

School Name **Guilford Technical Community College, Jamestown, NC**

Course Name **Elementary Spanish I**

Course Format **Face-to-face, hybrid**

Key Results Students who score 80–100 percent on MySpanishLab homework achieve 11 to 22 percentage points higher on quizzes, midterm, and final exams, compared to students who score less than 80 percent on MySpanishLab homework.

Submitted by

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Course materials

Arriba, Zayas-Bazan, Bacon, and Nibert; MySpanishLab

Guilford Technical Community College (GTCC) is a large community college in a suburb of the nearby cities of Greensboro and High Point. GTCC offers a variety of degree programs, including nursing and aviation. About 50 percent of students enroll for an Associate's degree, 35 percent for continuing education, and 15 percent for Basic Skills. More than half of students are minorities. Fifty percent of students are younger than 25.

About the Course

GTCC offers four Spanish courses – Elementary Spanish I and II (covering the first six chapters of *Arriba*), and Intermediate Spanish I and II, covering the remaining chapters in the text. Typically, students want to complete two semesters of a foreign language and use the transfer credits at a four-year university.

Challenges and Goals

The college strives to offer quality online and hybrid instruction in addition to face-to-face courses. To meet this goal we adopted MySpanishLab because we feel it offers students a consistent and effective learning experience for any of our course formats.

Implementation

All of our department's five Spanish language instructors can create their own lesson plans and tests, but we all use MySpanishLab for homework to ensure consistency across all sections of the course. I post the Student Activity Manual (SAM) assignments for the entire semester on the MySpanishLab calendar, so students can work ahead if needed. I assign 5 to 10 SAM activities each week, and I strongly encourage students to do the assignments as many times as needed to get 100 percent. Students get instant feedback when they submit their work so

they can identify and correct any mistakes. The computer gives hints and links to the applicable information in the eText, and it will provide them the correct answer after five attempts.

Many students struggle when they work with audio clips, but I tell them that deeper learning is a rigorous process: they need to discipline themselves to keep trying in order to improve their listening comprehension skills. I also show them how they can slow down the audio in MySpanishLab to make it easier to understand.

Assessments

25 percent	MySpanishLab homework (in hybrid course, MyLab is 20 percent; additional online assignments are 5 percent)
20 percent	Quizzes
20 percent	Midterm exam
20 percent	Final exam
10 percent	Oral presentation
5 percent	Professionalism points

Benefits

For accreditation purposes, our department frequently must provide information to GTCC's Learning Evidence Committee, which measures students' performance in meeting course learning objectives. To do this, we use scores on MySpanishLab activities to demonstrate student proficiency on key learning objectives like responding to native or near-native speech in the target language and being able to compare cultural concepts among the various Spanish-speaking countries. We use MySpanishLab as our common assessment tool because it is used across all our classes and because it is easy to pull performance data from the Student Activity Manual assignments grade book.

I love the tutorials in MySpanishLab and the video clips in the eText. The native speaker content is also great, and it allows students to experience a range of different accents. I always show the *Pura Vida* videos and the cultural content, and if I

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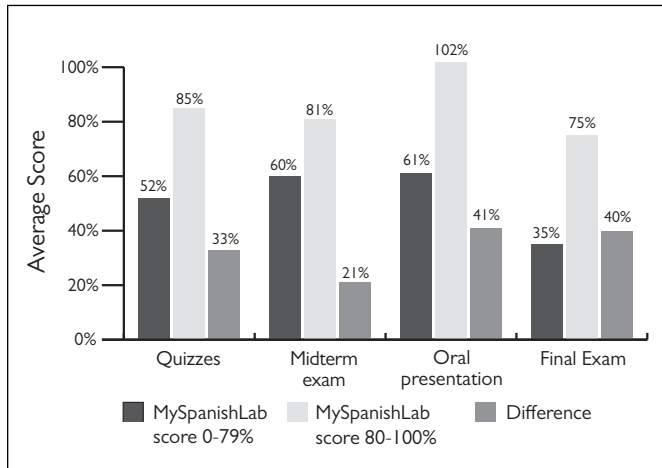


Figure 1. Elementary Spanish I, Face-to-face Section, Spring 2014. MySpanishLab Score 0–79 percent (n = 14); MySpanishLab Score 80–100 percent (n = 11)

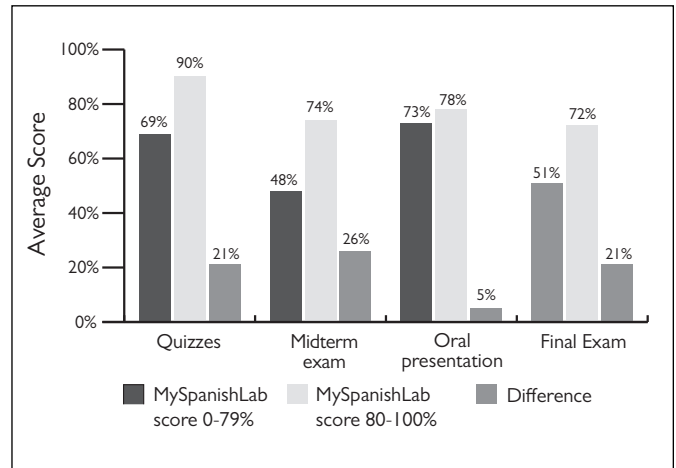


Figure 2. Elementary Spanish I, Hybrid section, Spring 2014. MySpanishLab Score 0–79 percent (n = 14); MySpanishLab Score 80–100 percent (n = 26)

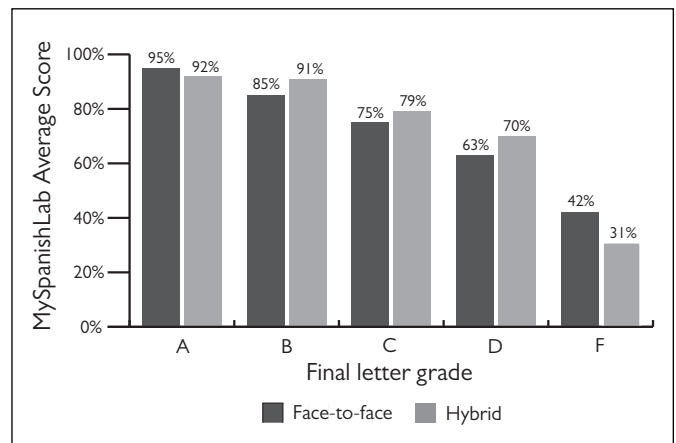
run out of time in class, I assign this material for homework. Although I might not assign every activity, if students need more help, I show them where they can go for additional practice and to play language-learning games such as “Hangman,” “Jeopardy,” and crossword puzzles. They can listen to the eText, match pictures with words, etc. My students ask me if they should buy Rosetta Stone to help them do well, and I tell them they don’t need it—they just need to work with the many resources they’ve already purchased in MySpanishLab!

Results and Data

Because MySpanishLab counts for 20–25 percent of the final grade, students have to do well on their homework to achieve a high letter grade. However, I wanted to evaluate whether doing the MySpanishLab homework helps students perform better on the quizzes or tests I give in class. In dividing the students into two groups—those who achieve 80–100 percent on the MySpanishLab homework and those who achieve less than 80 percent—I see a clear difference in student performance (Figures 1 and 2). Students who achieve at least an 80 percent on MySpanishLab homework score considerably higher on key course assessments than students who score lower.

Conclusion

I am considering increasing the number of required Student Activity Manual assignments from MySpanishLab in the future.



MySpanishLab Homework Averages Grouped by Final Course Letter Grade: Elementary Spanish I, Face-to-face Section (n = 25); Hybrid Section (n = 40)

Students who devote the time and the effort to get at least 80 percent on their MySpanishLab homework do better overall in the course. Although this correlation may, in part, be a result of work ethic, motivation, or aptitude, it also shows that students who discipline themselves to get the most out of MySpanishLab earn better grades in the course. MySpanishLab gives students a low-stakes opportunity to achieve a high score that can end up making the difference in overall course success.