

School Name **Lehigh Carbon Community College, Schnecksville, PA**
Course Name **Elementary Spanish I**
Course Format **Online**

Key Results The overall success rate for online students in spring and summer 2015 was 87 percent. There is a strong positive correlation between MySpanishLab homework scores and the overall course grade earned.

Submitted by
Charles Molano

Course materials
Arriba by Zayas-Bazan, Bacon, Nibert; MySpanishLab

Setting

Established in 1966, Lehigh Carbon Community College (LCCC) is a comprehensive, two-year, publicly-supported community college with an annual enrollment of approximately 7,000 students. Thirty-seven percent of students attend full-time, 60 percent are female, and 30 percent are minorities. The average student age is 25.¹ Forty-seven percent of students receive financial aid.²

We offer about 14 sections of Elementary Spanish I (face-to-face and online) each fall and spring semester (16-weeks). We also offer an intensive 4-week online summer course and 4-week winter course.

In Elementary Spanish I (3 credits), students learn basic grammar, pronunciation, and vocabulary. The course includes the study of Spanish-speaking cultures and the practice of listening, speaking, reading, and writing skills. After the completion of this course students will:

- Have a basic knowledge of Spanish grammar and vocabulary.
- Understand, speak, read, and write the Spanish language at a basic level.
- Have a general knowledge of the culture of Latin American countries and Spain.

Challenges and Goals

Many of our students have schedules that make it impossible to attend traditional, on-site courses. Additionally, students from other colleges and universities often want to advance faster in their degrees by fulfilling course requirements online and then transferring the course credits to their home institutions.

It was our goal to offer online courses that would enable us to meet the needs of a diversifying student population. MySpanishLab helps us achieve this goal by providing students with comprehensive, varied, and engaging language learning content. MySpanishLab helps instructors achieve this goal by facilitating the reviewing and grading of homework and providing a platform that supports the online course environment.

Implementation

My online courses are taught asynchronously—students do not have to be online at specific times to take the course. However, the attendance policy for my course is strict. Online attendance is defined by daily and weekly login requirements, completing homework, and taking the exams on specified days within a designated time period. Students are dropped and will receive an F in the course if they fail to submit homework for more than four consecutive days. All due dates for homework and exams are posted on the MySpanishLab calendar. I do not accept late homework or give make-up tests.

I do not give points for participation. I believe the success of a student should be based on the merit of their completed work and on their ability to participate and fully engage in all activities. Self-study is vital. The importance of homework is conveyed by weighting MySpanishLab work as 30 percent of the final grade.

There is no doubt that I expect a lot from my students and that I am firm with my grading policies. Students quickly learn that they need to work hard to do well in my course. If students can

¹ <http://www.lccc.edu/about/did-you-know/statistics>

² <http://www.lccc.edu/about>

Students are amazed at the depth of the resources in MySpanishLab and at the immediacy of the feedback they receive—they feel as though they've been given a personal tutor.

manage their time, they will be able to successfully process and complete the assigned material.

We cover four chapters in our 16-week semester—a pace of one chapter per month. With about 60 MySpanishLab exercises per chapter (I assign everything—instructor-graded and computer-graded activities), this equates to about 15 exercises each week. Students have unlimited attempts to get a high score on their MySpanishLab homework.

In fall 2015, I will begin to assign the new WeSpeke activities in which students connect with a global community of language learners, converse in real-time, then complete reflective response writing about their experience. One student recently called her conversation with a 19-year old girl from Lima, Peru “insightful.” These activities add a new and different cultural experience that enriches the online course.

I will also assign LiveChat activities that enable students to pair up with classmates and synchronously record audio and video and submit conversations for a grade. LiveChat has simplified the submission of oral activities; it has also made it easy for me to review and grade using this tool. Additionally, I assign the *Club Cultura* videos and corresponding homework activities.

English grammar Readiness Checks are optional if students choose to take them. Everything is available for the students to

use in MySpanishLab if they choose to do extra work. Students can see their grades in MySpanishLab and view their progress.

Assessments

30 percent	MySpanishLab homework
40 percent	Chapter exams (4)
30 percent	Final exam

Results and Data

The overall success rate for all of my online students in spring 2015 and summer 2015 was 87 percent ($n=93$). Please note: The results do not count one student who withdrew from the course and 13 students who were dropped due to inactivity per the attendance policy.

There was a strong correlation between MySpanishLab homework scores and the overall course grade earned in spring 2015, $r = .65$, $p < .01$ (Figure 1) and summer 2015, $r = .70$ (Figure 2). This is to be expected, as MySpanishLab homework scores made up 30 percent of the final course grade in spring 2015, and 25 percent of the final course grade in summer 2015, influencing this relationship. This positive relationship can also be seen by looking at average MySpanishLab scores and the final course letter grade achieved (Figure 3).

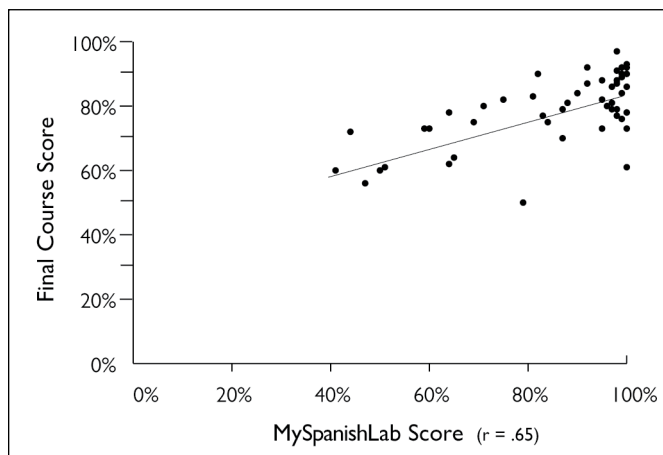


Figure 1. Correlation of Students' MySpanishLab Score to Final Course Score in the Online Course, Spring 2015 ($n=53$)

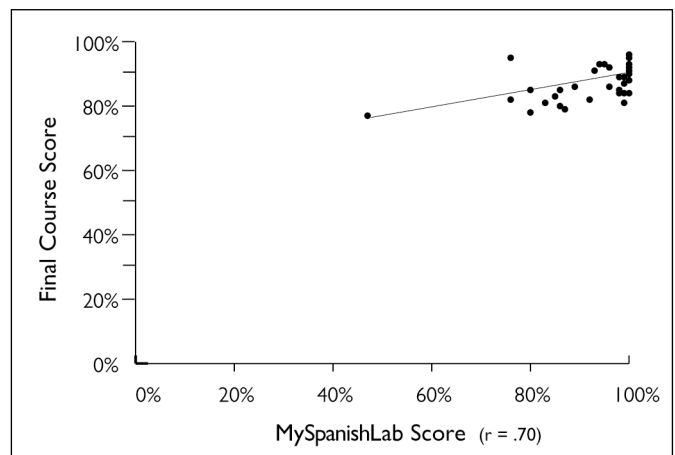


Figure 2. Correlation of Students' MySpanishLab Score to Final Course Score in the Online Course, Summer 2015 ($n=40$)

The tutorials in MySpanishLab are particularly effective at preparing students for active communication. Students report that they uncover something new and fascinating each time they work with MySpanishLab.

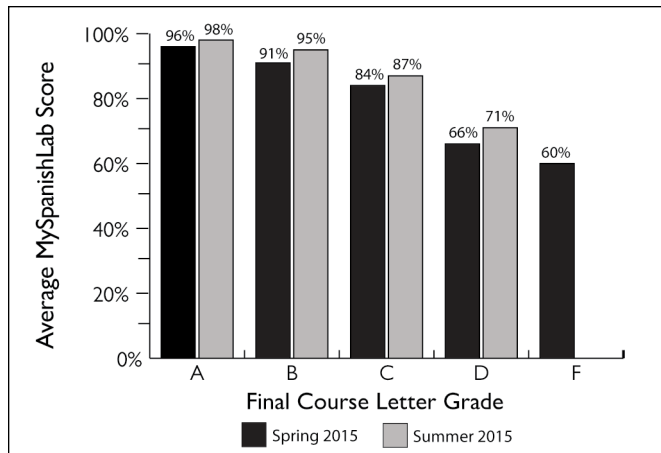


Figure 3. Average MySpanishLab Score Grouped by Final Course Letter Grade, Spring 2015 (N=53): A (n=9); B (n=18); C (n=17); D (n=7); F (n=2); Summer 2015 (N=40): A (n=12); B (n=18); C (n=7); D (n=3)

Conclusion

Once the initial course setup is complete, teaching with MySpanishLab is easy. Assigning computer-graded homework in MySpanishLab has freed up my time for teaching and grading more complicated assignments.

Online courses are a lifesaver to students who need to fulfill a language requirement but cannot attend a face-to-face class. We are thrilled to be able to offer students an effective and motivational online learning experience with MySpanishLab.

The Student Experience

Students are amazed at the depth of the resources in MySpanishLab and at the immediacy of the feedback they receive—they feel as though they've been given a personal tutor. Students love the recording aspect of MySpanishLab, which allows them to listen to their own pronunciations, compare, and adjust to match the native speakers. The tutorials in MySpanishLab are particularly effective at preparing students for active communication. Students report that they uncover something new and fascinating each time they work with MySpanishLab.

N = total number of learners

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 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.