amounts of material for a short time vs. the tests, which demand deeper and more long-term understanding of course content, which writing helps students achieve.

The Student Experience
One student came to my office after completing a few writing assignments to tell me proudly that she’d “figured it out!” It’s great to see students progress in their learning and finally reach the point where they really “get it.”

Some students did struggle with the writing; to address this I plan to make a few changes in how I implement Writing Space next semester. Students who visited me during office hours found it helpful to see examples of good essays and poor essays. I think this type of activity could benefit the entire class; therefore I plan to integrate at least one writing assignment as part of an in-class activity. I also plan to introduce Writing Space at the very start of the semester. At that time I’ll be able to explain to students that some writing assignments might not be tied to the exact content that we covered in class that week, but it will help to prepare them for their next test. I will also explain more fully how essays are scored and how logical organization and solid development of ideas are the most important parts of a successful essay.

Conclusion
Integrating writing into my course with Writing Space has helped my students develop their critical thinking skills and perform better on tests. Next semester I plan to assign writing right from the start and to integrate writing into some of the classroom meetings, which I think will lead to all kinds of new and interesting discussions. Another instructional strategy I’m considering is “Peer Review”—a more student-centered pedagogical method where students learn as much from the review process itself as from writing their essays. Participating in such peer reviews helps students make the transition from writing primarily for themselves or for an instructor to writing for a broader, more diverse audience, an important communication skill that will help prepare them for success in more advanced courses.
Background
Houston Baptist University has a very diverse student body, in beliefs, ethnicity, and background. The general psychology course is taken by a variety of majors, along with many freshmen who have not yet chosen their major. Many students live off-campus and commute to class which presents unique challenges. This survey course focuses on the basic principles underlying behavior and mental processes. Emphasis is on the main areas of study in the field of psychology, such as learning, memory, personality, health and stress, human development, and psychological disorders.

Challenges and Goals
The general psychology course is tied to our college goals and designed to improve critical thinking skills. After teaching this course for a number of years, I began assigning material in MyPsychLab. I have always provided my students with out-of-class study resources, and was interested in incorporating MyPsychLab’s Writing Space, which automatically grades student essays and provides instant feedback on both content and mechanics. Through writing, students work toward a deeper understanding of the course material and develop critical thinking skills that will help them apply the material purposefully to their lives. By incorporating frequent writing assessments, I hypothesized that student performance in the course would improve.

Implementation
Students complete 10 writing assignments within Writing Space throughout the course—one per chapter. These low-stakes assessments, designed to provide students with more opportunities to practice writing, are due before each exam. The Writing Space prompts ask students to apply what they are learning and move beyond basic conceptual understanding.

Students also complete MyPsychLab’s study plan before we begin discussing each chapter. The chapter study plans are due every Sunday to provide consistency with assignments and to help ensure students stay on track. Writing assignments and study plan posttests count as part of each students’ course grade. Select media assignments (mostly video) focusing on some of the more challenging topics can be completed for extra credit. These frequent assessments provide personalized learning for each student, allowing them to focus their time on topics that give them the most trouble.

Benefits
• Student scores on the cumulative final exam increased by an average of seven percentage points over three semesters, compared to previous terms without MyPsychLab.
• Frequent assessments and personalized learning help students better prepare for exams.
• Students have multiple opportunities to write about the material, which improves their understanding of the topics while developing their critical thinking skills.

Assessments
60 percent Five exams (lowest exam score dropped)
20 percent MyPsychLab assignments (Writing Space; study plan posttests)
20 percent Comprehensive final exam

Results and Data
Despite teaching a larger percentage of psychology students each semester, student performance has continued to improve. Since implementing MyPsychLab with Writing Space, cumulative final exam scores have increased 7 percentage points compared to previous semesters without MyPsychLab (Figure 1). I am
encouraged that success on both the MyPsychLab study plan posttest and Writing Space assignments are positively correlated with students’ higher final exam scores. Students who averaged 70 percent or above on their MyPsychLab study plan posttests scored, on average, two full letter grades higher on their final exams compared to students who scored 69 percent or below in their posttests (Figure 2). The same is true for student scores on Writing Space assignments (Figure 3).

The Student Experience

Many students benefit from additional help when it comes to basic study skills. Since I started using MyPsychLab, a number of students have told me they feel more prepared for their in-class exams; one stating that the MyPsychLab assignments were “pivotal to my success.” Student feedback also points to the benefits of frequent writing assignments: “The writing assignments required me to think deeper and, as a result, I retained the knowledge more often.” Another student stated that the greatest benefit of using MyPsychLab is that she had “more insight when she got to class.”

Because computer-graded essays are a new concept for most students, I tell them in my syllabus that, if they think their essay grade is unfair, I will grade their essay by hand using the same rubric as Writing Space. Although not many request hand grading, I find they do like having this option. For students who are struggling, I provide sample student essays to help them understand what constitutes a good college essay.

Conclusion

After three semesters of implementing MyPsychLab with Writing Space, the data shows increased student learning. Study plan posttest and Writing Space assignment scores are a strong indicator of success on the final exam and can be used to identify students who may need additional help going into the final. The ability to assign and grade writing helps students develop critical thinking skills, which, when they apply those to the material, leads to deeper understanding.
**MySocLab with Writing Space**

**CASE STUDY**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>School Name</th>
<th>Des Moines Area Community College, Ankeny, IA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Course Name</td>
<td>Introduction to Sociology</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Course Format</td>
<td>Flipped, face-to-face</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Key Results**

Writing Space helps students learn and retain information over time and develop important writing and critical thinking skills. For students who successfully completed all Writing Space assignments, final exam scores increased eight percent compared to previous semesters.

Submitted by
Laurie Linhart, Instructor

Course materials
*The Sociology Project: Introducing the Sociology Imagination*, Manza; MySocLab

Background

In this general overview of the discipline of sociology, students are introduced to a wide range of topics, including: culture, socialization, organizations and institutions, deviance, inequality, gender, health, family, social change, theories, and research methods.

Challenges and Goals

I’ve used MySocLab for a number of years and first implemented the chapter study plans as a way to “flip” my classroom. Students complete the MySocLab study plans for each chapter prior to the first class meeting of the week. With the basic concepts presented outside of class, I can elaborate on specific topics and incorporate more active learning into the class. As a result, student engagement has increased.

In the past I’ve included writing assignments as a way to help students master course content. Through the process of creating an essay in response to a thought-provoking prompt, students are forced to move beyond basic memorization and recitation to higher levels of learning as they analyze and apply concepts in their essays. The challenge for me was finding the time to grade student essays and provide meaningful feedback in a timely manner. This is why I decided to implement Writing Space’s auto-feedback writing assignments as a solution.

Implementation

I conduct frequent assessments throughout the semester as both a measurement of how well students are learning and a tool for giving them critical feedback, which I feel is an essential part of the learning process. Students are required to complete MySocLab’s study plan posttests and selected Writing Space assignments prior to coming to class. Because this was the first semester implementing Writing Space’s auto-feedback assignments, I decided to start slowly and only require two writing assignments—“Race and Ethnicity” and “Sociological Imagination.” The quality and breadth of the writing prompts push students to higher levels of thinking as they complete the assignments. For example, the “Race and Ethnicity” prompt asks students to take a stance on a topical issue, argue their position, and then support it with evidence from the textbook. This type of assignment requires more than a simple definitional response. In keeping with Bloom’s taxonomy of cognitive domains (Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001), this task forces students to use key higher order thinking skills, analyzing and creating, ultimately resulting in longer content retention and deeper overall understanding.

Benefits

- By assigning MySocLab and Writing Space activities in advance, students come to class better prepared, which leads to more engaging class discussions.
- In addition to providing students with feedback, Writing Space’s auto-grader eliminates any potential “halo effect,” grading all students objectively and consistently.
- Auto-grading saves instructors time and provides students with personalized, immediate feedback on both content and mechanics to help them improve their writing and critical thinking skills.
“Students who passed their Writing Space assignments averaged eight points higher on their final exams than students without access to Writing Space.”

Results and Data
Students who passed their Writing Space assignments averaged eight points higher on their final exams than students without access to Writing Space (Figure 1). To me, the fact that students who received instant feedback on their writing did significantly better in the course suggests that Writing Space also had a positive effect on students’ final exam scores.

The Student Experience
The majority of students who responded to an end-of-semester survey found Writing Space’s auto-feedback assignments helpful, and almost all students indicated they would recommend MySocLab to students taking this course in the future. Students also appreciated their flipped classroom experience, reporting that MySocLab helped them master basic chapter content before we engaged in discussions of greater depth in the class meetings.

Conclusion
Giving students more opportunities to practice writing can only improve their writing—a skill that will help them across all disciplines as well as in their future careers. Writing Space helps students learn and retain information over time while also enabling them to develop important writing and critical thinking skills. Because of these positive results, I plan to increase the number of Writing Space assignments required throughout the course going forward.

References
Best Practices: 10 Steps to Success with Your MyLab Implementation

The institutions included in this report did more than simply add a new learning technology to their curricula: the ways they implemented Pearson’s MyLab solutions significantly contributed to their positive results. Following are 10 recommended best practices that will help you and your students get the most out of your MyLab implementation.

1. Identify the problems you want to solve.
An examination of the most-successful MyLab implementations shows that one common thread emerges: schools that have achieved success knew precisely what they wanted to accomplish. They established clear educational goals at the outset and then designed implementations specifically to achieve them.

2. Choose the digital learning solution and content that best fit your goals.
Assign the specific features that will help you achieve your stated goals.

How will you measure success? What are the quantifiable goals you want to achieve? Pertinent metrics might include comparisons of homework grades, exam scores, final course grades, or retention rates with those of previous semesters; correlations between MyLab assessment scores and exam scores; measuring the increase from a pre- to post-assessment, or student success rates in subsequent courses.

4. Get everyone—and keep everyone—on the same page.
Communicate your goals clearly to colleagues, students, and administrators. Train all full-time instructors, part-time instructors, adjuncts, tutors, and other key players—and make available plenty of opportunities for continuous training. Pearson provides product and implementation training to help ensure that your implementation aligns with your goals.

5. Start small.
Slowly integrate MyLab into your course. Start with requiring homework such as chapter exams, study plans, or writing assignments. When you’re ready, add more assignments and activities.

Students tend to skip “optional” assignments. Experienced MyLab users recommend that you count MyLab for at least 10 percent of a student’s final course grade. Provide structure: clearly communicate course and workload expectations to students, and set firm and consistent deadlines. Finally, conduct a Getting Started orientation on the first day of class to show students how to access the MyLab materials and assignments they’ll be responsible for. Visit www.pearsonmylab.com/northamerica/educators/support for details.
7. Connect and engage with students.
Educators implementing MyLab products in their classes are unanimous about the importance of individually connecting with students both in class and outside class. Some educators recommend not waiting for students to ask questions about their work. Rather, they suggest circulating in the classroom proactively to assess what students need, thereby avoiding student embarrassment. Outside of class, consider sending weekly emails containing kudos to those students doing well and offering support and intervention to those who are having trouble or not completing their work.

The most-successful learning solutions include personalization and immediate feedback that engage students in active learning and enhance and inform assessment. Students using MyLab products can complete assessments at their own speed and, by way of diagnostics performed as they progress, can follow a personalized learning path that both targets the exact content/skills they need to work on and delivers the right material they need for mastering the requisite skills.

9. Conduct frequent assessments.
Educators have long recognized the necessity of assessment as both a measurement of how well students are learning and a tool for critical feedback. MyLab implementations enable educators to exponentially increase the power of assessment by increasing the number of assessments, thereby offering students a firsthand account of what they know and what they do not know and providing educators more opportunities to intervene before a student falls too far behind.

10. Track learning gains.
What you don’t track you can’t measure. And what you haven’t measured you can’t prove has actually happened in your class. Educators who consistently track and measure learning gains are able to make informed decisions about course transformations, redesigns, or programmatic shifts and can strengthen their ability to prove institutional effectiveness, meet accreditation standards, quality-enhancement plans, and fulfill grant requirements.
Conclusion

More than simply successful implementations, the courses, programs, and initiatives described in the previous pages are victories. Behind the successful outcomes—in the forms of improved student engagement and exam grades, enhanced critical thinking, success in subsequent courses, college readiness, and other learning gains—are students who have become better equipped to pursue their academic goals and achieve their life dreams.

An Ongoing Process
We applaud the institutions included herein for their efforts and determination. But those efforts are not over: a successful technology implementation is an ongoing process, ever evolving with the emergence of new and improved pedagogy, the entry of each unique cohort of students, the availability of implementation and training resources for instructors, and increased amounts of information gleaned from the long-term tracking and measuring of student data.

Pearson’s Faculty Advisor Network (FAN) is available to help you improve the teaching and learning experience in your courses. Visit the FAN (community.pearson.com/fan) to meet and engage with a community of educators who are eager to share advice, tips, and best practices related to Pearson digital learning solutions.

The Pearson Family of Solutions
Pearson offers solutions for all kinds of educational needs, for all types of courses, and for all of the ways those courses are taught and delivered. The possible configurations of an effective MyLab or REVEL implementation exponentially increase when combined with one of the many proven-successful best practices. Let us help you:

• **Increase achievement.** Instant access to reliable data can help in the development of personalized learning, assessment, and instruction and can provide a blueprint for faculty and institutional effectiveness.

• **Expand access.** From digital course materials and real-time assessments to fully online courses, MyLab and REVEL learning solutions are more flexible, more powerful, and more accessible than ever before.

• **Enable affordability.** Innovative technology offers the best opportunity to deliver personalized, scalable, and engaging solutions that drive results up—and drive costs down.

We look forward to hearing about your achievements and to including your experience in the next English, Humanities, Social Sciences, and World Languages Efficacy Report. To tell us about your success or to partner with on an efficacy study, contact Nicole Kunzmann, senior efficacy results manager for humanities and social sciences, at nicole.kunzmann@pearson.com, or Sara Owen, efficacy results manager for English and world languages, at sara.owen@pearson.com.

Following is a list of links developed to inspire, support, and promote conversation among educators, and to ensure that the latest and most effective practices get disseminated across the industry. We hope you find them useful and urge you to share them with colleagues and others committed to improving the teaching and learning experience.

**RESULTS LIBRARY**
[www.pearsonmylab.com/results](http://www.pearsonmylab.com/results)

**MYLAB 10 BEST PRACTICES**
[www.pearsonmylab.com/10-best-practices](http://www.pearsonmylab.com/10-best-practices)

**COURSE REDESIGN WEBSITE**
[www.pearsoncourseredesign.com](http://www.pearsoncourseredesign.com)

**FACULTY ADVISOR NETWORK**
[community.pearson.com/fan](http://community.pearson.com/fan)

**MYLAB IMPLEMENTATION TRAINING**
[www.pearsonmylab.com/support](http://www.pearsonmylab.com/support)

**REVEL IMPLEMENTATION TRAINING**
[www.pearsonhighered.com/revel/educators/support](http://www.pearsonhighered.com/revel/educators/support)
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References


Pearson is committed to providing products and services in support of effective teaching and learning. We do this by fostering partnerships with all industry stakeholders, including you, our customers. This is your community. In a spirit of sharing best practices among peers, we offer instructors informative reports, present online forums and trainings, and sponsor various on-ground events throughout the year. We encourage you to participate, and we welcome your feedback.