

MyAccountingLab

School Name University of Southern Indiana, Evansville, IN

Course Name Accounting Principles I

Course Format Flipped, lecture

Key Results

Data for this course indicate strong positive correlations between MyAccountingLab homework scores and exam scores. In addition, data show that students who completed most MyAccountingLab quizzes had exam scores 16 percentage points higher and final course grades 17 percentage points higher than students who skipped at least one homework assignment.

Submitted by

Jamie Seitz, Instructor

Course materials

MyAccountingLab and *Financial Accounting*, Harrison, Horngren, and Thomas

Setting

Located in suburban Evansville, University of Southern Indiana is a four-year public university serving approximately 9,500 undergraduate, graduate, and doctoral students each year. Sixty-four percent of the school's students receive need-based financial aid, 62 percent are female, and 9 percent identify as minorities.

Instructor Jamie Seitz has been teaching for six years, the past four years at University of Southern Indiana. She's taught Accounting Principles I for all of those four years, the last three years in the current course format.

Principles of Accounting I is a one-semester three-credit course, and part of a two-semester sequence required of all business majors. The course is an introduction to financial accounting and financial statements; it explores accounting principles and their association in communicating economic events and informational content. The primary focus of the course is on the user's perspective: the analysis and interpretation of financial statements using cases and real-world examples. Students who have successfully completed the course should be able to do the following:

- Define basic accounting concepts
- Describe the relationships between the five core accounting concepts
- Prepare basic financial statements.
- Record basic economic transactions.

Challenges and Goals

In 2012, Seitz was using a competitor's textbook and digital program with what she concluded were unsatisfactory results. She was challenged by the methods around problem selection and other program options, and the program was creating additional work that made the implementation of an online course component an unnecessary hindrance. Ultimately, student dissatisfaction led to an overhaul of course materials. MyAccountingLab facilitated easy problem assignment for homework—Seitz's primary reason for adding a digital companion program to the textbook.

Implementation

Seitz requires use of MyAccountingLab outside the classroom for homework only, although many of her students use it for exam preparation, as well. Seitz's implementation enables her to introduce new and complex concepts during lecture, assign content in MyAccountingLab for homework, and offer support during class as students work in small groups to complete problems by hand. She anticipates that the average student spends approximately 1.5 to 2 hours per week in MyAccountingLab. In a voluntary, spring 2015 student survey, of those students who participated (37 percent response rate):

44% Spent 2–4 hours per week in MyAccountingLab

37% Spent 1–2 hours per week in MyAccountingLab

15% Spent less than an hour per week in MyAccountingLab

Seitz promotes the critical-thinking skills necessary to tie accounting concepts together by having students work on problems before lecture.

Lecture time is a combination of content presentation and problem solving. Seitz focuses on reviewing any challenging content from the textbook that may require further explanation. She uses videos from the MyAccountingLab multimedia library for clarification or as an alternative explanation of more-complex content. Problem solving begins with students working in small groups to complete problems associated with lecture content; having students work on problems before she does helps promote the critical-thinking skills necessary to tie accounting concepts together. Seitz works problems with the class as a whole, and then small-group presentations of student-worked problems with Seitz's assistance conclude the lecture. During the last lecture of the week, students bring their laptops to class and work on problems in MyAccountingLab together. Seitz records all of the lectures, and all of the problems students completed in small groups are explained in handouts.

Seitz recommends that students follow a standard pattern to best learn the material: read the textbook for content and vocabulary before attending lecture, while taking notes on each chapter. MyAccountingLab homework is completed after attending lecture.

Seitz requires 12 MyAccountingLab homework assignments (approximately one per week); each is worth between 10 and 20 points. A typical assignment includes four or five short exercise or problems per chapter, and may include some multiple-choice questions. Students are allowed two attempts per problem; all learning aids are turned on. Learning aids are intended to identify potential student intervention at the moment learning is occurring. In an end of semester student survey, 85 percent of students responding agreed that they "always" or "usually" use learning aids when they are unable to start or complete a homework problem. As a best practice, students must complete current homework assignments in order to open the next chapter's homework assignments. This enables Seitz to identify at-risk students who might be falling behind. Homework is completed after lecture; it is open on Monday and remains open until the following Monday, at which point the assignment is due and no longer available. Homework may be submitted up to seven days late for partial credit.

Although the Study Plan is not required, Seitz encourages students to take advantage of the option. Because it requires students to do additional practice, some students find that the repetition is a critical part of exam preparation. One student reported that what she liked best about MyAccountingLab was that "the study plan assignments and practice tests helped me know what to study come exam time."

Summative assessments comprise three midterm exams (covering four chapters each) and a comprehensive final exam. All exams are pencil and paper and taken in class. They are created using the testbank that accompanies the textbook, and are algorithmic and pooled.

Seitz recommends that students prepare for exams in the following manner:

- Reread the chapters in the text and review their notes.
- Review the covered material by going over the lecture PowerPoint presentations that are posted on the course website.
- Test themselves by answering the learning objectives at the beginning of each chapter without using their notes, and by completing the discussion questions at the end of each chapter.

Assessments

45 percent	Midterm exams (three)
32 percent	MyAccountingLab homework assignments (12)
23 percent	Comprehensive final exam

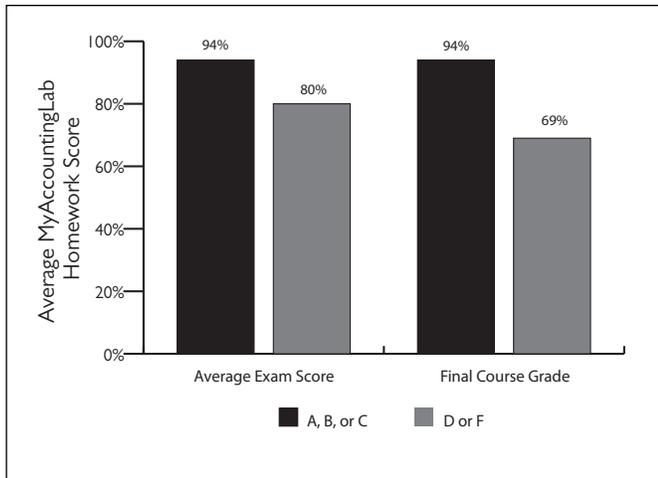


Figure 1. Relationship between Average MyAccountingLab Homework Scores and Average Exam Grades and Final Course Grades, Spring 2015 (n = 73)

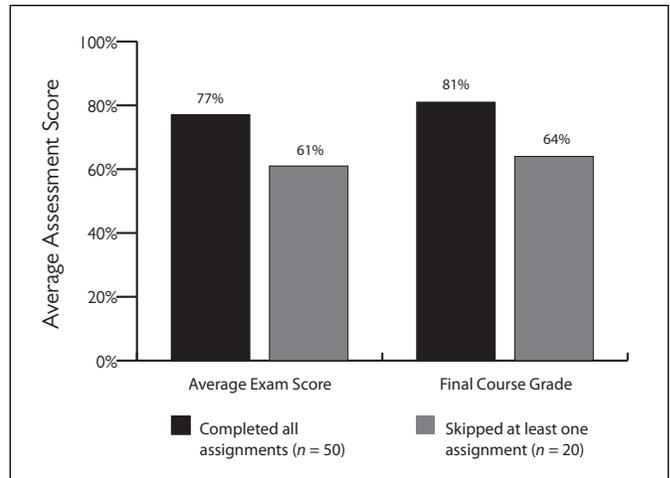


Figure 2. Relationship between MyAccountingLab Homework Completion and Average Exam Scores and Final Course Grades, Spring 2015 (N = 73)

Results and Data

The relationship between MyAccountingLab homework grades and both average exam grades and final course grades was examined by analyzing the grade distribution of students who exhibited mastery of course content by earning an A, B, or C average exam and final course grade (Figure 1).

- Students who earned an average exam grade of A, B, or C scored an average of 94 percent on MyAccountingLab homework—14 percentage points higher than students who earned a D or F average exam grade.
- Students who earned a final course grade of A, B, or C scored an average of 94 percent on MyAccountingLab homework—25 percentage points higher than students who earned a D or F final course grade. (MyAccountingLab homework contributes 32 percent to the final course grade, influencing this relationship.)

MyAccountingLab homework completion rates were assessed to determine if a relationship exists between homework completion and average exam scores and final course grades. Students were placed into two groups based on the average number of skipped homework assignments. Students who completed more than the average number of skipped assignments earned substantially higher average exam and final course grades (Figure 2).

- Average number of skipped homework assignments: .62
- Students who completed all MyAccountingLab homework assignments had average exam grades 16 percentage points higher than students who skipped at least one assignment.

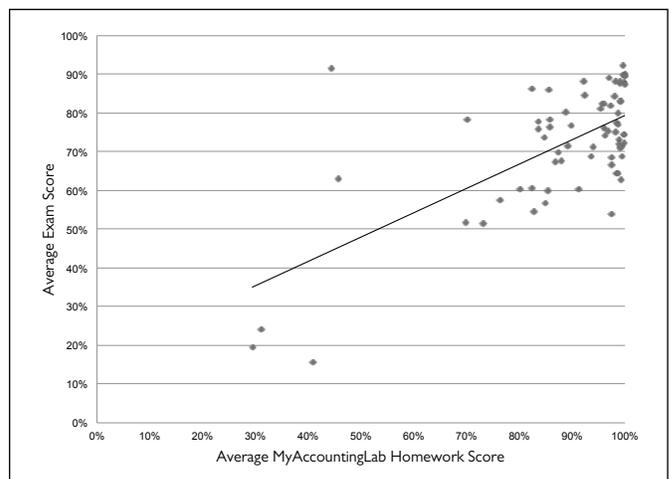


Figure 3. Correlation between Average MyAccountingLab Homework Scores and Average Exam Scores, Spring 2015 (n = 73)

- Students who completed all MyAccountingLab homework assignments had final course grades 17 percentage points higher than students who skipped at least one assignment. (MyAccountingLab homework grades are 32 percent of the final course grade, influencing this relationship.)
- Sixty-eight percent of students (n = 53) completed all assignments.

Figure 3 is a correlation graph. Correlations do not imply causation, but instead measure the strength of a relationship between two variables. The corresponding *p*-value measures the statistical significance/strength of this evidence (the correlation), where a *p*-value < .01 confirms the existence of a positive

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correlation between these two variables. Data show a strong positive correlation between average MyAccountingLab homework scores and average exam scores, where $r = .66$ and $p\text{-value} < .01$. For students, the formative MyAccountingLab homework is intended to help them identify where they stand in terms of successfully completing the more summative exam assessments. (Additional research is needed to develop and test this concept further.) As a best practice, MyAccountingLab helps Seitz identify students early on who are struggling and might be at risk of poor course performance.

Data analysis included only students who completed the course by sitting for exams; one student did not take any exams and was removed from the analysis.

The Student Experience

Responses from an end-of-semester spring 2015 voluntary student survey indicate that the majority of responding students recognize the value of MyAccountingLab.

- 93%** Agree or strongly agree that MyAccountingLab provided additional resources that helped them learn more than they would have from more traditional pencil-and-paper homework.
- 89%** Agree or strongly agree that their understanding of the course material increased as a result of using MyAccountingLab.
- 62%** Agree or strongly agree that use of MyAccountingLab positively impacted their exam scores.

In the same survey, when asked what they liked best about MyAccountingLab, student replies included the following:

“I loved the Help Me Solve This feature. It helped me learn how to do something without directly giving me the answer.”

“There were plenty of Help options when I didn’t understand something.”

“MyAccountingLab showed wrong answers on homework and showed what was done wrong.”

“Being able to be hands-on with the concepts and not just be told about them.”

Conclusion

Moving to MyAccountingLab has been a very positive experience for both Seitz and her students. “As long as I teach this course, I will use MyAccountingLab,” says Seitz. Responses from her end-of-semester survey indicate that vast majority of participating students concur. A full 85 percent agreed that they would recommend the use of MyAccountingLab to another student. Finally, MyAccountingLab’s easy-to-use platform makes homework assignment stress-free, and students report that they benefit from the learning aids and homework help it provides.

This user-report case study documents implementation practices and evaluates possible relationships between program implementation and student performance. These findings are not meant to imply causality or generalizability beyond this specific instance. Rather, findings from this study demonstrate associations that are potentially useful for further theory testing in future experimental studies. For this case study, a mixed-methods design was applied, and the data collected included qualitative data from interviews, quantitative program usage analytics, and student performance data. An open-ended interview protocol was used to guide data collection.