

Product Name MasteringGeography

Course Name Geography of the Global Village (World Regional)

Credit Hours Three

Key Results Students who do MasteringGeography homework tend to do better both on the exams and in the course.

Text

Globalization and Diversity: Geography of a Changing World, 3e, Lester Rowntree, Martin Lewis, Marie Price, and William Wyckoff

Implementation

Geography of the Global Village is an introductory course in world regional geography that surveys the human and physical diversity of our planet. The purpose of this course is to discuss the regions of the world emphasizing the unfamiliar and introducing geographical concepts such as location, core-periphery, and diffusion. Successful student outcomes include: (1) increased knowledge of the cultural, regional, and ecological contexts of the world; (2) understanding of global diversity and globalization; (3) proficiency in map skills and international place names; and (4) grasp of the importance of intellectual pursuits that construct geographical ideas.

Because of large course enrollments, my homework before implementing MasteringGeography consisted of questions that were answered on a Scantron form while referencing a print Atlas. However, this method didn't provide an opportunity for the kind of visual interaction with maps that help students better understand the concepts. MasteringGeography provides resources that students can interact with to facilitate learning those concepts.

I tell my students that for every hour of lecture, they should anticipate two to three hours of study time outside of class. I assign regular, untimed MasteringGeography homework that correspond to the textbook chapters and include numerous MapMaster and Google Earth™ learning activities. Students can earn extra points by completing additional MasteringGeography activities.

Assessments

50 percent Midterm exams (best two of three)

25 percent Final exam

25 percent MasteringGeography homework

Results and Data

I analyzed homework completion rates for my fall 2012 course to determine how it impacts course performance. I did not evaluate the data based on the actual homework score. Rather, a MasteringGeography assignment was labeled as skipped if it showed a score of 0 and was counted as attempted if points were scored. I found the following results:

- 67 percent of students who completed the final exam attempted all 14 MasteringGeography homework assignments; 33 percent skipped at least one.
- Of the 33 percent who skipped at least one MasteringGeography homework, the average number of skipped assignments was 2.
- 46 percent of students who skipped MasteringGeography homework assignments skipped only one assignment.
- 83 percent of students who skipped MasteringGeography homework skipped between 1-3 assignments; 16 percent skipped 4-10 assignments, and 1 percent skipped all assignments.
- 92 percent of students attempted all homework assignments for exams 1 and 3, 96 percent attempted all homework assignments for exam 2, and 74 percent of students attempted all homework for the final exam.

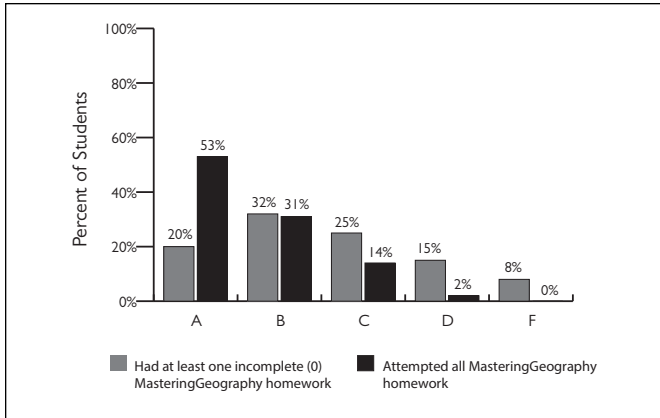


Figure 1. Relationship between Final Course Grade and MasteringGeography Homework Participation (Incomplete $n=202$, All $n=411$)

I evaluated the final course grade for both groups and found a significantly higher percentage of students who attempted all MasteringGeography homework earned an A in the course versus students who skipped one or more assignments (figure 1).

In addition, I looked at each group’s mean exam scores. Although I drop one midterm exam, I used all exam scores for this analysis. Figure 2 shows exam scores based on completion of MasteringGeography assignments for the applicable unit exam. Scores for the second and third midterm exams, and the final exam were significantly higher for students who attempted all MasteringGeography homework for that unit than they were for students who skipped at least one homework assignment for the unit exam.

Finally, I calculated the average MasteringGeography homework grade, including extra credit points, and found that students who do well on the homework tend to do better in the course (table 1).

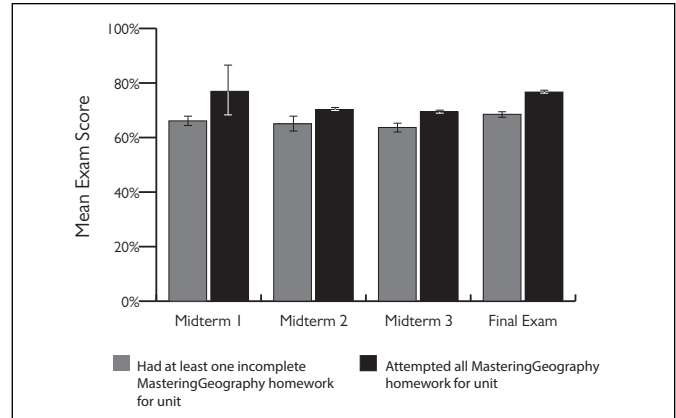


Figure 2. Relationship between Mean Exam Scores and MasteringGeography Homework Participation (Midterm 1: Incomplete $n=50$, All $n=580$; Midterm 2: Incomplete $n=23$, All $n=595$; Midterm 3: Incomplete $n=48$, All $n=546$; Final Exam: Incomplete $n=162$, All $n=451$)

The Student Experience

Student feedback is generally positive. Students are more engaged with the course content because of the opportunities for more visual and interactive learning.

Final Course Grade	Average MasteringGeography Homework Score with Extra Credit
A	92%
B	84%
C	76%
D	62%
F	31%

Table 1. Average MasteringGeography Homework Score per Final Course Grade

Conclusion

With large enrollments, it’s hard to create in-class activities in which students are engaged and able to explore maps. MasteringGeography offers a more visual way to understand spatial reasoning and learn map-reading skills—concepts students must understand to do well in the course. When students put the time and effort into doing the MasteringGeography homework, they tend to do better on exams and, ultimately, in the course.

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