

CASE STUDY

Purdue University West Lafayette, IN

INSTRUCTOR Jason Fetters, Program Director, Spanish 201/202

COURSES SPAN 201 Intermediate Spanish I
SPAN 202 Intermediate Spanish II

LEVEL Intermediate

TEXT *Identidades, 2/e*, with MySpanish Lab
by Judith E. Liskin-Gasparro, Paloma Lapuerta, Elizabeth E. Guzmán, and Matilde Olivella Castells

TERM COVERED Spring 2009

CONTRIBUTION OF MYSPANISHLAB TO FINAL GRADE 25% for both 201 and 202

TYPES OF DATA REPORTED Comparison of final course grades before and after MySpanishLab integration

COURSE STRUCTURE Traditional face-to-face

COURSE REDESIGN FOR PURDUE'S two intermediate Spanish courses was initially triggered by concerns about cheating and the integrity of students' grades; faculty members uncovered that students had located an online source to purchase the key to the student workbook. For the new Program Director for Intermediate Spanish, Jason Fetters, the cheating concern provided an opportunity. Redesigning the courses around an online learning resource would enable the department to address several challenges at once in a large program enrolling 500-1300 students per term in two intermediate Spanish courses. Fetters and his fellow instructors sought:

- a sophisticated learning resource that would engage students more effectively than paper workbooks
- an immersive, always-available study environment that would extend students' learning beyond the limits of three contact hours per week
- a uniform curriculum and consistent grading among all sections

Fetters had used online programs produced by WebCT and Quia but was not satisfied with either. After looking closely at MySpanishLab, he adopted it for the course redesign of Intermediate Spanish 201 and 202 and began to incorporate MySpanishLab in fall 2008.

Incorporating MySpanishLab

In the pilot term of fall 2008, students were assigned both textbook activities and MySpanishLab activities. Requiring students to complete both textbook and online homework assignments proved a bit awkward in practice. Students disliked switching back and forth between the textbook and MySpanishLab, and instructors found juggling two grading systems an inefficient use of time. Students preferred completing assignments in MySpanishLab, and instructors appreciated the ease and consistency of grading with MySpanishLab's gradebook. So for the spring 2009 term, the transition to MySpanishLab was completed; students were required to complete 100% of homework assignments using MySpanishLab. MySpanishLab accounts for 25% of students' final grade with oral assessments, chapter exams, presentations, and compositions comprising the remaining 75%.

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RESULTS

Redesigning the two courses around MySpanishLab has been a success. The curriculum and course requirements are uniform across all sections so students receive a consistent learning experience. Because MySpanishLab automates the grading process, instructors report that they have more time to offer students one-on-one assistance. Fetters says, "When I examine the data from before and after MySpanishLab, it is clear to me what a great success MySpanishLab is and how useful it is for our students."

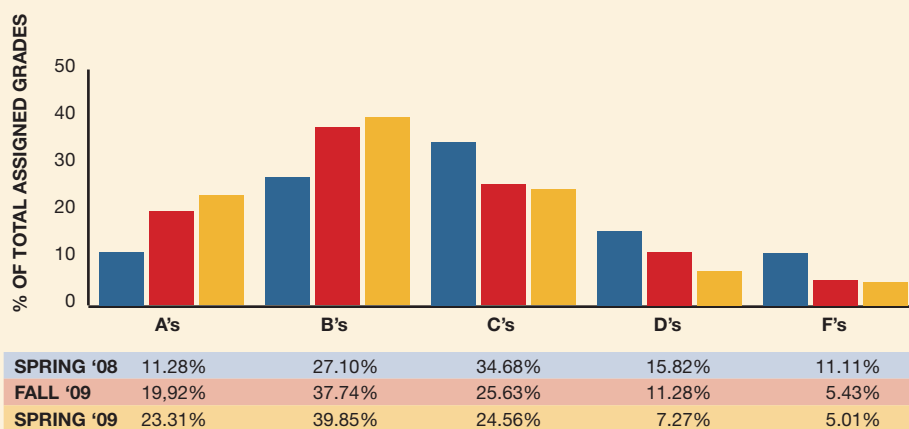
Other important findings comparing students' performance before and after MySpanishLab:

- Students' failure rate has dropped from 11% to 5% in one academic year
- Nearly 88% of students are earning a C or higher grade
- B's are now the grade most awarded (40%) as compared to C's in spring 2008 (35%)

FUTURE

Having completed the course redesign and full integration of MySpanishLab, Fetters is looking forward to incorporating the voice recording and other audio features of MySpanishLab into the Purdue intermediate Spanish courses. Fetters sums up, "I'm quite happy with the program and with the support I've been given. MySpanishLab has every possible resource a teacher would want, all in one place as a complete package. As I compare our experience with other instructors, I see that we are on track by using MySpanishLab."

Final Grade Distributions Spanish 201



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AVAILABLE FOR FALL 2010 CLASSES: MyChineseLab

AVAILABLE FOR SPRING 2011 CLASSES: MyLatinLab

COMING SOON: MyGermanLab, MyPortugueseLab, MyRussianLab

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