### Key Results
The data suggest a positive correlation between MySpanishLab homework and the overall course grade: students who complete and score higher on MySpanishLab homework also perform better in the course overall.

### Challenges and Goals
At UMN, we teach Spanish in a communicative manner. Our approach is based on the fundamental premises of Second Language Acquisition theory:

- Language learning is not linear, rather it is a gradual and complex process.
- Learners need exposure to rich, comprehensible input, because in trying to understand the input and paying attention to its meaning, they learn the language forms.
- Learners need plenty of opportunities to use the language in a reality-based interactive context.

The ultimate goal of our program is for students to be able to speak, understand, read, and write in Spanish within certain contexts. We strive to help each student become an independent language learner using rich and exciting cultural content.

The course requires a considerable amount of work to be completed online, outside of the classroom contact hours. MySpanishLab helps us achieve our goals by supplying students with varied and numerous components for ample language practice. MySpanishLab gives students an opportunity to experience a wealth of authentic cultural materials online that otherwise may not be contextualized or readily available to students.

Finally, UMN puts extra emphasis on art and culture through language. It was our goal to match our course objectives by including additional “art tour” content to cover works of art in more depth. We were able to customize the national version of MySpanishLab to accommodate our needs. We also included additional reading strategies from Pearson’s Gente textbook.

### Implementation
We use a Program Version utilizing a template with sections in MySpanishLab for consistent implementation of MySpanishLab.
homework across sections. Chapters Preliminar through 5 are covered in this course.

We assign about 10 Student Activity Manual (SAM) activities each week over the course of 13 weeks, for a total of about 135 activities. The majority of the homework in MySpanishLab is computer-graded. We give students three attempts on their homework to get their best score. All MySpanishLab assignments are due at 11:55pm on the date listed except for those listed on Fridays, which are due on Sunday at 11:55pm.

The following highlights particular assignments in or related to MySpanishLab:

- Five culture video blog activities are assigned in MySpanishLab to guide students in their comprehension of the material before, during, and after the viewing. These cultural videos are both engaging and well-made. We watch portions of the videos in class, and students watch the rest as homework and answer questions.

- Six Páginas literary selections are assigned (one for each chapter) with pre- and post-readings and post-reading activities.

- Ensayos are 125-word essays submitted through TurnItIn. Completed in anticipation of the Mesa Redonda (roundtable) composition, the essays are based on the 3–4 paragraph comparison reading that comes mid-chapter in the text. Students briefly summarize the topic and relate it to their own life.

- Imágenes (Art) We assign a few art-tours for homework in MySpanishLab and also spend class time discussing artwork related to the chapter theme.

- One to four grammar tutorials are assigned weekly in MySpanishLab.

- Students are encouraged to complete Extra Practice activities in MySpanishLab. These do not count toward the final grade.

While we do not implement a classic flipped classroom model, we have always asked students to complete grammar work in advance of class, so they come ready to communicate and participate. Before MySpanishLab, students used a paper workbook, but we could not tell if work was being completed. With MySpanishLab, we can require grammar work, set due dates, and count it as part of the homework grade. A benefit of assigning homework in MySpanishLab is that instructors can track student progress—we see how much time students spend on an activity and how well they do via the Student Performance channel on “Today’s View” in MySpanishLab.

Assessments

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percentage</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>25%</td>
<td>Exams (3)</td>
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<td>Final Exam</td>
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<td>MySpanishLab</td>
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<td>Video blog project</td>
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<td>10%</td>
<td>Interpersonal exchange</td>
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<td>10%</td>
<td>Composition (Mesa Redonda)</td>
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<td>5%</td>
<td>Essays (5)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5%</td>
<td>Moodle forums and quizzes</td>
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<td>5%</td>
<td>Participation and preparation</td>
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Results and Data

We found a strong correlation between MySpanishLab homework and the overall course grade, $r = .65$, $p<.01$ (Figure 1). The data suggest that students who complete and score higher on MySpanishLab homework also perform better in the course. It should be noted that MySpanishLab homework scores made up 10 percent of the final course grade, influencing this relationship.

The success rate for students taking Intermediate Spanish in the fall of 2014 and spring of 2015 was 97 percent. When we look at average MySpanishLab scores grouped by course letter

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grade, we can see that there is a positive relationship between MySpanishLab scores and the final course grade achieved. I plan on sharing these data in my orientation sessions to help students see the relationship between MySpanishLab work and overall course success. MySpanishLab is an essential piece of the course that can have an impact on student’s ability to understand and demonstrate core concepts.

The Student Experience
While students do complain that the program can be difficult at times, and sometimes tedious, those students who make an effort to complete the activities perform better, and they know it! Last semester, students were asked what they would tell the incoming class to do in order to succeed in the course. Unprompted, many students listed MySpanishLab as a top recommendation. The following quotes highlight some of those recommendations:

“MySpanishLab really helped.”
“Practice the grammar in MySpanishLab.”
“Do your homework on time, don’t procrastinate.”
“Keep up with MySpanishLab and take notes on grammar.”
“Do your Extra Practices.”
“Don’t forget MySpanishLab.”

Conclusion
By incorporating culture into language learning, we open up a whole world of meaning for students, and that’s what we want to do — make language learning meaningful. Being able to customize our resources with Pearson to offer additional realia has been important to our program. We created art tours to serve as a gateway for students to engage in something authentic and real. The following quote from an instructor teaching at UMN’s College in the Schools program explains how MySpanishLab helps us achieve our goals:

“I love the art supplement with MySpanishLab. It’s wonderful! On a side note, the art activities are an awesome supplement to class discussions. When we magnified the painting Juanito en la Laguna, a student pointed out that one of the red eyes from the lamb in Juanito’s arms is laying in the pile of garbage. It added a lot to our discussion as no one noticed it in the book until we magnified it on the screen. The students also like the reflection music and hearing the details in Spanish. It helps them focus in on interpreting the art. Super cool addition to MySpanishLab!”

It’s been gratifying to see the language resources evolve and improve in MySpanishLab each year, and even more gratifying to see that students understand the value of MySpanishLab to their success in language acquisition.