

School Name University of Dallas, Irving, TX

Course Name General Psychology

Course Format Face-to-face

### Key Results

Using REVEL, I was able to see that all students had access to their assigned course material. REVEL's assignment calendar successfully encouraged students to read the material before coming to class, and the performance dashboard helped me decide which topics to emphasize during lecture. After the implementation of REVEL, students scored significantly higher on exams than students in the same course the previous year. Both cohorts were academically equivalent.

### Submitted by

Brittany Landrum, Instructor

### Course materials

REVEL for *Psychology* by Ciccarelli and White

### Setting

The University of Dallas is a small, private, four-year university accredited by the Southern Association of Colleges and Schools, located 15 minutes from downtown Dallas, TX. Approximately 95 percent of the 1,360 undergraduate students have demonstrated financial need and are awarded financial aid and/or scholarships. Most students are traditional in age and registered as full-time students. The General Psychology course serves as an introduction to various topics in psychology including learning, memory, sensation, perception, intelligence, and consciousness. Additionally, various fields in psychology are looked at including social, abnormal, physiological, and developmental. The students taking General Psychology are a mix of freshman, sophomores, and juniors and are reflective of the university demographics stated above.

### Challenges and Goals

Before REVEL, I used a printed textbook by a different author, along with the publisher-provided open access website that included online quizzes. The challenge with these quizzes was that there was no way to know if students were using them or how they were performing. It is very important that all students in my class have access to and read the textbook. I decided to implement REVEL because it is affordable, I can see if all of my students have access to it, and because it is easily accessible and available anytime. REVEL serves as a way to encourage students to read their assigned course material before coming to class. I believed this would better prepare them to engage

in higher, more conceptual levels of thinking, with the goal of seeing improved performance on exams. My exams consist of mostly applied and conceptual questions, and students need to understand the material to do well. Simply memorizing definitions from the book is not enough.

### Implementation

Following the course syllabus, students are asked to complete 16 chapter assignments in REVEL throughout the semester. Quizzes embedded within the assigned REVEL reading material are due before 9 A.M. on the day I plan to cover the material in class. All quizzes are available two weeks prior to the due date, giving students plenty of time to complete their assignments while also keeping them on pace with the rest of the class. REVEL's performance dashboard provides me with an overall class score for each chapter assigned, as well as individual student scores. This feature allows me to see how well the class understands the material and helps me prepare my lecture accordingly. Students can also track their progress from the REVEL performance dashboard throughout the semester. If they do not complete a REVEL assignment on time, it will be reflected in their overall REVEL score. At the end of the semester, I simply export all students' overall REVEL scores at once. This export includes an overall REVEL score for each student that counts as 35 percent of their final course grade.

### Assessments

45 percent	Exams (five)
35 percent	REVEL (16 chapter assignments)
15 percent	Participation
5 percent	Attendance

*“Connecting my REVEL assignments with my course syllabus makes it easier for students to keep up with the work and allows me to use the information from the REVEL performance dashboard to structure my lecture.”*

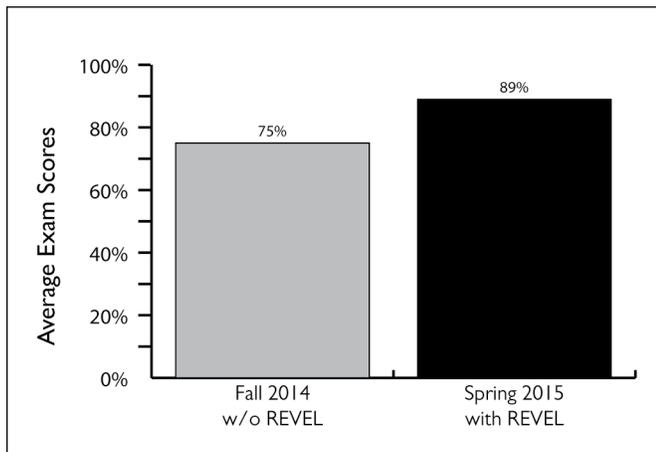


Figure 1. Average Exam Scores without REVEL (Fall 2014,  $n = 33$ ) vs. with REVEL (Spring 2015,  $n = 31$ )

#### Benefits observed

- REVEL is an affordable option for students.
- Thirty out of 31 students (97 percent) in my spring 2015 class had access to their assigned course material before the first assignment was due.
- REVEL is easy to use.
- Students complete chapter assignments in REVEL before class and come to class better prepared. Twenty-one out of 31 students (68 percent) in my spring 2015 class completed all assignments before coming to class, and only two out of 31 students missed more than two assignments.
- Seeing student performance prior to the lecture allows me to emphasize or expand on topics in class.

#### Results and Data

Students using REVEL ( $M = 89\%$ ,  $SD = 5\%$ ,  $n = 31$ ) scored significantly higher on exams than students in the same course the previous semester who used a traditional print textbook with optional open-access quizzes ( $M = 75\%$ ,  $SD = 12\%$ ,  $n = 33$ ),  $t(62) = -5.71$ ,  $p < .01$  (Figure 1). Both Fall 2014 and Spring 2015 exams consisted of mostly applied and conceptual multiple-choice questions. The same topics were covered each semester with questions being pulled from publisher-provided test banks,

and both cohorts were equivalent academically and in terms of preparedness for the course.

#### The Student Experience

In spring 2015, an end of semester survey asked students for feedback on their experience using REVEL. Their feedback was positive, mostly focusing on the accessibility and ease of use of REVEL. Here is what a few students had to say about REVEL:

- “Easy access to materials.”
- “Very accessible for those with disabilities.”
- “It made the course easier.”

Students were also asked what best practices they would share with students using REVEL for the first time. Best practices from students included:

- “Highlight or take notes on important information from REVEL assignments.”
- “Play the audio while reading.”
- “Spread it out; don’t try to do everything in one sitting.”

#### Conclusion

REVEL has had a positive impact on the way I teach my course, which I believe has led to improved performance on exams. Connecting my REVEL assignments with my course syllabus makes it easier for students to keep up with the work and allows me to use the information from the REVEL performance dashboard to structure my lecture. Next semester, I plan to explore implementing early intervention strategies using the REVEL performance dashboard.

#### References

- <http://www.udallas.edu/about/facts.html>
- <http://www.udallas.edu/offices/ir/instprofile.html>
- <http://www.udallas.edu/parents/faq/index.html#f3>

$M$  = Mean  
 $SD$  = Standard Deviation  
 $N$  = Number of learners