

School Name Gateway Community & Technical College, Edgewood, KY

Course Name General Psychology

Course Format Face-to-face, online, accelerated

Key Results

The data indicate a strong correlation between MyPsychLab study plan post-test scores and in-class exam scores. This is valuable information as it shows how MyPsychLab scores can be used as a leading indicator to predict student performance on exams and in the course.

Submitted by

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Course materials

Mastering the World of Psychology, Wood, Wood, and Boyd

About the Course

General Psychology is a survey course designed to give students an introduction to the history, methods, and content of modern psychology. Topics include the history and systems of psychology, psychological research, physiological psychology, psychological processes, developmental psychology, personality, abnormal behavior, and social psychology. We offer both online and face-to-face sections to a diverse mix of students in class sizes ranging from fewer than 15 students to 50 students. General Psychology is offered in a number of formats each semester, including full-length 16-week sessions, and 12-week and 8-week accelerated sessions.

Challenges and Goals

One challenge across all sections, especially the accelerated sections, is helping students keep up with the assigned reading and assignments throughout the semester. We decided to implement MyPsychLab to provide students with low-stakes assessments throughout the semester, and a study plan, to keep them on track and help them prepare for higher stakes exams.

Implementation

We assign the MyPsychLab chapter study plans before the material is covered in class. This helps to ensure that when students come to class they have already read the chapter and are prepared to participate in class or online discussions.

The MyPsychLab assignment calendar is especially helpful for keeping students on track throughout the semester. Students

are expected to routinely check the assignment calendar to know when their assignments are due, and can link directly to their assignments from the calendar.

Beginning with a 25 question pre-test, which does not count for a grade, students complete the study plan in MyPsychLab for each chapter assigned. We find that it is best for students to take the study plan pre-test prior to reading the textbook chapter. After submitting each pre-test, students receive immediate feedback on whether their responses were correct or incorrect. If incorrect, the correct answer is provided with a brief explanation. Students are also given the exact pages in the textbook where they can read further about that particular topic.

Each student is provided with a personalized study plan based on the results of their pre-test assessment. Depending on the individual student's performance, study plans may include flashcards, videos, simulations, as well as brief formative assessments. After working through their individualized study plan, and reading the textbook chapter, each student then takes a 25 question post-test which counts for 15 percent of their overall course grade. Students may take the post-test as many times as they wish to achieve the highest grade possible.

Benefits

By receiving instant-feedback on their MyPsychLab post-test scores, students understand what they know—and what they don't know—before they come to class. This provides an opportunity to address any gaps in their understanding of course content, and we know from experience that students get more out of the lecture when they come to class prepared.

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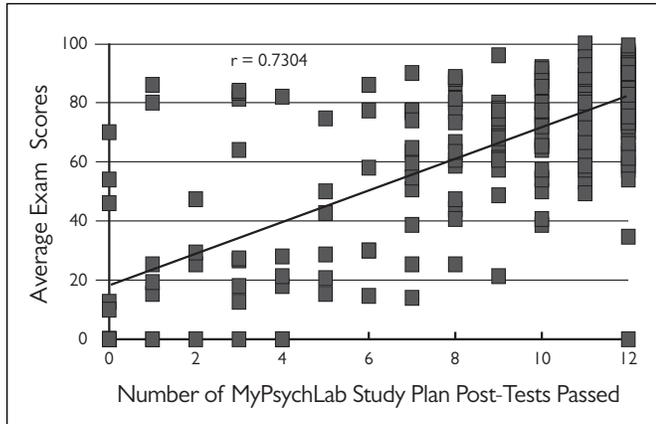


Figure 1. Correlation Between the Number of Chapter Study Plan Post-Tests a Student Passed vs. The Student's Average Score on Exams, Fall 2012–Spring 2014 ($n = 235$) Results include both online and traditional sections.

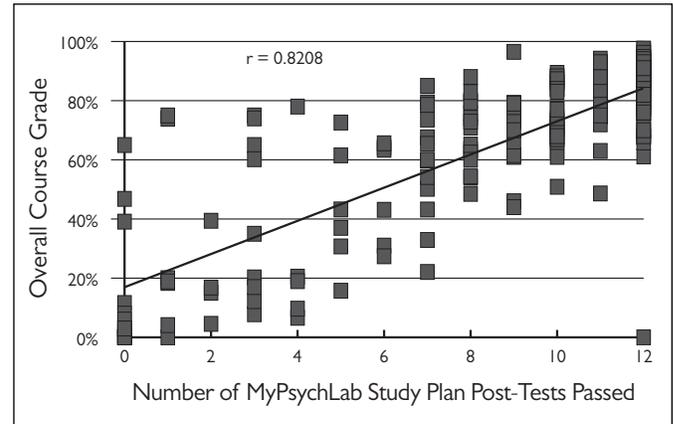


Figure 2. Correlation Between the Number of Chapter Study Plan Post-Tests a Student Passed vs. The Student's Average Course Grade, Fall 2012– Spring 2014 ($n = 235$) Results include both online and traditional sections.

Assessments

30 percent	Tests (three)
15 percent	MyPsychLab (study plan post-tests)
15 percent	Research Paper
15 percent	Article Summary
15 percent	Quizzes
10 percent	Attendance

Results and Data

The data indicate a strong correlation between MyPsychLab study plan post-test scores and in-class exam scores (Figure 1). This is valuable information because it shows how MyPsychLab scores can be used as a leading indicator to predict student performance on exams and in the course. The correlation is even higher between MyPsychLab study plan post-test scores and overall course grades (Figure 2).

The Student Experience

To enhance our students' motivation to succeed, we plan to share with them the strong correlation between their performance on the study plan post-tests and their success in the course. We will also connect with students early on in the semester—providing additional help to those students not passing, or not completing, their study plans. We believe it also benefits students to receive positive reinforcement throughout the course; therefore, we will also connect regularly with those students who are performing well on their study plans.

Conclusion

We look forward to sharing this information with our colleagues and with students at the start of next semester. We hope that as a result of sharing this data and implementing some “best practices” from other MyPsychLab users, we will begin to see greater increases in exam scores and overall course grades.