

Success Stories

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

Course Info

I use MasteringBiology with *Campbell Biology* for two courses: Biology Principles and Themes and Biological Diversity, Function and Interactions. They are traditional courses with both lectures and labs. Approximately 1500 students take these courses each year.

Implementation

We assess our students through mid-terms and final exams. MasteringBiology accounts for 10% of the final grade.

The main reason we use MasteringBiology is to increase student engagement and have the students work with the material on an increasingly regular basis. It's a good way to keep them focused and on track, and it provides us with an additional means of evaluation.

We use MasteringBiology in two ways. There are weekly MasteringBiology assignments for practice and they relate to the block of lectures for that week. No grade is given to these assignments but we encourage students to do them as it will help them understand the material. We also assign ten weekly MasteringBiology quizzes (approximately one hour in length) that are graded. Of the ten quizzes, we drop the lowest two and average out the remaining eight to get the final grade.

Benefits

MasteringBiology allows us to give homework and helps us understand what the students' backgrounds are. It enables us to ask specific questions to help drive the students more and keep them on track.

My favourite feature of MasteringBiology is the tutorials. I like that they are interactive. They are a great teaching tool because if a student gets the wrong answer, they are provided with bits of information to direct them towards the right response, which is exactly how I would help my students during my office hours.

MasteringBiology helps me as the instructor because I can go into a lab and make the assumption that the students are in the same place. I can be more instructive when I know where they are in their understanding of the material and can highlight what is important. It allows for dynamic interactions.

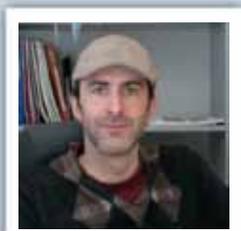
MasteringBiology also benefits my students in that it forces them to stay on top of the material and do work every week; it reduces the cramming. I've overheard students saying in the labs that they enjoy working through the tutorials. They like that it allows them to make mistakes and learn from them. Last year we saw it really made a difference with the C, D, and F students. We saw far fewer Ds and Fs and a lot more passing grades than before.

Conclusion

My advice to instructors who are thinking of using MasteringBiology is to be flexible, try it out; it is definitely worth it. More students will use it if it is for grades, so give it a small allocation of marks to motivate them.

We will definitely use it again next year. Those of us involved in the course are pleased with the outcomes and the increasing numbers of Ds to Cs.

For more information, please contact your Pearson Rep at www.pearsoncanada.ca/highered



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