School Name	Miami Dade College, Miami, FL
Course Name	Reading and Writing Basic Skills Test Prep Boot Camp
Course Format	One-Week Intensive On-ground

Key Results — After taking a one-week reading or writing Boot Camp with MyFoundationsLab, 50 percent of students moved up one developmental course level and 25 percent placed out of developmental courses altogether.

Submitted by
Jacqueline Peña, College Prep Chairperson

Course material
MyFoundationsLab

In 2012, after a rigorous planning and design process by a college-wide team of continuing education and department faculty, lab faculty, and administrators, Miami Dade College launched "Boot Camps" designed to increase success for first time in college students who are required to take college prep reading and/or writing courses.

We have two goals for our Boot Camps: we want to reduce the time students spend in developmental education courses by improving placement levels for students not yet college-ready, and we want to enhance academic success for students in their first semester and beyond.

Implementation

The Boot Camps are intended to offer effective and efficient "just in time" remediation of students' individual skills gaps. We selected MyFoundationsLab because it delivers precisely the model we want: diagnostic skills-testing that can be aligned with results from Florida's Postsecondary Education Readiness Test (PERT) and the College Board's ACCUPLACER; personalized skills remediation accessible to students 24/7; and web-based Post-Tests to assess skills mastery.

We focused initially on approximately 5,000 First-Time-in-College Direct Entry students placing from one to three levels below college-ready. The Boot Camp is an intensive 15-hour course in one specific subject area (reading, writing, or math) using MyFoundationsLab and followed by readministration of placement testing. Students attend class for three hours each day for five consecutive days, in sections of 15-20 students.

The faculty we select to teach the Boot Camps engage in mandatory trainings covering how to use MyFoundationsLab, how to teach modularized courses, and the basic logistics of teaching Boot Camps. Each campus has both an academic and a

Continuing Education liaison to provide content, pedagogy, and logistic support.

In class, our instructors orchestrate a mix of group, individualized, and computer-based instruction. Instructors also offer students motivational support and test-taking strategies.

Once students register and log in to MyFoundationsLab, they see the course homepage and access their personalized Learning Path. Students then work through the required modules for Reading (Intermediate and Advanced) or Writing (Sentence Skills and Essay Development); each module has a Skills Check. At the end of the one-week intensive course, students re-take the PERT placement exam.

Results and data

During Summer 2012, 197 students attended the Writing Basic Skills Camps. Only students with both pre-and post-test scores on the PERT were used in the analyses, for a total of 83 students—42 percent of all those attending the Writing Basic Skills Camps.

252 students attended the Reading Basic Skills Camps. Only students with both pre-and post-test scores on the PERT were used in the analyses, for a total of 122 students, or 48 percent of all those attending the Reading Basic Skills Camps.

- Among students who used MyFoundationsLab, 48 percent (Reading) and 57 percent (Writing) moved up one developmental course level.

- 25 percent of Boot Camp students placed out of developmental courses altogether.

- Boot Camp students improved an average of 9.2 points on the PERT retest.

- Students who spent more than five hours on MyFoundationsLab had greater post-test score increases in both Reading and Writing than those who spent less time and those who did not use MyFoundationsLab.

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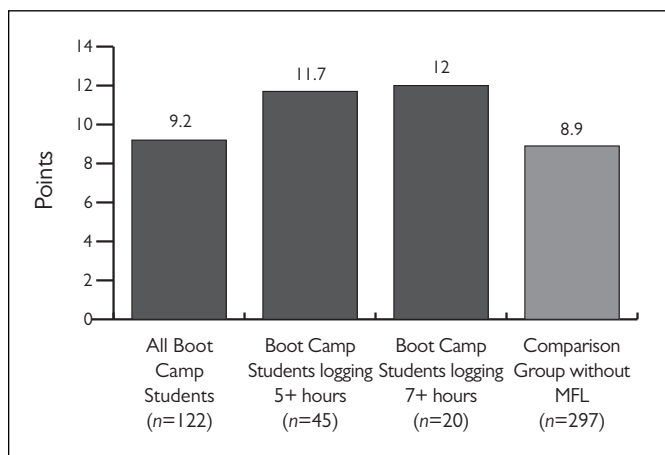

Figure 1. Average Point Increases on PERT Reading Post-test with and without the Use of MyFoundationsLab (Summer 2012)
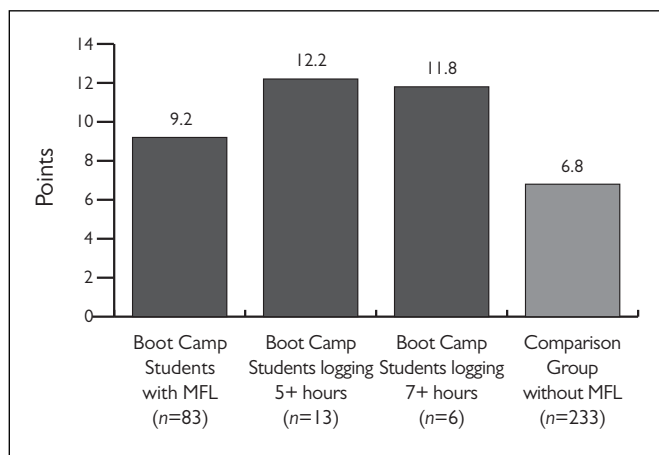

Figure 2. Average Point Increases on PERT Writing Post-test with and without the Use of MyFoundationsLab (Summer 2012)

The student experience

Students responding "Strongly agree" or "Agree" to questions about MyFoundationsLab and the Boot Camp course:

- The MyFoundationsLab registration process was easy: 96 percent

- The online course was easy to navigate: 98 percent

- I had adequate time to complete my work/tests in class: 96 percent

- I liked choosing the skills to work on each day: 98 percent

- It was easy to access MyFoundationsLab outside of class: 90 percent

- I was able to learn most of the skills presented: 99 percent

- The online course activities were very helpful: 99 percent

- The program helped me prepare for college-level courses: 98 percent

- This course helped me prepare for the PERT: 100 percent

- I would recommend this course to a friend: 99 percent

Conclusion

Boot Camps with MyFoundationsLab are addressing a critical need for incoming students. MyFoundationsLab offers effective "just in time" skills remediation that enables students to begin their college studies at a level commensurate with their true academic potential, placing students on a fast track to achieving their education goals.

Redesign is ongoing. From the outset, we understood that we would design the very best Boot Camps possible, implement the courses, then analyze the data and refine our model based on those results. For Boot Camp 2.0, we are registering only those students with PERT placement exam scores, monitoring time on task to emphasize in-class use of MyFoundationsLab for at least 10 hours per week, and grading students (Y=successful; N=course must be repeated.) We will continue to develop and refine our best practices based on student performance.

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