PEARSON

Revel educator study

A look at impact on student reading and performance at California State University Stanislaus

Key findings:

- Students who earned a higher percentage of total Revel™ quiz points also earned a higher percentage of total reflection assignment points and a higher overall percentage of points in the course.
- Students who passed the course earned significantly higher average total Revel quiz points than students who failed the course.
- On a voluntary end-of-semester survey 92 percent of respondents strongly agreed or agreed that experiencing the text through Revel helped them to feel more engaged with the course content than a traditional textbook.

Setting

Locale: California State University, Stanislaus is a diverse public institution located in California's central valley and is part of the California State University system

Enrollment: approximately 9,000

Average undergraduate age: 23

Student to faculty ratio: 20 to 1

Full-time retention rate: 85 percent

Gender: 66 percent female

Ethnicity/race: 75 percent minority, with 50 percent Hispanic or Latino

Six-year graduation rate: 57 percent

School name: California State University, Stanislaus, Turlock, CA

Course name: Introduction to the Humanities

Course format: Face to face

Course materials: Revel for *Discovering the Humanities* by Sayre

Timeframe: Fall 2017

Educator: Dr. Patricia Eshagh, Instructor

Results reported by: Stephanie Fritson, Pearson Customer Outcomes Analytics Manager

About the course

Introduction to the Humanities (HUM 2000) is an introductory survey course that explores human creativity from prehistoric times through the 20th century. As students move through the course chronologically, the objective is to understand the values, ideals and personalities that inspired human expression through art and architecture, literature, philosophy and religion. In particular, students observe and reflect upon how, over time, humankind addresses the questions of, "Who are we?" and, "Where do we come from?"

Students who successfully complete the course are able to:

- Identify and interpret the key works produced in cultures from the prehistoric period to the 20th century.
- Compare and contrast works based on appropriate analytical skills and correct terminology.
- Demonstrate sensitivity for the human condition across time and culture through reflective thought and introspection.
- Understand the critical role the study of the humanities plays in the development of a reflective versus a reactionary society.

Challenges and Goals

Prior to implementing Revel, Instructor Eshagh found her students frequently came to class not having read the assigned material and were unprepared to participate in discussion, resulting in her having to review the material covered in the text again in class. Students were not able to critically evaluate the material presented and struggled to engage with the content. She elected to use Revel in her course with the goal of assigning quizzes to improve student reading, engagement, and preparedness for class

sessions. She also hoped to ultimately improve course discussion, along with the ability of her students to think critically and make inferences.

Implementation

Dr. Eshagh taught two sections of Introduction to the Humanities in Fall 2017 and implemented Revel in both sections. Both classes were taught in a face-to-face format. Grades for the course were comprised of Revel quizzes, weekly reflection assignments, a midterm exam, and a final exam. The final accumulated point total was the students' final grade based on total points below:

A 540–600 points | **B** 4 80–539 points | **C** 420–479 points
D 360–419 points | **F** 0–359 points

Revel quizzes

Students were required to complete assigned textbook readings within Revel by the due date listed on the class schedule (usually Sundays beforethe week began). As students read each chapter section, they were also required to complete the associated Revel module quiz to assess comprehension. Each module quiz question was worth three points. Points were deducted for each incorrect attempt up to a maximum of three tries per question. The percentage of correct answers students earned was applied to their Revel module quiz point total at the end of the semester. For example: If a student's percentage of correct Revel module quiz answers was 45 percent at the end of the semester, he or she received 45 of the available 100 points for Revel module quiz participation.

Weekly reflection assignments

This weekly reflection assignment was designed to encourage students to be reflective thinkers, to ponder the topics covered in lecture and in their assigned reading more deeply and be able to express their opinions in writing based on a set of prompts. It was also designed to ensure that students attended

lectures, as there was no way to earn points for missed classes. Each week, students were asked to write a short response (maximum one page) based on a prompt supplied by the instructor. The weekly reflections were a form of journaling that could be used as a resource for the essay portion of the midterm and final exams. The procedures for the reflection assignments were as follows:

1. Mondays: The weekly reflection prompt was posted on Blackboard. At the beginning of lecture, the instructor discussed the weekly prompt so that students were aware of what they would be responding to at the end of the week.
2. Wednesdays or Fridays (last class of the week): Students were required to print out the weekly reflection assignment worksheet (available on Blackboard) and bring it with them to class. During the last fifteen minutes of class, students completed their written reflection (freely responding to the weekly prompt) and participated in a class discussion on what they wrote.
3. Each weekly assignment was worth 10 points for a maximum of 140 points. Points could not be earned for missed assignments.

Exams

The course had a midterm and a final exam that were both taken online via Blackboard. These online exams included multiple-choice and/or true /false questions, along with image comparisons. They also included short essay responses that tied in with the weekly reflection assignments. A study guide was provided to students before each exam.

Extra credit

Student were able to earn extra credit points by attending a cultural event and writing about their experience. Students were required to obtain approval from the instructor before attending an event in order to receive extra credit points. In the written portion of the extra credit assignment students were required to: describe their experience; why they selected the venue; whether or not the enjoyed the experience; and how the class had impacted that experience. They were also required to attach their event entrance tickets to their papers as proof of attendance. The papers were a minimum of 250 words and were required to be typed and double spaced. Each paper was worth ten extra credit points and students were allowed a maximum of two extra credit papers for a total of 20 extra credit points.

Assessments
- 30% Final exam (180 points)
- 30% Midterm exam (180 points)
- 23% Weekly reflection assignments (140 points)
- 17% Revel module quizzes (100 points)

  100% 600 points total

Results and Data

Results indicate that students who earned a higher percentage of total Revel quiz points also earned a higher percentage of total weekly reflection assignment points. The correlation between student performance on Revel quizzes and weekly reflection assignments was strong ($r(74)=.62$, $p<.001$).

Students who earned a higher percentage of total Revel quiz points also earned a higher overall final percentage of points in the course. The correlation between student performance on Revel quizzes and the overall percentage of total points earned was also strong ($r(74)=.61$, $p<.001$). Revel quiz points made up 17 percent of the final course grade, influencing this relationship.

A *t*-test, which measures whether the means of two groups are statistically different, was used to compare the average total percentage of Revel quiz points earned between students who passed the course (received letter grades of A, B, or C) and those who failed the course. Results indicate that students who passed the course earned significantly higher average total Revel quiz points than students who failed the course where $t(74)=2.91$ and $p<0.01$, indicating that this difference was statistically significant.

The Student Experience

In Fall 2017, students in Dr. Eshagh's Introduction to Humanities course completed a voluntary, end-of-semester survey (61 participants), providing valuable insight on their experience using Revel in the course.

- 100 percent of respondents were able to log in to Revel the first week of class.
- 93 percent of respondents rated their overall experience with Revel as "excellent" or "good".
- 92 percent of respondents found completing the readings and assignments in Revel "very easy" or "easy".

Students' survey comments regarding their Revel experience included:

"The learning experience is better online or through an app than a regular textbook."

"Some benefits of Revel are being able to read and learn things at your own pace, it also allowed me to pay closer attention to lecture."

"I was able to listen to the audio which helped me be more engaged. Reading a normal book bores me."

"The quizzes help you better understand the key points of each reading and keep you on track and ready for each lecture in class."

"Revel was beneficial because I always had easy access to the app and could do my homework even if I was not home. It also allowed me to read chapters throughout the day."

"Revel can be done whenever, wherever."

Conclusion

Dr. Eshagh implemented Revel in Introduction to the Humanities with the goal of assigning module quizzes to improve student reading and preparedness for class sessions. Eshagh hoped to also improve course discussion and her students' critical thinking skills. Results indicate students who earned a higher percentage of total Revel quiz points also earned a higher percentage of total reflection assignment points and a higher overall percentage of points in the course. The pass rate (grade of A, B, or C) in the course was 84 percent, with 39 percent of students earning an A and students who passed the course earning significantly higher average total Revel quiz points than students who failed the course. On a voluntary end-of-semester

survey, 95 percent of respondents agreed that completing Revel quizzes made them more prepared for class, and 92 percent agreed that experiencing the text through Revel helped them to feel more engaged with the course content than a traditional textbook. Eshagh reports that following the implementation of Revel in the course students are arriving to class having read the text and are prepared for discussion. She has observed students demonstrating a better understanding of the course material, including the ability to make inferences and think critically. She plans to continue to use Revel in future terms.