

Success Stories:

Profiles of Pearson Technology Users

MySpeechLab

An interview with
Professor Meredith Frank
LaSalle University
Philadelphia, PA



Course Information

Fourteen sections of Presentation Skills (three credit hours) are offered this semester. It is a traditional-format course that is required for all undergraduates except Education and Nursing majors. We use the Pearson text, *Presentations in Everyday Life* by Engleberg and Daly and MySpeechLab. The course goals are to be able to present and organize informative, persuasive and special-occasion speeches and also to be able to view and critique speeches.

Assessment

Speeches make up 60% of the final grade and papers, quizzes, exams make up 40% of the final grade. MySpeechLab counts for about 20–30% of the final grade.

Implementation

La Salle University's mission is to meet students where they are, and where they are has to do a lot with technology. I decided to use an online textbook because I knew this was where education was headed. I oversee all the Presentation Skills courses at our school and order the textbooks for all sections. A couple weeks before the semester starts, I email all our students to tell them that they are required to have online access to MySpeechLab. I make a point of introducing MySpeechLab to students from day one. On the first day of class, I visit each Presentation Skills section and give a basic tutorial to show students how to use the technology. I also give a MySpeechLab assignment on the first day of class to get the ball rolling. Some instructors are hesitant to use the technology, so it takes a firm hand to guide both instructors and students through the process.

We consistently implement MySpeechLab across all sections of Presentation Skills. Students are required to take online quizzes, watch speeches, and answer open-ended questions. With all my speech assignments, I require students to have at least one source from MySearchLab. Students must also cite the eText in all their papers.

The sample speeches are great! If I have an extra ten minutes in class, I will usually show a speech. I find that rather than just reading the words of a speech, it's great for students to actually see speeches being given. The speeches aren't all perfect, so it's helpful for students to see speeches that are delivered well and speeches that are not. This semester I have incorporated MySpeechLab videos with in-class quizzes. For example, I had students watch a speech that used Monroe's Motivated Sequence. When I gave them a quiz on this topic, I had them remember and reference that particular speech in order to answer the questions.

Benefits

MySpeechLab gives me a lot more time for interactive, hands-on learning in the classroom. Instead of lecturing, I can spend class time doing activities and showing videos. Because the textbook basically reads itself—literally when the audio chapter reviews are activated—it helps students learn independently outside of class time.

Conclusion

The students who use MySpeechLab to its fullest capacity love it, think it's great, and perform well in the course. I've found that students who are not using the MySpeechLab resources as often do not do as well in the class. Students do come to class better prepared, but I would say this has more to do with the fact that MySpeechLab helps students work more independently, which allows me to use class time more effectively.