



MyLab Economics experience with Kjetil Andersson

Platform: MyLab® Economics

School: University of Agder, Norway

Book: Acemoglu, Laibson and List: Economics

2023



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"Recently we have constructed a data set on the time students spend in MyLab and the final grades they receive... We do see that there is a strong positive association between time spent in MyLab and grades." – Kjetil Andersson



The course

The course is **Introductory Economics**, and we're using the book by **Acemoglu, Laibson and List: Economics**, 3rd edition. This is a large course with approximately **400 students**. We are using MyLab® Economics, which helps us to provide students with questions and follow-ups from the lecturer. There are **12 two-hour lectures**, and right after each lecture groups of students come together to solve tasks.

I have been using MyLab Economics for five years.

I assign tasks taken from MyLab consisting of roughly **20-25 questions per group session** – each time relevant to the respective lecture. I also invite former students of the course, who supervise and help with the groups. Occasionally, I also go around myself.

In addition to these group sessions, I use MyLab Economics after each lecture for the mandatory assignments. These mandatory assignments are three in total, and students have to pass all of them to be able to take the exam.

The textbook

It is a very good introductory text. What distinguishes this book from other texts, is that it emphasises that Economics is an empirical science. *In addition to the traditional introductory period, the concepts introduced are also quite empirical.* Furthermore, the content of the textbook is **very well-paced**.





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How do you work together with Pearson upon implementing and using MyLab® Economics?

I had a lot of meetings with Kristine and Andrew, our local Pearson contacts. They gave me all the information I needed to set up MyLab Economics in the beginning. Kristine also used to come and take a few minutes in my first lecture to tell students about how MyLab Economics works. I don't do that anymore, but maybe I will again.

Now I also tell students this is a tool they can use for **self-study**, so if they are interested, they can familiarise themselves with it on their own. But students these days tend not to do more than what is required. If you have not explicitly told them about all these additional features, my experience is they don't use it that much.

How do you integrate MyLab into your curriculum?

It's formally integrated in the sense that there are both the questions I assign to groups and the mandatory segments as part of the curriculum. I stated that in addition to the textbook, MyLab Economics, as well as my lecture slides, are part of the core curriculum.

I tell students that Economics is a discipline you need to work with; you need to do a lot of the work yourself, and MyLab Economics is the tool to do that.

Do you give any extra credits to your students for working with MyLab® Economics?

No. Although they have to pass the three mandatory assignments to be able to take the exam, the use of MyLab for practice is voluntary.

How did you decide to use this platform, and why?

A couple of years ago, I was looking around for textbooks for this course. Because of the cohort size and number of students, I quickly decided I wanted a textbook with digital resources. I found a new textbook, ordered a copy, had a look and liked it.

What were your aims and objectives when you decided to start using MyLab® Economics with your students?

First of all, I decided I needed a textbook with digital resources. There are not that many around, so I just quickly stumbled upon MyLab Economics. I liked what I saw and have been using it since.

Did it meet your goals?

As a whole, it definitely did. It is as good as I expected it to be.



How do you communicate the use of MyLab® Economics with your students?

In the first lecture, I tell them we are using MyLab Economics and provide the introductory material Pearson gives to lecturers, which includes useful links and PowerPoints. Then they use the first group session to download and register on MyLab Economics and do some very simple work to familiarise themselves with it. After that, I have an assistant walking around and supervising the process, helping them with implementing it and getting started, but I don't have an explicit tour of how you can use the tool.

We have noticed they use MyLab Economics intensively before the exam.

What do your students say about MyLab® Economics?

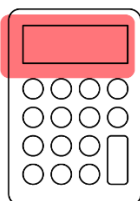
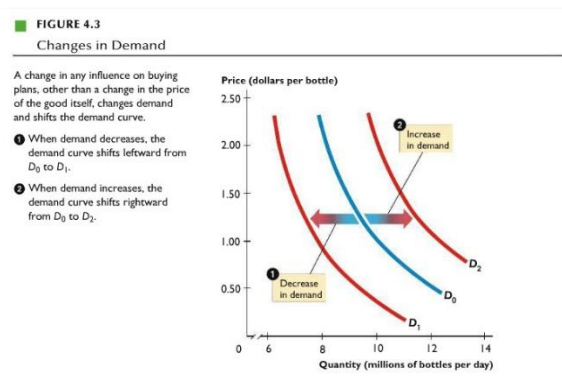
They fill in a general questionnaire where they provide their feedback on the digital environment of the course. Frequently, we receive a lot of feedback on MyLab Economics. I would say the majority of it is positive or very positive about MyLab Economics.

My overall experience is that they like the tool.

Regarding the pedagogical setting of the course – one of them said it was brilliant because right after the lecture they logged in to this tool to test themselves and see if they could understand the main concepts. That's why I always want to form these groups right after lectures, so they get this form of revision immediately and practice what they've learned.

Which features do they use the most?

The assignments I hand them. Very few tend to use additional quizzes or other features; however, they work on the weekly and mandatory assignments I give.



Homework: Real-Time Data Homework

Exercise Scores: 0 of 1 pt Assignment Scores: 0% (0 of 3 pts) RTDA: Bond Ratings 0 of 3 complete

Real Time Data Analysis Exercise

Click the following link to view interest rate data from FRED. Then use that data to answer the following questions.

*Real-time data provided by Federal Reserve Economic Data (FRED), Federal Reserve Bank of Saint Louis.

For this exercise, you will need to enter data from FRED for the Moody's seasoned Aaa corporate bond yield, Moody's seasoned Baa corporate bond yield, 3-month T-bill secondary market rate, and 10-year Treasury constant maturity rate. Then, you will use what you've learned to answer a related economic question.

Using the data from FRED, enter the values for September of 2013 (shown as 2013-09-01 in FRED) for the following series IDs: (Enter your responses exactly as they appear in FRED.)

Series ID	Value
AAA	<input type="text"/>
BAA	<input type="text"/>
TB3MS	<input type="text"/>
GS10	<input type="text"/>

Enter any number or expression in each of the edit fields, then click Check Answer.

1 part remaining

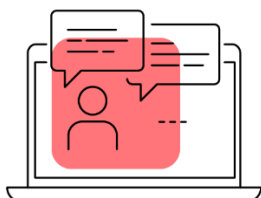
Clear All Check Answer Save



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“The main benefit is that it automatically grades mandatory assignments. It provides the assignments and mostly works by itself. It makes life much easier. I would have needed a lot more assistance- and additional resources had it not been for MyLab Economics.”



In your opinion, what are the main benefits of the platform and what was your personal favourite tool?

The main benefit for me as a lecturer is that **I have access to these questions which can basically function on their own**. They don't need very much assistance from my part in forming these groups where students sit together to solve them. *Obviously, the time I save by having this tool is the main reason I choose to use MyLab Economics.*

For students, I would guess the main benefit is they can log in and practice and gain exam-relevant **practice by themselves**.

You're an experienced user – you are using MyLab® Economics for five years already. What would be your advice for a first-time user?

The first thing is, if there are lecturers who are similarly working with groups of students that get together after the lectures for, say, two hours, they could figure out how much time the groups of students can dedicate to practice on the bulk of questions assigned. In the beginning, I assigned too few questions because many of them were quickly done.

So, probably **you need more questions than you might think**. Then, you have to think about the **default setting in MyLab** where you can get the right answer by just clicking enough times. I wasn't aware of that until recently. It might be better to remove this functionality; maybe you can think about **giving tasks without the answers**, so students would have to think to solve them.

If you set it up as homework, this feature is built-in; and that's ok. I'm contemplating moving to quiz mode instead sometimes – to make students think more.

If you'd like to know more about MyLab®, please visit our website:
<https://www.pearson.com/en-gb/higher-education/products-services/mylab.html>