

MyLab Business Law educator study observes Dynamic Study Modules and Mini Sim scores at Walla Walla Community College

Key Findings

- Every student scoring above average on MyLab assignments earned an A as their final course grade.
- Students with MyLab assignment scores above average earned writing assignment scores 24 percentage points higher than students with MyLab assignment scores below average.
- On an end-of-semester student survey, 100% of respondents agreed that their use of MyLab positively impacted their quiz scores.

Study Specifics

School name: Walla Walla Community College, Walla Walla, WA

Course name: Business Law I

Course format: Hybrid

Course materials: MyLab Business Law with *Business Law* by Cheeseman

Timeframe: Winter 2018

Educator: Joe Cooke, Professor

Results reported by

Candace Cooney, Pearson Customer Outcomes Analytics Manager

Setting

- Locale: two-year, small-town, public institution in southeast Washington state
- Enrollment: more than 12,000 students
- Three-year graduation rate: 37%
- Ethnicity: 30% minority

About the Course

Joe Cooke has been teaching for approximately 30 years and has been at Walla Walla Community College for seven years. Business Law I is a one-quarter, five-credit course offered to more than 60 students annually and required of business majors. The course provides students with a comprehensive overview of the fundamentals of the American Legal System including the Court System, the Constitution, the Legislature and litigation process, and offers analysis of the principles of common law contracts.

Challenges and Goals

Cooke had been using MyLab™ programs in his other courses (Business Math and Accounting) when he was tasked with bringing the Business Law course online for Fall 2015. Having used and reviewed other publisher programs in the past, he trusted MyLab to offer his students the variety of assignments and activities necessary for a meaningful and interactive online course. His teaching philosophy mirrors corporate practicality — students are responsible for mastery in their own work, and collaboration is encouraged, just as it is in the corporate world. He expected MyLab would offer an interactive, dynamic, responsive, and targeted program

with assignments and assessments that students could work on repeatedly and at their own pace, leading to greater understanding of the course material.

Implementation

Instructors face other external considerations when adopting educational technology, including the cost of course materials. Cooke offers students options, allowing them to choose the set of materials that works best for them. On the Winter 2018 survey of his students (64% response rate), 44% of students indicated they purchased the all-digital MyLab code/eText option (no print book), 44% purchased the MyLab code and loose-leaf text, and just one student purchased the MyLab code with a used textbook. Generally, students find value in course materials that have relevance and impact. In fact:

- 89% of survey respondents agreed that the resources in MyLab made the program a good value for this course.
- 100% of survey respondents agreed that use of the MyLab positively impacted their quiz scores.

MyLab assignments

Cooke admits there is a small learning curve when creating a new course with MyLab, similar to any new technology, and suggests that inexperienced users of the program begin by utilizing the pre-built chapter homework assignments. He does caution, however, that instructors using pre-built assignments review them carefully prior to student launch, inspecting them for content and delivery as they may address material and terminology differently. Cooke creates MyLab assignments one chapter at a time, staying ahead of students without spending significant time at once creating the course. For subsequent semesters, he simply copies the newly created course, making any necessary changes and additions. Regardless of the time needed to create the course, Cooke puts student achievement first and believes that MyLab offers students the consistent, repeated practice needed to be successful in his course.

Following a Pearson best practice, Cooke assigns Chapter 0: Getting Started with MyLab, which is due at midnight on the first day of class. This quick quiz familiarizes students with how to enter answers in the system and the type of questions they will encounter, and more importantly, it also ensures all students are registered in the MyLab, putting them on the path to success immediately.

Chapter warm-up exercises are a pre-lecture assignment that encourage students to read the textbook thoughtfully. The ten, pooled, multiple-choice questions gauge their understanding of essential chapter concepts. As a result, students come to class familiar with basic content, allowing Cooke to flip the class and incorporate group work and other experiential exercises during lecture. On the student survey, 78% of respondents agreed that the warm-up exercises encouraged them to read the textbook more than they otherwise would have.

Video case studies are completed pre-lecture as well, and help students apply chapter concepts to real-world business law challenges while reinforcing the concepts. Each video case is followed by five multiple-choice questions and students have unlimited attempts at completion.

Dynamic Study Modules (DSM) are questions that continuously assess student performance and activity, using data and analytics to provide personalized feedback in real-time, to reinforce concepts targeting a student's strengths and weaknesses. Cooke maintains that most of the learning through MyLab takes place with the DSM, as they provide a balance of questioning, application, and feedback. When completed, most students

have a good understanding of the chapter concepts, and as another pre-lecture assignment, Cooke expects students to understand the basic terminology in lecture. One student sent Cooke an unsolicited email message saying,

"In the first class I took from you, you didn't offer the Dynamic Study Module, but it is really neat!! I love it!! Not only does it quiz you but if you answer wrong eventually you go back and it tells you how they got that answer and why and shows you what it should have been. I wish we would have had it in the first class, I feel like it helps me understand things so much more!!"

Additionally, the student survey revealed:

- 100% of respondents agreed that the test-review-retest pattern of the Dynamic Study Modules helped them to learn and remember chapter content.
- 100% of respondents agreed that the use of confidence intervals when answering questions in the DSM ('I am sure', 'I am partially sure', 'I don't know yet') helped them identify those topics they still needed practice with.

Mini Sims are simulation assignments that ask students to apply course concepts to realistic business challenges they are likely to experience in their future careers, covering topics like contracts, dispute resolution, and courts and jurisdiction. Students make a series of decisions, and the Mini Sim branches, creating various scenario paths based on answers given. This personal learning experience provides an opportunity for Cooke's students to build and develop their critical thinking skills. On the end-of-semester survey, students indicated the following:

- 100% of respondents agreed that the Mini Sims in MyLab provided a real-world application of the chapter material that allowed them to apply course concepts to realistic business challenges.
- 89% of respondents agreed that the Mini Sims allowed them to practice business decision-making skills and to understand the impact of the decisions they were making.
- 89% of respondents agreed that the Mini Sims were a different and engaging way of working with the chapter concepts.

Writing Space assignments help Cooke's students develop the critical-thinking and analytical skills they need for success. The initial writing project Cooke assigns is designed to help students accept and incorporate feedback in their final draft. The second assignment requires students to craft a logical argument/brief, while the third assignment is usually a full research project (for example, students might argue both sides of the Equal Rights Amendment).

Chapter quizzes in MyLab are open book, untimed, and students have unlimited attempts at completion. Cooke designs these assessments to mimic an actual law firm environment where lawyers identify issues, search for similar cases, and interpret the relevant statutes and regulations. His expectation is that students will become proficient at investigation, not memorization. Questions are pooled so when students repeat the quiz they are presented with a fresh set of issues and questions.

Additionally, an in-class group project on contract negotiations is introduced, where each group is a different party to the negotiations — contracts, sales and leases, and warranties.

Assessments

54%	MyLab DSM and Simulations (23)	8%	MyLab video quizzes (6)
16%	MyLab Writing Space assignments (3)	6%	MyLab quizzes (7)
14%	In-class group projects (3)	2%	Canvas discussion posts (2)

Results and Data

Cooke combined DSM and Mini Sim scores as a single assignment. Students were divided into two groups based on their average MyLab DSM/Mini Sim score (figure 1).

- Every student who scored above average on these MyLab assignments earned a final course grade of A.
- 50% of students who scored below average on these MyLab assignments earned a C or F as their final course grade, and none of these students earned an A.

Final course grades and average MyLab DSM/Mini Sim score

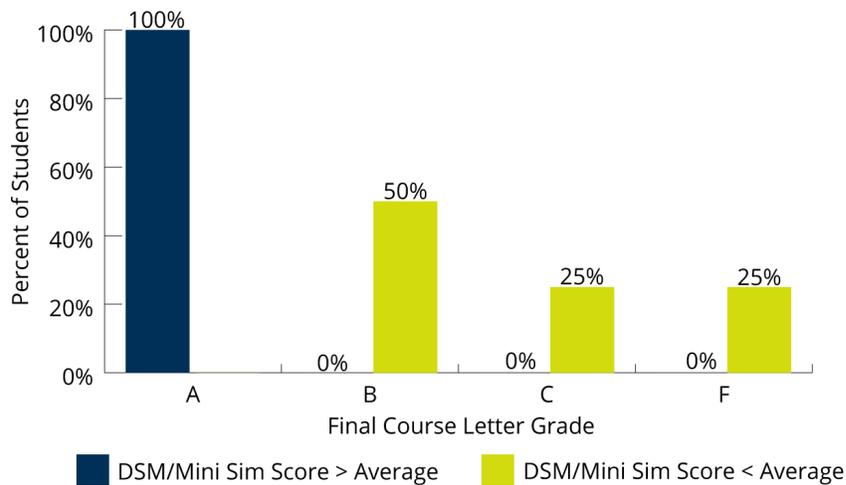


Figure 1. Final Course Letter Grades Based on Average MyLab DSM/Mini Sim Score, Winter 2018 ($n=30$)

The average MyLab DSM/Mini Sim score was 84%. Students scoring above average on these assignments earned MyLab writing assignment scores 24 percentage points higher than students who scored below average (figure 2). The conceptual understanding delivered through DSM assignments and the critical thinking emphasis of the Mini Sim assignments (88% average score) help students develop the skills necessary for successful analysis and writing.

MyLab writing assignment score and average MyLab DSM/Mini Sim score

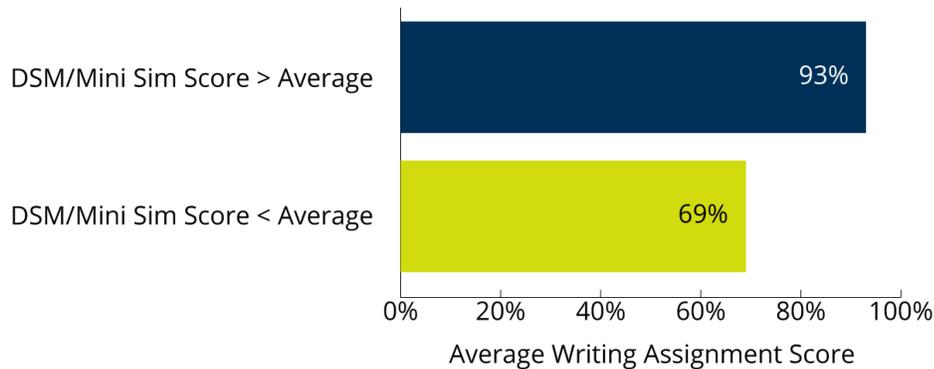


Figure 2. Average MyLab Writing Assignment Score Based on Average MyLab DSM/Mini Sim Score, Winter 2018 ($n=30$)

The Student Experience

Responses from the Winter 2018 end-of-semester survey of Cooke's students indicate that the majority of responding students recognize the value of MyLab Business Law.

- 100% of respondents agreed that their understanding of the course material increased as a result of using MyLab.
- 100% of respondents agreed that the use of MyLab positively impacted their quiz scores.
- 89% of respondents agreed that they would recommend MyLab to other students taking this course.

Student responses to the question "What were the benefits of MyLab?" include:

- *"The ability to continue to study and attempt to improve my scores has greatly facilitated my ability to learn the materials in MyLab Business Law."*
- *"The presentation format was a positive reinforcement for the materials in the text and in class."*
- *"[One benefit was] being able to see what I needed to re-study right away. The multiple attempts available allowed me to continue to gain mastery and actually learn more thoroughly."*
- *"I found it helpful when studying for my assignments and in-class work. Especially the summary of all the sections."*

Conclusion

With MyLab, Cooke is able to offer his students multiple options for self-study: chapter warm-up exercises to encourage reading the text, Dynamic Study Modules for adaptive learning and repetitive practice with core chapter concepts, video cases to offer real-world application, simulations to improve decision-making skills, and chapter quizzes that require students to practice their researching skills. Students who used MyLab consistently and successfully agreed that the homework and quizzes helped them more clearly understand the course material.