

California State University at Bakersfield Bakersfield, California

INSTRUCTORS Professor Randi Brummett de Leon; Professor Brooke Hughes

COURSE English 100 Critical Thinking and Writing

LEVEL Covers essay writing using rhetorical modes

TEXT Quick Access, *by Lynn Troyka*; other textbook varies by instructor

TERMS COVERED Winter 2008-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 100 seeks to help students develop effective college-level writing skills through the study of rhetorical patterns and practice writing frequent short papers in a variety of essay modes. Fundamentals of grammar, usage, punctuation and spelling are reviewed as necessary. To place into English 100, students must score between 142-154 on the California English placement test or achieve a grade of C- or higher in English 80 Reading and Writing.

The course design called for students to attend 10 of 20 possible mini-lectures held at various times and at various locations around campus. The mini-lecture requirement created several challenges:

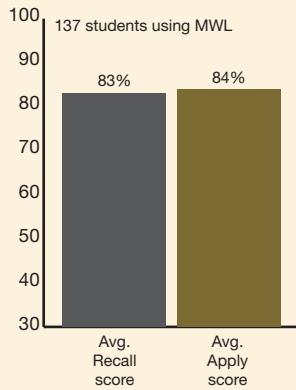
- How would the majority non-resident students attend sufficient mini-lectures?
- Who would teach the mini-lectures?
- Was sufficient classroom space available at the desired times?
- How would instructors manage attendance?
- How to monitor student learning?

Recognizing that students with multiple obligations and time constraints might benefit from a more flexible learning resource, Professors Brummett and Hughes considered online writing programs. They sought to give students more control over their studies and more flexible access to instruction than exists with strictly in-classroom learning. They sought a resource that would add another dimension to students' learning experiences and one that would make course administration easier for instructors. After reviewing online alternatives, they chose to pilot MyWritingLab.

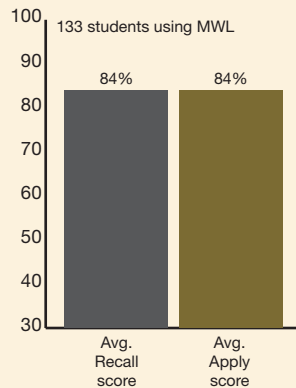
STUDENT FEEDBACK

“The fact that you can fail an assignment, learn from it, and try it again was the best part.”

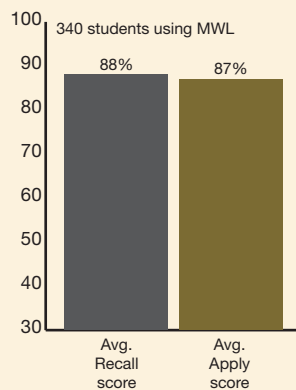
Winter 2008



Spring 2008



Fall 2008



Implementing MyWritingLab

Beginning in winter 2008, five pilot courses began using MyWritingLab instead of the mini-lecture requirement; by spring 2008, all sections of English 100 used MyWritingLab as the mini-lecture component. All English 100 instructors are trained in MyWritingLab as are all tutors in the OASIS Tutoring Center. English/writing tutors

“Now, the students can do their grammar work on their own time, at their own pace.”

—PROFESSORS RANDI BRUMMETT DE LEON AND BROOKE HUGHES

from OASIS visit English 100 classes to assist students with MyWritingLab registration and students are welcome to use the OASIS center to access one-on-one tutoring help or to work on the computers at the center.

English 100 students work on their own time to complete 10 topic areas in MyWritingLab, one per week, dealing with syntax and the writing process. Sample topics are thesis statements, essay development, and punctuation. In order to complete mastery of a topic, students watch a mini-lecture on the topic and complete two areas: Recall (multiple choice questions) and Apply (where students apply what they've just learned to a paragraph). Students must score 80% or higher on both the Recall and Apply exercises to prove mastery and receive full credit. MyWritingLab comprises 10% of students' final grade.

RESULTS

Student performance in English 100 was very strong as MyWritingLab was fully integrated into all sections. English 100 students did not take the pre- or post-tests but their Recall and Apply scores documented mastery of the course topics. Across three terms, 610 students using MyWritingLab in English 100 scored 83-88% on Recall and 84-87% on Apply.

CONCLUSIONS

MyWritingLab enabled students to learn on their own terms, at their own pace, and on their own schedules.

“Students in English 100 were previously required to attend 10 mini-lectures on grammar topics,” Professors Brummett and Hughes noted, “but since they didn't find out about these mini-lectures until the first week of class, they often couldn't attend any of them due to schedule conflicts. Now, the students can do their grammar work on their own time, at their own pace.”

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