

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MySpeechLab

An interview with
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Course Information

I teach the course Effective Speaking (three credit hours) using the Pearson text *Principles of Public Speaking* by German and Gronbeck, and MySpeechLab. Traditional and online sections are offered. Effective Speaking is not a general education requirement, though many of our programs do require that students take this course or Interpersonal Communication.

There are five main course objectives in Effective Speaking: recognize and identify the components of an organized speech, demonstrate how to organize and present an effective and professional speech, analyze an audience, demonstrate good listening skills, and evaluate effective speaking based on criteria presented in the course.

We are a technical school. Most of our students are returning students who are coming back for either certificates or additional degrees, but we do also have traditional first-year students. Students come from a wide range of disciplines: health, engineering, business.

Assessment

Assessment differs in the online course and the traditional course and also differs by instructor. MySpeechLab counts for about 50% of the final grade in the online course and 25% of the final grade in the traditional course.

Implementation

MySpeechLab has really changed the way we conduct our course. It has expanded the options available to our instructors. Students in this day and age really require interactive multimedia as part of their core learning. Students are gaming and are online. MySpeechLab added a necessary interactive and multimedia component that had been lacking.

Most of our instructors are using the chapter quizzes and video quizzes extensively. The audio chapter reviews have also helped. Being able to hear those audio reviews really adds a different modality that students find helpful and we have many students with disabilities that find this feature particularly beneficial. MediaShare is another big feature that we use. I actually have some instructors in traditional courses who record all student speeches in the classroom, then upload them to MediaShare so students can review how they did in their speech. In our online classes, students must watch at least two of their peers' speeches on MediaShare and give constructive criticism. The use of MySearchLab is huge. Almost everyone uses this feature because it offers so many great tools for researching. The Multimedia Library is a lifesaver for me, especially in my online class, because there are so many Explore features with audio/visual interactivity. The Explore sections are phenomenal; students really like them.

Benefits

We urge our instructors to dive into using MySpeechLab because students respond really well to it. Every instructor has the freedom to pick and choose how they want to use MySpeechLab, but they must all incorporate it in some way. MySpeechLab training with our Pearson representative is offered every year for new and current adjuncts. We want to show our instructors how to navigate the site and how they can incorporate MySpeechLab into their classroom.

Conclusion

Most of the hesitation from instructors in using MySpeechLab comes from a lack of experience with technology, so urging them to use MySpeechLab is just the first step. The second step is supporting them with ongoing training, mentoring, and checking in with them often. Sometimes, as a third step, I validate MySpeechLab by talking about how I've incorporated it into my course, and what I've done that my students seem to really like. I show the Gradebook and tell my colleagues that using it will make their lives easier. Instead of grading quizzes by hand, the quizzes on MySpeechLab are all automatically graded online and they are specific to the textbook. I pull out a few different persuasive strategies—ease of use, student engagement—but offering support is the best way to encourage instructors' use.