Pearson

Revel educator study examines impact on student preparedness and performance at Bryant University

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Key Findings

- Data indicate that average exam and final course scores were substantially higher for students earning Revel scores above average.
- 69% of students scoring above average on Revel assignments earned an A or B as their average exam grade.
- On an end-of-semester survey, 82% of respondents agreed that the "read a little, do a little" interactive approach of Revel helped them learn and retain the material better than they would have with a traditional textbook.

Study Specifics

School name: Bryant University, Smithfield, RI
Course name: Financial Institutions and Markets
Course format: Face to face
Course materials: Revel for *Financial Markets and Institutions* by Mishkin and Eakins

Timeframe: Fall 2018
Educator: Jeffrey Koplik, Lecturer
Results reported by: Candace Cooney, Pearson Results Manager

Setting

- Locale: small, suburban, four-year, private institution about 15 miles northwest of Providence, RI
- Enrollment: more than 3,500 students
- First-year retention rate: 90%
- Six-year graduation rate: 78%
- Ethnicity: 75% Caucasian, 6% Hispanic, 4% African American, 4% Asian, 11% Other

About the Course

Financial Institutions and Markets is a one-semester, three-credit course taken primarily by junior and senior business students majoring in finance. The objective of this course is to introduce students to the purpose, operation, and structure of the financial system. Students will learn how individuals, firms, and financial institutions use financial markets such as the stock, bond, mortgage, derivatives, and commercial paper markets. An underlying theme of the course is how the financial system reduces transaction costs, mitigates informational asymmetries, manages risk, and generally enables the economy to efficiently allocate capital to productive purposes.

Challenges and Goals

Prior to implementing Revel™, Koplik found that students were frequently attending class without having read the assigned material and were unprepared for discussions. While finance classes are generally quantitative in nature, reading the chapter material remains an important part of the overall learning experience. In Fall 2018, Koplik elected to assign Revel readings and quizzes in hopes of increasing student preparedness and engagement.

Implementation

As a fully-digital program, Revel presents an affordable option to print textbooks, although students always have the option to purchase a print book as a companion for the online learning experience in Revel. On a Fall 2018 end-of-semester survey of Koplik's students:

- 69% of respondents reported that they did not purchase a print text along with their Revel access code.
- Initially, 82% of respondents (35 out of 55 students) indicated they were apprehensive about not having a print text and using only Revel for reading assignments.
- However, as the semester progressed, 89% of respondents (45 out of 55 students) reported becoming comfortable using Revel for reading.

Revel is designed to help every student come to class ready to learn. To keep students engaged as they read through each chapter, Revel integrates videos, interactives, and assessments directly into the author-created narrative so students are more likely to complete their assigned reading and retain what they've read. Koplik's students show up to class ready to participate and learn. On the student survey, 95% of respondents agreed that completing the Revel reading assignments prior to lecture helped prepare them for class.

Students use Revel for reading, understanding content, and quizzing. On the student survey, 31% of respondents said they spent 1–2 hours per week working in Revel, while 67% spent more than two hours each week working in Revel. The unique Revel approach of reading chapter content followed by immediate assessment was widely seen as beneficial by survey respondents:

- 82% agreed that the "read a little, do a little" interactive approach of Revel helped them learn and retain the material better than they would have with a traditional textbook.
- 64% said they preferred the interactivity of Revel to a traditional, print textbook.

Revel assignments are due on or before the day of lecture so students come to class prepared to learn. On the student survey, 95% of respondents agreed that completing Revel assignments prior to lecture helped them prepare for the new material being introduced in class. Revel assignments consist of the following exercises and assessments, with each category worth 33.3% of the final Revel score:

End-of-chapter homework: These pre-built assignments cover the entire chapter.

Practice quizzes: These six-question quizzes are located after each section a student reads in Revel. Koplik requires completion of these quizzes so students can review concepts and quiz themselves. On the student survey, 89% of respondents agreed that the practice quiz at the end of each section allowed them to check their understanding of what they just read before moving on to the next reading section. Said one student, *"I liked how Revel let me read one section at a time, then see if I understood what I read."*

Chapter quizzes: One quiz per chapter is assigned after the chapter has been read and both homework and the practice quizzes are completed. Each quiz is comprised of 10 multiple-choice questions.

Students complete two in-class midterm exams and a cumulative final exam. Exams may be comprised of any combination of multiple-choice questions, numeric problems, and short-essay questions (possibly with readings).

Assessments

- 20%   Midterms (2)
- 20%   Final exam
- 20%   Revel assignments
- 20%   Active class participation
- 15%   Cases
- 5%   Attendance at speaker events

Results and Data

Students were placed in two groups based on their total average Revel score. Figure 1 identifies the following:

- Average exam scores were nine percentage points higher for students earning Revel scores above average.
- Final course scores were 13 percentage points higher for students earning Revel scores above average.

For students, the formative Revel assignments are intended to help them identify where they are in terms of successfully completing summative course exams. Data suggest that if students are not completing Revel assignments successfully, they may lack the requisite content knowledge necessary to effectively complete the course exams.

Average exam and final course score based on Revel score
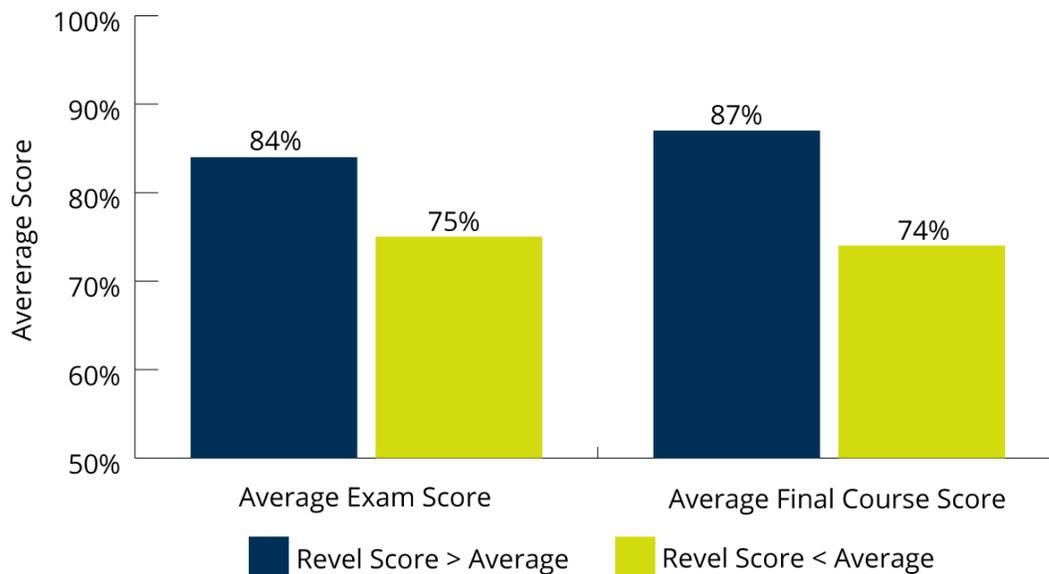

Figure 1. Average Exam and Final Course Score Based on Revel Score, Fall 2018 (n=70)

Figure 2 uses the average Revel score of 80% to examine the distribution of average exam grades.

- 69% of students scoring above average on Revel assignments earned an A or B as their average exam grade, while 45% of students scoring below average on Revel assignments earned an A or B.

- 28% of students scoring below average on Revel assignments earned a D or F as their average exam grade, while just 4% of students scoring above average on Revel assignments earned a D, and none of these students earned a failing exam grade.

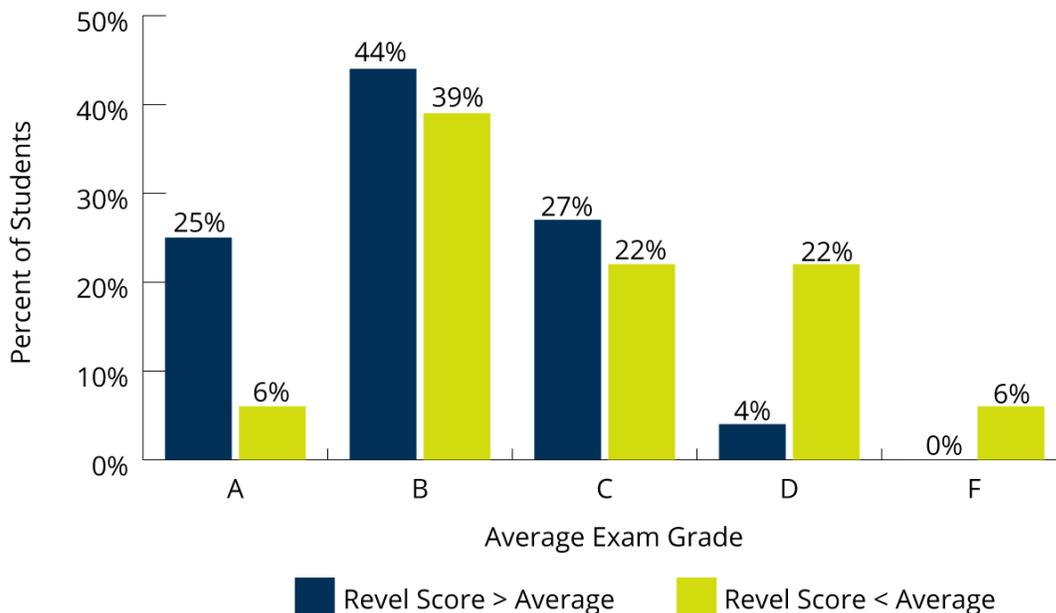**Average exam letter grades based on Revel score**

Figure 2. Average Exam Letter Grades Based on Average Revel Score, Fall 2018 (*n*=70)

The Student Experience

Responses from the Fall 2018 end-of-semester survey of Koplik's students indicate that the majority of responding students recognize the value of Revel.

- 82% of respondents agreed that the "read a little, do a little" interactive approach of Revel helped them learn and retain the material better than they would have with a traditional textbook.
- 64% of respondents said they prefer the interactivity of Revel to a traditional print textbook.
- 76% of respondents said the resources provided in Revel made the program a good value for the course.
- 67% of respondents would recommend Revel to another student.

Student responses to the question, "What were the benefits of Revel?" included:

- *"I enjoyed being able to practice after the reading. It was also helpful to be able to use the homework and quizzes to help me prepare for exams."*
- *"Revel helped me to better understand the material. Instead of just reading a textbook, I liked that Revel had mid-text questions to help understand the information."*
- *"With Revel, I had to read to actually respond to the questions, they got me prepared for class."*
- *"Being able to test my knowledge before class to see what I was struggling to understand."*
- *"Revel helped me learn more than just reading a textbook. The questions helped me understand the chapter easier."*
- *"The benefits include the end-of-chapter questions. I enjoyed being able to review what I read and answering test/quiz questions at the end of each chapter."*

Conclusion

Koplik's principal motivation for adopting Revel was to encourage his students to read the text prior to attending lecture. Revel's "read a little, do a little" approach breaks the material down into smaller pieces, so students are less likely to be distracted and more likely to complete the reading before attempting the practice questions and other assignments. In addition, these frequent breaks for low-stakes assessment means Koplik's students can identify immediately what concepts they might not fully understand before moving on. As the end-of-semester survey identified, students concur that this works: 89% of respondents agreed that the practice questions at the end of each section allowed them to check their understanding of what they just read before moving on to the next reading section. Revel also provided an opportunity for improved student engagement, as 95% of respondents agreed that completing Revel assignments prior to attend lecture helped them prepare for the new material being introduced that day in class.