



The Power of Practice

How Pearson's MyAccountingLab Increases Student Success

BY MICHELLE D. SPECKLER

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The Power of Practice: How Pearson's MyAccountingLab Increases Student Success

By Michelle D. Speckler

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Introduction

The only constant in life is change. Accounting education is no different. The field incurred rapid changes in the 1990s when the American Accounting Association expressed concerns that accounting curricula were not fully aligned with the accounting profession. Soon after, the American Institute of Certified Public Accountants added its two cents. Its report, “Core Competency Framework for Entry into the Accounting Profession,” asked for even more-dynamic transformation. Aimed to assist educators in developing more-broad-based curricula, the report emphasized the importance of “broad-based skills and competencies.” For the first time, accounting education was charged with the teaching of critical thinking, communication, teamwork, ethical awareness, technological competence, and independent learning.¹

Although the field of accounting education has steadied itself from the sea change of the past decades, it continues to shift and transform in the face of both constant technological evolution and the growing role of accounting in today’s business world.

Today, more than ever before, accounting is the basic tool for processing, integrating, and disseminating information.² Given the future import of their subject matter, accounting instructors are challenged not only with the task of cultivating passing grades from their students but also with promoting the kind of critical thinking skills and other abilities required of lifelong, independent learners.

That duality of purpose—promoting both accounting education and the nature of learning itself—presents even the most impassioned and devoted instructors with enough to keep their hands full. Fortunately, there’s help. Pearson’s MyAccountingLab was specifically designed to confront the rapidly changing face of modern accounting instruction. A unique combination of multimedia technology and proven pedagogical tools, MyAccountingLab acknowledges the central role that experience plays in the learning process and answers

the call of researchers who posit computer-assisted teaching and learning as the “catalyst of change in education” and who assert the use of such technology as the third revolution in higher education, following television and the microcomputer.³

Instructors are no longer just the disseminators of information. The old paradigm positioned instructors as the vessels of all knowledge for students to access. Modern instructors are like captains—guiding students through a learning process to mastery of various outcomes.

—Nancy Noe, M.Ed.
Linn-Benton Community College

By moving beyond the traditional rote learning method and placing the student at the center of an interactive, engaging learning experience, MyAccountingLab makes learning more pleasant and more approachable, and most important, it gets results. Faculty in two- and four-year educational institutions across the country are achieving increased pass rates and decreased withdrawals while saving time and easing the administrative workload. But don’t take our word for it. Read on to discover why MyAccountingLab is quickly becoming the most sought-after program in higher education accounting instruction and what has driven the program’s staggering one-year jump from 2,400 unique log-ins to 50,000.

“MyAccountingLab is the best thing to ever happen to teaching accounting,” says Tim Kizirian of California State University, Chico. “I give it five stars.” We suspect you will, too.

Taking Action

Because of today's advanced and affordable computer technology, the only thing holding accounting professors back from truly innovative instruction is our own lack of creativity.⁴

MyAccountingLab is a proven, Web-based tutorial and assessment program that gives instructors the flexibility to make technology an integral part of their accounting course—or simply provide a supplementary resource. Either way, MyAccountingLab works. Institutions across the country report that since implementation of MyAccountingLab, both major and nonmajor students are better prepared for class, are more engaged in class, and explore concepts on their own outside of class.

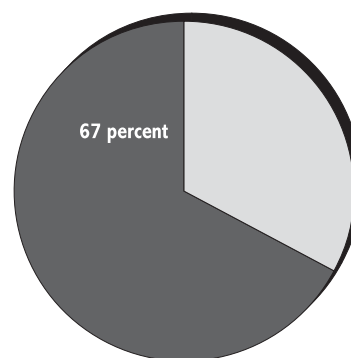
What Makes MyAccountingLab Different

The linchpin of MyAccountingLab's success is how it actively engages students in the learning process. Modularized, self-paced, Web delivered, and adaptable to each student's level of knowledge, MyAccountingLab and its innovative new Demo Docs feature enable students to learn when and where they want, using the style and pace that best suit them.

"[MyAccountingLab] is a giant step forward in accounting instruction," says Jan House, instructor at Jefferson Davis Community College. "It targets visual learners and helps students stay focused when outside of class."

Content That Engages and Motivates

According to author and professor Candace Garrod, students retain about 20 percent of what they hear, 40 percent of what they see and hear, and 75 percent of what they hear, see, and do.⁵ MyAccountingLab's variety of multimedia learning tools—its integration of visual imagery, text, sound, and animation—create a uniquely engaging, hands-on experience in which students can retain more knowledge and thereby increase their understanding of the subject matter. This kind of



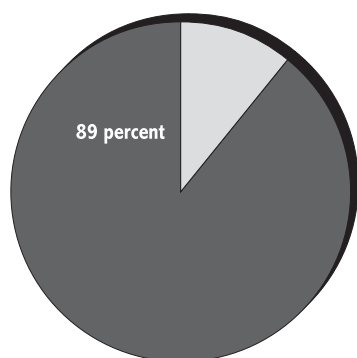
Sixty-seven percent of students surveyed say they use media assets when struggling with a particular topic.⁶

engaging experience is what keeps students connected to material that requires that they persevere through lengthy and complicated problems.

Students who use MyAccountingLab also receive the kind of positive, immediate feedback that reinforces the correlation between effort and learning. That emphasis on effort is a powerful key to the increased gains achieved by students who use MyAccountingLab. "Accounting class is not an IQ test; it is a test of diligence and discipline," says Tim Kizirian of California State University, Chico. "If students work hard, they will pass the course. MyAccountingLab proves this over and over."

The Demo Docs Advantage

Imagine being able to individually tutor each of your students—showing them step-by-step how to do a problem, standing over their shoulders as they try it themselves, and assisting them at the moment they need help. MyAccountingLab's Demo Docs do just



Eighty-nine percent of students surveyed say Demo Docs are better than text study aids.⁷

that, and MyAccountingLab is the only program to offer them. Demo Docs are print and Flash versions of entire problems worked through from start to finish, with the kind of comments you would say in class. “You know all those great examples you want to work for your students but never have time to do?” says Michelle Powell of Holmes Community College. “Now your students can have them!”

MyAccountingLab Works for Instructors

Since 2007 more than 50,000 students at more than 200 colleges and universities worldwide have used MyAccountingLab. More than 500,000 MyAccountingLab questions have been answered and graded as part of accounting homework assignments or tests. Two of the reasons MyAccountingLab works so well for so many are its flexible set of course materials and its course management tools that make it easy to deliver all or a portion of your course online.

Homework and Test Manager. MyAccountingLab’s powerful Homework and Test Manager enables instructors to create, import, and manage online homework assignments, quizzes, and tests that are graded automatically—so instructors can spend less time grading and more time teaching. “Because the software grades them, I can assign more homework and give more exams—which means my students get more practice and have more opportunities to learn,” says Kizirian.

Instructors can choose from a wide range of scheduling options, including time limits, proctoring, and maxi-

mum number of attempts allowed. Assignments are created from online exercises directly correlated to the textbook. Homework exercises include guided solutions and Demo Docs to help students quickly understand and master concepts. The latest version of MyAccountingLab also features question pooling, in which instructors can create a pool of exercises from which a subset of questions is drawn—thereby significantly reducing the likelihood that two students will see the same question and values.

Item Analysis for Individual Students. MyAccountingLab’s item analysis feature enables instructors to quickly assess class performance: from how the class as a whole answered an individual question to how an individual student performed on an assignment. This exportable data includes the number of attempts a student made on each question (for homework) as well as the question order (for tests or quizzes).

Defensible Grading. MyAccountingLab students know exactly what their grades are at all times—and so does their instructor. Grades are defensible, and instructors have the opportunity to intervene before it is too late. The program’s automatic grading and tracking features mean no last-minute tears at the end of the semester, no trying to pass at the last minute. “My life is easier, and my students are informed,” says Kizirian.

I would certainly tell other instructors to try [MyAccountingLab]. It’s wonderful. It has made my job as an instructor a lot easier. And I think it has really benefited my students.

—Ann DeCapite
Coastal Carolina Community College

Comprehensive Gradebook. MyAccountingLab’s comprehensive, online Gradebook automatically tracks students’ results on tests, homework, and tutorials. All MyAccountingLab grades can be exported to a spreadsheet program, such as Microsoft Excel. In addition,

the MyAccountingLab Gradebook provides a number of views of student data and offers the flexibility to set assignment weights, to select which attempts to include when calculating scores, and to omit or delete results for assignments whether for individual students or for the entire class at once.

Last semester's midterm, the average score was a 70. This semester—with MyAccountingLab—the average score was an 82. Big difference.

—Tonia Watkins
Coastal Carolina Community College

Coordinator Courses. Managing multiple sections and overseeing teaching assistants are a snap with MyAccountingLab's Coordinator Course feature. After an instructor creates a coordinator course, all member courses created from it will reflect the original parameters established. Courses remain consistent throughout the department, and changes need be made only once.

"I know that all 900 students are getting the same shake for their tuition—and I'm grateful for that," says Alan Terpstra of William Penn University's College for Working Adults. "It leads to more-directed, more-consistent teaching—and ensures that students are receiving the same-quality experience throughout the department."

Content Correlated to Curricula and Assessment. MyAccountingLab is specifically designed to correlate with your textbook. Content material and the order of material perfectly align both with what you are teaching and with what you are assessing—down to objectives within a chapter. "There is comfort in knowing you can design your courses for standardization throughout the department, assign to assessment, be driven by metrics, and know that content is being mastered," says Terpstra.

MyAccountingLab Faculty Advocates

Built upon the proven effectiveness of peer-to-peer advising, MyAccountingLab's Faculty Advocate program offers access to a nationwide network of faculty advocates—college instructors experienced in teaching with MyAccountingLab—to advise and counsel accounting faculty currently using MyAccountingLab, as well as those considering incorporating it into their courses. Faculty advocates provide phone coaching and support, conduct campus demonstrations, and present MyAccountingLab at conferences and workshops.

Responsive Customer Service

Faculty users of MyAccountingLab can be confident that they'll receive top-notch customer service for both their own technical questions and those of their students. Technical support is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, by e-mail, chat, and the online knowledge base of frequently asked questions. For instructors, support also is available via Pearson's toll-free technical support phone line at hours that even include Sunday evenings.

Pearson's customer service [is] very receptive and responsive. I can sense the commitment to the product and to making it the best product out there—if it isn't already, which I think it is.

—Jeffrey Waybright
Spokane Community College

"My experience with technical support is positive," says Terpstra. "Most of the issues my students have are due to their Internet connections. I've never had an example of Pearson's server being the problem. That is just not an issue in a MyAccountingLab adoption."

MyAccountingLab Works for Students

According to an EDUCAUSE Center for Applied Research study of more than 26,000 students at 103 colleges,⁸ the majority of undergraduates are positive in their views about information technology. Ninety-eight percent of the students surveyed own a computer and spend an average of 18 hours per week doing online activities for work, school, or recreation. More than 60 percent of the students responded that courses that used technology improved their learning. They said technology simplifies organization and control in the learning environment, facilitates communication with faculty and classmates, and can make content more accessible.

Those students are digital natives; most of them have grown up immersed in technology in some form.⁹ They not only embrace technology; they also expect it. MyAccountingLab provides the kinds of tools needed to engage, stimulate, and connect to 21st-century students both online and in the classroom.

Help Me Solve This Feature. Extra help is just an in-context click away. MyAccountingLab's Help Me Solve This feature automatically creates an algorithmic version of the problem in question, changes the numerical values, and provides additional step-by-step assistance until the solution is obtained. To further reinforce your teaching, Help Me Solve This reminders and cues use the same wording as the textbook. Once students receive all the help they need—whether at the end or even in the middle of a problem—they can seamlessly return to their homework, exactly where they left off.

Interactive Tutorial Exercises. Homework and practice questions are correlated to the textbook

Over time and directly related to the extent that students dig in and use and embrace the program, they come back and say, "This is better, I'm glad we did this, and I'm glad we had this to help us learn."

—Alan Terpstra
William Penn University
College for Working Adults

We can deliver more education value for students' tuition dollars than ever before.

—Alan Terpstra
William Penn University
College for Working Adults

and regenerate algorithmically to give students unlimited opportunity for practice and mastery. Questions include guided solutions, Demo Doc examples, learning aids for in-context extra help, and helpful feedback when students enter incorrect answers.

"I encourage my students to use the Demo Docs and other practice exercises," says Jeffrey Waybright of Spokane Community College. "I think they're dynamite. And my students like them, too. The greatest thing about them is that they outline every single step of the problem-solving process. They don't leave students halfway through a problem. They go all the way."

Study Plans. MyAccountingLab's personalized Study Plans are based on each student's test results and linked directly to interactive, tutorial exercises for remediation in topics that students haven't yet mastered. Students receive several options for unlimited practice: they can regenerate their Study Plan tutorial exercises with new values, visit their e-book or content-correlated textbook, or use the Help Me Solve This feature.

Universal Answer Acceptance. How many ways can a student enter the value 1000? \$1000, 1,000, and 1000.00 are just a few. Unlike most accounting courseware, MyAccountingLab reads and accepts correct answers no matter how they are input. No more working through a problem only to have it marked incorrect because of formatting. Universal answer acceptance reduces frustration and lets students focus their attention on learning accounting, not the software program. When possible, MyAccountingLab uses whole numbers, keeping it simple so students remain focused on learning concepts and not on superfluous complications.

What Students Are Saying

Students learn more than accounting with Pearson's MyAccountingLab: they learn how to learn—and enjoy learning more. Pearson surveyed students from two- and four-year institutions across the country. Here's what they had to say about MyAccountingLab:

Brevard Community College

I like the exercises they give you and the fact that you can get help from the teacher. Also I love that there are actual lectures!

The Study Plan feature is a very strong element in MyAccountingLab. I've often found myself wondering, What should I brush up on for this next test? I wish I had had an outside view on my performance. This feature allows that and enables me to immediately know what I need to improve on.

Brown Mackie College

I like how you can literally see what you need to do. Sometimes a textbook explains what you need to do but skips over steps, assuming that readers will find their way, but this is the best way to navigate.

Chabot College

I am highly enthusiastic about MyAccountingLab. The features are so interactive that it made learning the material fun for me. It even has an on-screen calculator and everything that a student needs right there in one place.

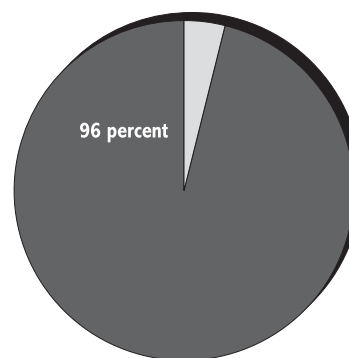
I like that everything is at one place. The help section is very helpful, the video lectures are amazing, and the resources are absolutely awesome.

Indian River Community College

[I like] all the help and explanations.

Jackson State University

[I like] being able to see other examples. When I can get help from another source, it helps me understand better.



Ninety-six percent of students surveyed would recommend MyAccountingLab to instructors.¹⁰

Lansing Community College

I have used this software before with a math course. I found it to be very helpful. I like that it will help you work through the problems and that you can e-mail or print from your exact point rather than having to log out to e-mail your instructor.

MyAccountingLab is very self-explanatory and easy to navigate.

Lorain County Community College

I used a similar software for an algebra class, and I found this to be extremely helpful. It was nice to get help solving an assignment if you needed it as well as the ability to change to a similar question. The new Demo Docs is a very good feature that was not available in my algebra class.

Metropolitan Community College

What helps me the most are the extra tools. I definitely use these when I'm struggling.

I think it has a lot of nice features and options for students who learn differently from the rest of the class.

Moraine Valley Community College

It is very cool that each problem has many different ways to help you solve that problem.

Case Studies

California State University, Chico

Founded in 1887, California State University, Chico (CSU Chico), is one of the oldest postsecondary institutions in California and among the most highly ranked public universities in the West. More than 17,000 students and 1,000 faculty members pride themselves on the institution's distinctive record of teaching, scholarship, research, and service—taking to heart the inscription above the doors of the campus's administration building: “Today Decides Tomorrow.”

Tim Kizirian is one of those prideful faculty members. A financial accounting instructor at CSU Chico, Kizirian has been using MyAccountingLab since its market introduction. “MyAccountingLab was the first online courseware I looked at,” says Kizirian. “It was bundled with my favorite textbook, so I went for it.” Although a first-time user of online courseware, Kizirian found that getting the program up and running was easy. “It was seamless,” he says. “MyAccountingLab is extremely user-friendly—both for the instructor and for the students, who embraced it immediately. I had zero problems introducing the program.”

Kizirian has explored two MyAccountingLab competitors. “They were too complex, requiring both a high learning curve and a high investment of my time,” he says. “MyAccountingLab not only benefits my students; it actually makes my own life easier.”

Kizirian is an active, enthusiastic proponent of all of MyAccountingLab's features, including homework, student tracking, the Gradebook, and testing. “For the first time in my career, I have been able to motivate students to do their homework,” he says. “With MyAccountingLab, they're doing their homework and doing it on their own—no cheating issues!”

Kizirian attributes his students' efforts to the immediate feedback provided by MyAccountingLab, as well as its ability to track student effort. “Students experience an immediate feedback loop—both for individual home-

work problems and in terms of where they stand in the class—and that makes all the difference,” he says. “Most students need a perceived payback in order to do homework. If you don't ‘pay’ them to do homework, most simply won't do it. To pass my course, students must study and they must do their homework. In past semesters, I weighted homework as 10 percent of the final course grade. Since seeing the gains students can make simply by using MyAccountingLab, I've reweighted the homework to a third of the final course grade.”

MyAccountingLab's tracking feature enables Kizirian to see exactly how much time students spend on homework. “The correlation is clear: those who use MyAccountingLab more perform better,” he says. “What's more, tracking enables me to focus my teaching because I can quickly see what concepts students easily comprehend and what concepts they struggle with. In the past, that was guesswork.”

*MyAccountingLab is the best thing
to ever happen to teaching accounting.
I give it five stars.*

—Tim Kizirian
California State University, Chico

“In my classes, MyAccountingLab has the biggest impact on the middle-of-the-road students,” says Kizirian. “They can move up a whole grade because the program motivates them to do the homework. It might still be hard for them, but they learn that if they try, they will pass the course.”

In his most recent course, Kizirian observed a .92 correlation between time logged in and final course grade. In an informal comparison of final course grades for fall 2007 and spring 2008, Kizirian discovered even more-exciting data. Note that both semesters had the same number of students, the same professor, the same lectures, and identical exams; the only difference was the use of MyAccountingLab for homework. Table 1 shows the significant increase in final grades of A, B, or C with the use of MyAccountingLab and the equally significant decrease in Fs.

	ABCs	Ds	Fs
Fall 2007 No MAL	25	6	11
Spring 2008 MAL Homework	34	4	4

Table 1. Final-Grade Comparison of CSU Chico Students Who Did Not Use MyAccountingLab and Those Who Used It for Homework

This fall, Kizirian and fellow accounting faculty have four classes using MyAccountingLab—one of them completely online. They plan to fully utilize MyAccountingLab's tracking features to determine exactly what factors are driving the increased student success. "I'm interested to see how it plays out," Kizirian says.

"My colleagues hear it every day: MyAccountingLab benefits students and is easy to use," adds Kizirian. "Now they're picking up on it, too. Even a retirement-age colleague of mine is interested. He cares about his students and wants them to succeed. He sees that with MyAccountingLab, students do the work and they learn accounting. That's really all it takes."

There are other software options out there, but the additional bells and whistles they offer are low-value added. They aren't worth the ramp-up time and they benefit neither students nor instructors. MyAccountingLab does both.

—Tim Kizirian
California State University, Chico

Spokane Community College

More than 6,000 full-time students and 12,000 part-time students attend Spokane Community College (SCC) for both its highly regarded professional/technical programs and its strong educational tradition in the liberal arts. Whether they work full-time and attend school part-time to acquire the skills necessary for on-the-job advancement or intend to transfer later to four-year institutions, students at SCC know they will be supported by a wide breadth of curricula and student services designed to successfully fulfill the school's inspirational tagline: "In the business of helping you change your life."

Jeffrey Waybright, accounting instructor at Spokane Community College, is no stranger to online courseware. Asked to develop online classes for the college several years ago, he learned an available program and created the classes. But there were issues. "It was a horror story," says Waybright. "In two instances, I had to pull the plug midway through the quarter. It didn't work the way it was supposed to. In one case it just crashed."

MyAccountingLab has features that no other software has.

—Jeffrey Waybright
Spokane Community College

Two years ago, Waybright was introduced to MyAccountingLab. "My previous experience left me fearful," he says. "I was thinking that this better work like they say it does. And it did! Implementation was smooth, and it actually worked better than I anticipated it would. I like the textbook, and I really appreciate the Gradebook feature and enhanced testing abilities. My options are not just true/false but problematic." Waybright has fully integrated MyAccountingLab into all of his distance-learning and on-site courses, using it

for everything: homework, quizzes, tests, study plans, tracking, grading, and communication with students.

“The program is pretty intuitive,” says Waybright.

“For those few questions I have had, Pearson’s customer service was very receptive and responsive. I can sense the commitment to the product and to making it the best product out there—if it isn’t already, which I think it is.”

Technical support was quick and available and solved my problem right away.

—Jeffrey Waybright
Spokane Community College

MyAccountingLab enables students to see exactly what is expected of them and how to achieve success. “Students can practice until they get a problem right,” says Waybright. “And they do. They hammer the heck out of the homework and the study plan—all the tools. Students are offered the resources they need to resolve issues on their own. I can see that they use them and that when they do, they succeed.”

Waybright encourages students who want more instructor contact to contact him via the Ask My Instructor feature. “In the past, when students e-mailed me questions, I frequently wondered exactly what they were talking about,” he says. “Student communication isn’t always clear. Ask My Instructor links me to exactly where they are and what the problem is. It facilitates my giving them meaningful responses that can really help them. I love it. It’s dynamite.

“The immediate feedback provided by MyAccountingLab helps, too,” says Waybright. “It holds the interest of a newer generation of learners, who are used to instant gratification. And as a learning tool, it indicates not just right or wrong but also why the student didn’t get it the first time and then how to do it right. The students

master one concept before moving on to the next. As a result, I see more students earn high As; and some who would earn Bs are now earning lower As.”

It’s this kind of student engagement that has instructors like Waybright hooked. He knows that students are more likely to use a program if it gives them a positive experience. Waybright’s students enjoy using MyAccountingLab, and the proof is in their gains. So it came as little surprise when, on a recent faculty and course evaluation that posed the question, What did you like best about this course? Waybright’s students overwhelmingly replied, “MyAccountingLab.”

University of Houston

Founded in 1927, the University of Houston (UH) is a major public research and teaching institution, educating 35,000 students annually in nearly 300 undergraduate and graduate academic programs both on campus and online. UH is dedicated to becoming a nationally recognized institution in the 21st century. To that end, the university has committed to promoting excellence within the context of basic and applied research and scholarship and to identifying and responding to economic, social, and cultural challenges through education, research, and service.

Fall 2006 found Ron Lazar, assistant professor of accounting, and his colleagues seeking a replacement for their then current accounting textbook. They met with representatives from a variety of publishers who, when showing them new textbooks, introduced them to online products and the powerful teaching and learning support such products offer. “Our introductory classes have about 900 students in them,” says Lazar. “They’re huge. The time it would take to individually grade homework assignments is prohibitive. Online systems offer a way to both promote homework and reduce the time spent grading it. They’re the perfect solution.”

Lazar and the other faculty members took their time in extensively assessing several online systems. “It was a long process,” says Lazar. “Ultimately, we decided that MyAccountingLab was a superior system, with more books to choose from. Today, all of us are happy with the choice.”

Initial adoption was with a small, summer section of 60 students. “That summer we discovered what kinds of

issues might come up with installation or other technical aspects,” says Lazar. “We worked closely with Pearson to learn how to best implement MyAccountingLab methodically into the department syllabus and the larger fall courses. Any problems that came up were solved quickly. Both technical support and the development team were great. Communication was clear, and they were very efficient.”

MyAccountingLab keeps students engaged and interested in the material. I can see them improving from one question to the next within the same assignment. I can actually see the learning happening.

—Ron Lazar
University of Houston

The prior planning paid off. The fall implementation went smoothly, and today UH has 11 instructors using the product. Lazar uses MyAccountingLab primarily for homework, quizzes, and his Accounting Cycle project—a hands-on, half-semester project in which students navigate the entire process of a financial cycle. “Before MyAccountingLab, the Accounting Cycle project was completed and graded via pen and paper,” says Lazar. “It’s a great project for students who do it, but many didn’t. And many more copied from their friends. Now that it’s online, we can assign it as a test—for a grade; and it’s very successful. Students do it, learn a lot from it, and most important, work individually.

“The more we use MyAccountingLab, the more we learn how to best fit it into our class needs and take advantage of its flexibility,” says Lazar. “One of the first things we did was to change our homework grading so as to reflect mastery learning. Students who earn above 70 pass the concept and receive full credit for it. By being offered full credit, more students are motivated to do the homework, and more do better overall.”

Most student feedback has been positive. “Students who are motivated love the study plan,” says Lazar. “All students appreciate the 24-hour access and the

online textbook. And I know they use the Help Me Solve This feature.

“The immediate feedback makes a huge difference,” says Lazar. “It keeps students engaged and interested in the material. I can see them improving from one question to the next within the same assignment. I can actually see the learning happening. This kind of self-directed learning can affect their overall learning and their capacity to master content throughout their college career and even beyond it.”

While it’s too early for Lazar to cite any objective data regarding the performance of students who use MyAccountingLab versus the performance of those who don’t use it, he has made some subjective observations. “We all feel—and can see from the exams—that students are doing better,” he says. “Students are more prepared for class—particularly after the deadlines—and I see more understanding during class. It’s nice!

“I believe we should adopt this kind of learning courseware in as many courses as possible,” says Lazar. “It provides faculty with more knowledge about how students are doing—plus, students benefit from the immediate feedback and the opportunity to develop habits for lifelong learning. I have students returning to me who are taking the next class with a different book and no MyAccountingLab. They tell me they wish they still had the program. And in the future they will. We’re making plans now to coordinate use of MyAccountingLab throughout our principal classes.”

William Penn University College for Working Adults

Driven by a high regard for education, Quaker pioneers established William Penn University in 1873. Today, the degree programs at William Penn University’s College for Working Adults annually enable nearly 900 busy professionals to complete their associate and bachelor’s degrees while maintaining their jobs and personal obligations.

Every student at the College for Working Adults is handed a laptop computer on the day of enrollment—a gesture that underscores the administration’s wholehearted acceptance of technology as an efficient tool for reducing busy work and maximizing learning time.

When Alan Terpstra, adjunct instructor of accounting, stumbled upon MyAccountingLab and liked it, convinc-

ing his dean to incorporate the program into the institution's accelerated financial accounting and managerial accounting courses was a no-brainer. "I didn't even look at other brands," says Terpstra. "Now that I'm this involved in the product, I've become aware of the others but am still convinced that I ended up with the best one. The other publishers seem to be trailing along, trying to catch up with Pearson."

Since his first implementation in fall 2006, Terpstra has embraced the entire program. "From Day One," he says, "I've viewed it as a package and used the homework, quizzes, tests, and study plan. It's user-friendly and an efficient learning tool—a natural fit for anyone from the business world."

"My students love the immediate feedback," says Terpstra. "But the crown jewel of the program has to be the study plan. I can offer students the opportunity to score 100 percent on every homework assignment. The only variable is their own effort. Consistently, my students earn that 100 percent, which can only come from practice."

Terpstra's students also use the practice quizzes. "The life challenges faced by adult learners make adult learners more efficient as students," he says. "They quickly catch on to how to use the program to their benefit, and they do the practice quizzes because when they do, their test scores go up."

As an instructor, Terpstra appreciates the ease with which MyAccountingLab facilitates creation of online homework assignments and quizzes. "I'm faster on MyAccountingLab than I was on my previous online courseware," he says. "Compared with any other way I've designed it, it's better. I can design the entire student experience from my screen and then know that the program will take care of the rest, including immediate feedback and solid student resources."

"I activate all of the student tools, including AskYour Instructor," says Terpstra. "Today's working students are comfortable asking questions via e-mail. And it's easier for me. When I receive an AskYour Instructor e-mail, I click the link and go straight to where the student is. No guesswork. All the details are right in front of me—exactly as the student sees them. It's efficient, and it's paperless!"

Terpstra was pleasantly surprised to discover the

*If you're an educator, this is a train
you must be on.*

—Alan Terpstra
William Penn University
College for Working Adults

breadth of the easy-to-use self-assessment and report options offered in MyAccountingLab. "What really impresses me is what the program does on a database level," he says. "All of the grades and other results can be exported and configured into reports. I can learn what I'm doing right, what I can be doing better, and what isn't working. It's an incredibly useful tool for self-assessment. I can't imagine why anyone wouldn't want to evaluate their testing and teaching this way."

Most instructors agree: Grade A students will get As regardless of how they are taught and what resources are made available to them. The real measurement of a teaching and learning model comes from the B, C, and D students. This is where Terpstra sees the impact of MyAccountingLab in his courses. "I'm observing students—who previously would have earned Cs and Ds—earning Bs and Cs with MyAccountingLab," he says. "MyAccountingLab draws them in, keeps them involved and working with the material. For most students, putting in the time makes the difference. My students need to complete their degrees. They're very sensitive to time, because they want to move up in their jobs. MyAccountingLab helps them do that sooner."

As a result of the positive experience Terpstra has had with MyAccountingLab, his department recently adopted MyFinanceLab and MyEconLab, and the statistics department is now using MyStatLab. To Terpstra, the increased use of Pearson MyLab products is a natural evolution. "This is the 21st century, a time that's all about widening our sphere of communications," he says. "Why shouldn't this be true in education as well? This is where we need to be now. Thank goodness it's available."

Conclusion

Since its introduction in 2007, MyAccountingLab has helped more than 50,000 students achieve greater success via dependable and easy-to-use online homework, guided solutions, multimedia, tests, and study plans. MyAccountingLab's emphasis on self-motivation, positive reinforcement, and personal accountability enables MyAccountingLab to do more than teach students accounting; it empowers students to succeed throughout their college careers and beyond.

The instructors interviewed for this report represent a broad range of educational institutions: community, public, and nontraditional working-adult-focused colleges. Some implement the full range of MyAccountingLab features; others use the program only for homework. Regardless of the environment or format, all are realizing not only increased student gains but also significant time savings when it comes to administrative tasks like designing curricula, assigning homework, grading tests, and communicating with students.

For those in the industry, MyAccountingLab's positive impact comes as little surprise. In her seminal 2000 monograph, *Innovations in Online Learning: Moving Beyond No Significant Difference*, Carol Twigg, president of the National Center for Academic Transformation, outlined five key features that contribute to both the quality of student learning and substantial cost reduction:

1. An initial assessment of each student's skill level and preferred learning style
2. An array of high-quality, interactive learning materials and activities
3. Individualized study plans
4. Built-in, continuous assessment to provide instantaneous feedback
5. Appropriate, varied kinds of human interaction

Those familiar with MyAccountingLab recognize those five concepts as the essential building blocks of the program.

MyAccountingLab understands that not all students learn in the same manner. It provides a breadth of tools that make it easier to learn—whether the students are majors or nonmajors, visual or auditory learners, or anywhere in between.

Pearson Education recognizes the shifting environment of accounting instruction. As the global leader in online learning, Pearson is committed to helping within that environment, and the time has never been more right for it. Today's students are uniquely poised to take advantage of—and thrive under—the kind of active, self-paced multimedia learning that MyAccountingLab employs. Adept at multitasking and context switching, today's students approach learning in a highly nonlinear manner. They are challenging faculties to shift their instructional efforts away from the development and presentation of content and toward interactive activities that will transform lecturers into mentors and consultants in student learning.¹¹

As of the writing of this report, more than 200 community, four-year, and nontraditional educational institutions nationwide are using MyAccountingLab. That figure rises exponentially at each count. Far from a trend toward technology per se, we are witnessing an intuitive movement toward more-efficient, more-effective ways to increase student learning. For most instructors, decisions boil down to the matter of whether a product can help provide the highest-quality education possible for students or not. MyAccountingLab unequivocally can—and it does.

For more information, visit MyAccountingLab online at www.myaccountinglab.com.

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