

California State University at Bakersfield Bakersfield, California

INSTRUCTORS Professor Randi Brummett de Leon; Professor Brooke Hughes

COURSE English 80 Reading and Writing

LEVEL Covers paragraph to essay

TEXT Mosaics: Focusing on Essays, *by Kim Flachmann*

TERMS COVERED Fall 2007-Fall 2008

CONTRIBUTION OF MYWRITINGLAB TO FINAL GRADE 10%

TYPES OF DATA REPORTED Student outcomes

COURSE STRUCTURE Hybrid: Part lecture/part online

A non-traditional campus population, a flexible online learning environment

CSUB IS A PROUDLY NON-TRADITIONAL CAMPUS with a vision to become the leading university in the California State University system. The student population is diverse and 46% of students are older than 24. Only a tiny fraction of active students reside on campus—many are juggling work and family responsibilities as they pursue their degrees. Almost half of all students taking courses in the English department are ESL/Generation 1.5 students.

English 80 is designed to foster successful performance in college-level work by improving students' foundation skills in reasoning, reading, and writing. Students scoring 120-141 on the required California English placement test are placed into English 80 for remedial work on basic skills. The course as designed mandated that students meet with a tutor/instructor during a pre-determined lab time once a week to discuss grammar/writing/mechanics. Several issues presented themselves:

- Students often had conflicts with the pre-determined lab times and could not attend
- Available tutors and instructors did not consistently match needs for staff
- Classroom space was not necessarily available at the times or in quantities needed

To address all of these needs, Professors Brummett and Hughes implemented MyWritingLab to fulfill the online requirement, allowing students to work in the lab when they were able and instructors/tutors to provide support on a flexible basis.

Implementing MyWritingLab

Beginning with one section of English 80 in fall 2007, MyWritingLab was systematically incorporated into all three sections of English 80 through the winter and spring of 2008. The course was redesigned as a hybrid format (part online, part meeting in person) with MyWritingLab used as the grammar workshop component. In fall 2008, the course was further redesigned so that the MyWritingLab grammar workshop component became completely online. All English 80 instructors are trained in MyWritingLab as are all tutors in the OASIS Tutoring Center. English/writing tutors

STUDENT FEEDBACK

“MyWritingLab

explained when

the answers were

wrong and when

they were right.”

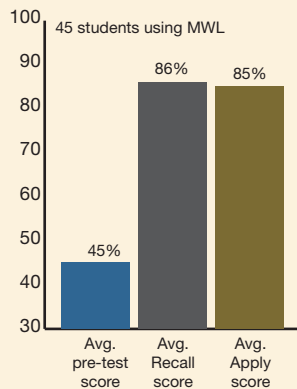
“I can try as

many times

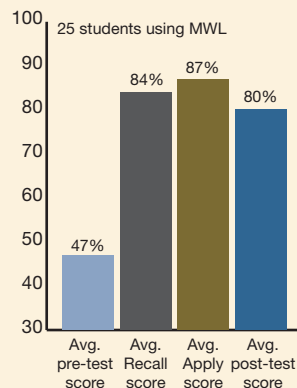
as possible and

not feel stupid.”

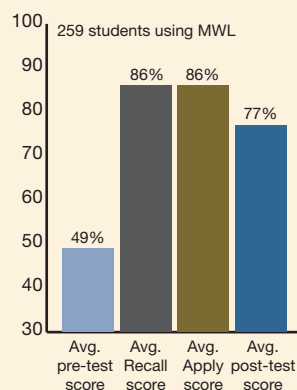
Winter 2008



Spring 2008



Fall 2008



from OASIS visit English 80 classes to assist students with MyWritingLab registration and students are welcome to use the OASIS Tutoring Center to access one-on-one tutoring help or to work on the computers at the center.

English 80 students take a diagnostic pre-test on sentence-level grammar and then complete 10 areas of MyWritingLab dealing with basic parts of speech: pronouns; combining sentences; correct verb tense and form; the subject and the verb; subject-

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—PROFESSORS RANDI BRUMMETT DE LEON AND BROOKE HUGHES

verb agreement; adjectives; adverbs; recognizing phrases and clauses; fragments; comma splices/fused sentences. In order to receive full credit, students must master each topic by scoring 80% or higher on both the Recall (multiple choice questions) and Apply (where students apply what they’ve just learned to a paragraph) sections for each topic. Working in MyWritingLab, students watch a mini-lecture on each topic and then work through the Recall and Apply exercises. Students inform instructors when they need new topics unlocked; instructors use these interactions to provide one-on-one teaching or to assist with any learning challenges students may be experiencing. MyWritingLab comprises 10% of students’ final grade.

RESULTS

Student outcomes in English 80 were very strong as MyWritingLab was fully integrated into all sections. English 80 students entered with average diagnostic scores of 47% and improved their Recall and Apply scores by 40 percentage points. In fall 2008, with all sections using MyWritingLab, 259 students enrolled in English 80. Those students averaged 49% on the pre-test diagnostic, achieved Recall scores averaging 86% and Apply scores of 86%; their post-test scores averaged 77%—a gain of nearly 30 percentage points.

CONCLUSIONS

MyWritingLab enabled students to learn on their own terms, at their own pace, and on a more flexible schedule.

“MyWritingLab allows us to deploy precious instruction resources almost surgically, to one student at a time and at the moment that students express the need,” Professors Brummett and Hughes noted. “MyWritingLab helps us to transform the challenge of limited faculty into a real positive for both students and instructors.”

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For a product tour or to find out more, please visit www.mywritinglab.com