School Name	Pulaski Technical College, North Little Rock, AR
Course Name	College Seminar
Course Format	On-ground

Key Results   When students did not show significant improvement on questions tied to specific learning objectives in the post-course assessment, two modules in MyStudentSuccessLab were assigned in full: Goal Setting and Learning Preferences. Post-Test scores on these two modules have increased as a result.

Submitted by
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Course materials
The First-Generation College Experience by Baldwin with MyStudentSuccessLab

College Seminar is required for all first-time-entering, degree-seeking students. Pulaski Technical College students comprise a diverse population:

- 78 percent of students at Pulaski Technical College are first-generation college students.

- 80 percent are required to enroll in developmental math courses.

- The average student is 28 years of age.

- 70 percent of our students eventually transfer to universities.

Because of this diverse audience, we need to ensure a consistent curriculum across 60 sections and 20 instructors. We must also ensure that students make steady progress toward the key course objectives. In the past, each section was taught differently, and assessment data could not be effectively gathered to inform instruction.

We adopted MyStudentSuccessLab because it offers rich content modules that correspond to key topics in our course. Also, we hoped to use its Item Analysis function within the Gradebook to help us regularly evaluate students' progress and to modify our teaching accordingly.

Implementation

In the first semester we implemented MyStudentSuccessLab, we ambitiously assigned all of its modules and components. At the end of that semester, we found that students weren't showing significant improvement on the post-course assessment. Our initial implementation lacked a clear correlation of assigned

MyStudentSuccessLab material to our key course objectives, so we crafted a plan to use MyStudentSuccessLab in a more personalized and focused way.

The content, learning modules, and assets in MyStudentSuccessLab are easily customized to create exactly the course desired. Therefore, we modified our pre-course assessment, adjusting it to a length and reading level appropriate to our students. We determined that two of our course's most important topics were Goal-Setting and Learning Preferences, so we made the MyStudentSuccessLab modules on those topics a required part of our syllabus. We standardized the syllabus across all sections and agreed that MyStudentSuccessLab's assessments would be required and count toward students' grades. Last, we made a concerted effort to thoroughly train faculty to teach with MyStudentSuccessLab.

Every instructor now requires the students to complete the pre-course assessment, the assigned module Pre- and Post-Tests, and everyone uses the post-course assessment as the final exam. From there, instructors have the academic freedom to teach other topics based on the needs of their individual classes. This approach creates a consistent instructional baseline but still allows flexibility across sections.

"With proper training and more experience in assigning MyStudentSuccessLab, instructors are more comfortable using the technology and have gained a greater understanding of how to use assessment data to inform and adapt instruction so we better serve every student's needs."

*"We use the Gradebook's Item Analysis function on a weekly basis
to make data-driven instructional decisions."*

Assessment

2.5 percent	MyStudentSuccessLab pre-course assessment
20 percent	MyStudentSuccessLab Post-Tests (top 10)
10 percent	MyStudentSuccessLab module activities (top 10)
7.5 percent	Mission statement and goal setting assignment
15 percent	In-class activities, quizzes, tests, and homework (15)
2.5 percent	Information literacy library assignment
2.5 percent	Financial aid assignment
10 percent	Degree plan/schedule assignment
10 percent	KUDER assessments and profile assignment
10 percent	Scholarship essay and application assignment
10 percent	MyStudentSuccessLab post-course assessment/final exam

Benefits

We use the Gradebook's Item Analysis function on a weekly basis to make data-driven instructional decisions. The pre- and post-course assessments give us a broad snapshot of students' strengths and weaknesses, and the module Pre-Test data shows what students do and do not do well on, both individually and as a whole class. We share this information with students to target classroom instruction and to involve them in making steady progress toward our course objectives. Item Analysis helps us tailor instruction to students' needs and, as a result, we have seen a significant improvement in students' Post-Test scores.

Results and data

After looking at several semesters of assessment data, we noticed that students weren't showing adequate improvement from the pre- to post-course assessment in goal setting and learning preferences, two critically important course objectives. As an experiment, we decided to assign the entire two modules tied to these objectives to see if we could move the needle on student learning. We are thrilled to see that by assigning the complete modules, student scores are improving on the module post-tests.
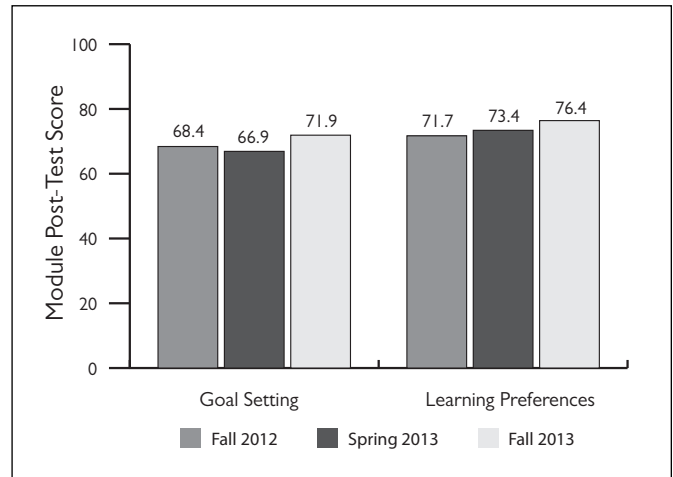

Figure 1. Goal Setting and Learning Preferences Module Post-Test Mean Scores Fall 2012-Fall 2013 (Fall 2012 *n*=660; Spring 2013 *n*=295; Fall 2013 *n*=672)

The student experience

Students have three chances to take each module post-test, and many students use this opportunity to improve their score. They get excited about mastering the modules and showing evidence that they are learning.

Conclusion

The 2012/2013 academic year has seen a better integration of MyStudentSuccessLab. With proper training and more experience in assigning MyStudentSuccessLab, instructors are more comfortable using the technology and have gained a greater understanding of how to use assessment data to inform and adapt instruction so we better serve every student's needs. Every semester, we pull assessment data from MyStudentSuccessLab to redesign the course so it will lead to an even more effective learning experience. Since we have been using MyStudentSuccessLab for two years, we now have a consistent baseline of data that can be used to detect common areas of need and patterns of improvement. MyStudentSuccessLab is definitely helping us meet our learning objectives for the College Seminar course.

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