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Case Study: MyMathLab at University of Alabama Wins IMS 2009 Learning Impact Platinum Award

Powered by Pearson eCollege, the University Increased Student Success Rates and Realized Cost Savings of 28%

University of Alabama, which serves 27,000 students annually in Tuscaloosa, Alabama, needed a more personalized approach to math instruction to prevent student failures. The university has been a partner of Pearson for several years, adopting Pearson's MyMathLab program in 2001.

MyMathLab at University of Alabama currently serves personalized, online math instruction to over 10,000 students per year. The school uses the majority of features offered in MyMathLab, including customization, homework, quizzes, tests and prerequisites. In 2008, MyMathLab courses began running on the Pearson eCollege platform, providing improved options and capabilities.

Since implementing Pearson's MyMathLab, the University of Alabama has achieved remarkable gains in student math success–between 20% and 30%–while retention rates are up at least 10% over the past five years. This incredible success caught the attention of the IMS Global Learning Consortium, which awarded the University of Alabama's MyMathLab program with the Learning Impact Platinum Award and the "Best Assessment Solution" award in 2009.

Redesigning Math Programs for Success with MyMathLab

"We have continued to invest in this innovative learning solution to address expanded use across the institution and now offer a more robust, integrated math learning solution using Pearson eCollege."

-Will Etheridge
CEO, Pearson Education North America

In the summer of 2000, the University of Alabama redesigned its math program using MyMathLab and a proven Math Emporium model. The university's College of Arts and Sciences created the Mathematics Technology Learning Center, which started out as a 70-seat computer lab. The lab now seats 500 students simultaneously.

MyMathLab offers a series of text-specific online courses designed to work with Pearson Addison-Wesley and Pearson Prentice Hall textbooks in mathematics. Self-paced, customizable and adaptable to each student's level of knowledge, MyMathLab immerses students in an active learning environment with the learning style and pace that best suits their needs. The University of Alabama's math department now uses MyMathLab to serve the following courses to over 10,000 students a year.

- *Beginning Algebra*
- *Intermediate Algebra*
- *Finite Math*
- *Precalculus Algebra*
- *Precalculus Trigonometry*
- *Precalculus Algebra & Trigonometry*
- *Business Calculus*

"Research has shown us that math competency is a singular predictor to college readiness and success. Ten years ago Pearson made an investment in this eLearning solution, MyMathLab, to reverse the alarming drop out rate and to realize a significant turnaround in retention and cost savings for students and higher education institutions," said Will Ethridge, CEO of Pearson's North American education businesses. "We have continued to invest in this innovative learning solution to address expanded use across the institution and now offer a more robust, integrated math learning solution using Pearson eCollege."

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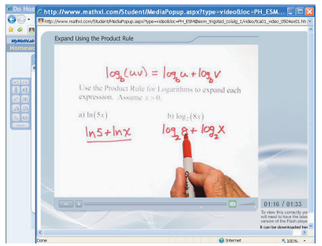
Why MyMathLab on Pearson eCollege?



Students have different learning tools available while working on homework.

MyMathLab on MyLabsPlus is an enhanced version of Pearson's original math solution. This product blends Pearson eCollege's reliable course management tools with engaging and successful content from Pearson Higher Education. Pearson eCollege offers institution-wide assessment options and improved administrative capabilities. Pearson eCollege manages all of the day-to-day technical aspects of the university's online math programs, including the hardware, software and 24/7 help desk support.

University of Alabama decided to run MyLabsPlus, looking to further improve the increased success rates for its students and better provide faculty with opportunities to improve their current math courses. Since adopting MyMathLab on MyLabsPlus, both students and faculty at University of Alabama note a number of benefits to using the program. These benefits include improved teaching capabilities for math courses, instructor customization capabilities and increased personalization capabilities for student learning.

Using MyLabsPlus, instructors can easily create, import and manage online homework assignments, quizzes and tests. All of these elements are automatically graded, allowing instructors to spend less time grading and more time teaching. In addition, software customizations provide performance data.

Currently, course content is organized into four test periods. In each test period, student progress is assessed using instructor developed homework, quizzes and a major test. Analysis is then done by instructors to determine what concepts the majority of students need to work on. These concepts are then included in future homework assignments.

Students attending the University of Alabama have responded to the personalized learning approach adopted by the school's math program. Students enjoy the following benefits of the MyLabsPlus program.

- *Students can work at own pace*
- *Students can work in lab or at home*
- *Students receive instant feedback on work*
- *Homework, quizzes, tests and final exam are computer graded*
- *All student activity is recorded*
- *Additional availability of faculty and instructor support*

All MyMathLab courses are online courses, available when students are ready to learn, versus set on a specific class schedule. For non-traditional learners, these courses provide an opportunity to complete coursework when it is convenient for their own learning preferences and schedules. Pearson eCollege provides Software-as-a-Service with the inclusion of a 24/7/365 Help Desk for all users of the platform. This includes service for administrators, instructors and students using MyLabsPlus.

MyMathLab's study plans help students monitor their own progress, letting them see at a glance exactly which topics they need to practice. MyMathLab generates a personalized study plan for each student based on his or her test results, and the study plan links directly to interactive, tutorial exercises for topics the student hasn't yet mastered. Students can regenerate these exercises with new values for unlimited practice, and the exercises include guided solutions and multimedia learning aids to give students the extra help they need.

Program Results Combine to Create a Strong Submission for the 2009 IMS Learning Impact awards

With MyMathLab, teaching capabilities are improved through better customization and personalization of student learning. This results in increased student success rates and increased retention in subsequent courses, all while decreasing the cost from traditional courses.

Since the inception of the MyMathLab program at University of Alabama, student success rates in math courses have shown significant improvement. Before using MyMathLab, student success rates averaged at 40% - 45%. Current student success rates while using MyMathLab average 60% - 75%.

In addition, the student retention rate is up at least 10% over the last 5 years, due to increased instructor capability to track students' progress and usage of program communication tools allowing for course reminders, suggestions and praise.

"We have found that students are gaining a deeper understanding of mathematical concepts using MyMathLab in conjunction with instructor support," said Jamie Glass of the University of Alabama's Mathematics Technology Learning Center. "Because of the broad range of learning tools, students with different learning styles can find the tool that works best for them. The fact that the learning aids are readily available as they work helps students get past roadblocks when working on difficult concepts."

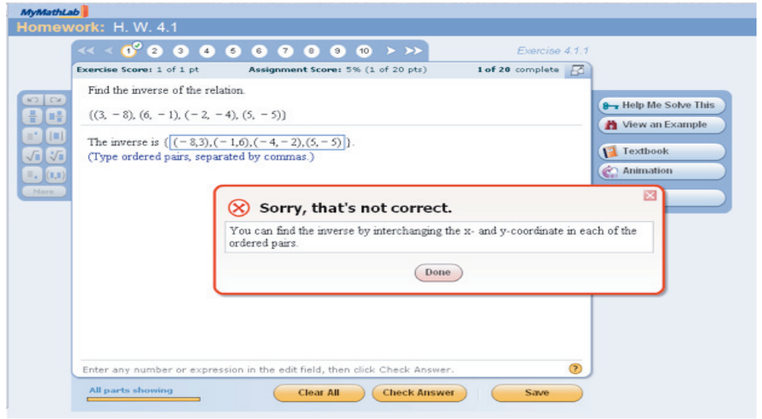
The University of Alabama has also continued using MyMathLab due to a 28% cost savings for each math course versus a traditional math course.

MyMathLab Success Rates Recognized by the IMS Global Learning Consortium

The proven success of the MyMathLab program being used at the University of Alabama led to the recognition of a 2009 Platinum Learning Impact award from the IMS Global Learning Consortium.

The IMS Global Learning Consortium's Learning Impact awards recognize use of technology to improve learning across all education segments, worldwide. Finalists are evaluated by an expert panel of judges and the attendees at the 2009 IMS Annual Learning Impact Conference and Summit on Global Learning Challenges.

In addition to the Platinum award recognition, the University of Alabama's MyMathLab program was also awarded a Best in Category award for Best Assessment Solution.



Students receive immediate feedback and helpful suggestions.

2009 IMS Global Learning Consortium

Learning Impact Platinum Award Winner

Learning Impact Best in Category winner for "Best Assessment Solution"

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