

ONLINE PRETESTING ENGAGES STUDENTS EARLIER AND IMPROVES EXAM PERFORMANCE: PRELIMINARY RESULTS FOR A PRINCIPLES OF MARKETING COURSE

Scott G. Sherwood, Metropolitan State College of Denver, Department of Marketing, Campus Box 079, PO Box 173362, Denver, CO 80217-3362, sherwoos@mscd.edu

Gregory S. Black, Metropolitan State College of Denver, Department of Marketing, Campus Box 079, PO Box 173362, Denver, CO 80217-3362, gblack4@mscd.edu

ABSTRACT

An introductory course in marketing is a requirement for most business degrees regardless of major. Engaging students early on is imperative if they are to maximize their understanding of the material. For a variety of reasons, many students do not read the text until preparing for the first exam. This paper examines the improvement in test scores when online quizzes were required prior to covering the material in class.

Engaging students in course material from the beginning of the term can be a challenge when faced with the amount of material to be covered and the limited number of class meetings. Several textbook publishers now offer online components that allow instructors to offer tests, quizzes, assignments, and supplemental materials. This study is the result of adding a required weekly quiz in a Principles of Marketing class. The quiz was based on new chapters not yet introduced in class. The expected result was an increase in test performance over previous classes that did not require the quizzes. An additional desired benefit (unmeasured) was increased engagement of students in classroom activities. Students in a Principles of Marketing class were required to take weekly quizzes online that covered the chapters for the following week. Each quiz was comprised of ten multiple choice questions with a 15 minute time limit. The sum total of quizzes was equal to a single exam. Not all students participated in the quizzes and not all participating students took all the quizzes.

Exams were scheduled approximately every five weeks and consisted of 60 to 70 multiple choice and short answer questions. The results were compared to five classes from previous semesters who did not take quizzes prior to their exams.

The following two hypotheses were tested:

H1: students who were pretested (took quizzes) score higher on exams

H2: students in the pretest section score higher if all six quizzes were taken.

The results for H1 showed a mean of 167.93 for the quizzed students versus 153.17 for the control group. The t test gave a value of 2.696 and significance of 0.009. Regression analysis for H2 resulted in 0.262 significance. Based on these preliminary and limited results, it appears that students in the class who were required to take quizzes did better than other sections. However, whether a student took six of the quizzes versus less than six was not statistically significant.