

Minnesota State University, Mankato

Course Names Principles of Macroeconomics

Credit Hours Three

Semesters Covered Fall 2006–Spring 2008

Types of Data Reported Correlation of MyEconLab Usage to Final Course Grade



Textbook in Use with MyEconLab

Macroeconomics, 1e, 2006, Leeds, von Allmen, and Schiming

MyEconLab Course Structure

Course Design

The course meets on campus three days a week for 50 minutes a session. Chapter discussions last a week on average. Homework and graded quizzes are assigned at the beginning of the discussion of each chapter and are completed outside of class time by the end of the discussion of the chapter.

Assessments

For each chapter in the text, students are required to complete a MyEconLab-based homework assignment. Students must score at least 60 percent on the homework before taking the graded quiz for that chapter. Students are also encouraged to use the sample exams for each chapter.

Students can earn a total of 465 points:

300 points	Three exams (<i>two midterms, one final</i>)
100 points	In-class and homework activities
65 points	MyEconLab-graded quizzes

MyEconLab Implementation

The 15-question homework assignment comprises multiple-choice questions, which highlight the basic course information and utilize MyEconLab's graphing capabilities. The graded quiz typically comprises MyEconLab's more sophisticated quantitative and graphic problems.

Students work on assignments outside of class. They may use the textbook, notes, and consultations with the instructor and each other to complete them. In this way, students are encouraged to learn the concepts and employ the tools in ways that promote practice of the key skills needed to succeed in economics.

Grades from the MyEconLab Gradebook are entered into a class grade book and included with other graded activities.

Contribution of MyEconLab to Final Grade

Use of MyEconLab contributes 14 percent of the final course grade.

MyEconLab Course Results

Final Grade	Average Time Spent on MyEconLab Homework and Quizzes	Average Time Spent on Optional Sample Exams	Average Total Time Spent on MyEconLab Activities
A	5 hrs, 49 mins	5 hrs, 04 mins	10 hrs, 53 mins
B	3 hrs, 58 mins	2 hrs, 11 mins	6 hrs, 09 mins
C	3 hrs, 08 mins	1 hr, 51 mins	4 hrs, 59 mins
D	2 hrs, 58 mins	1 hr, 15 mins	4 hrs, 13 mins
F	0 hrs, 53 mins	0 hrs, 12 mins	1 hr, 05 mins

Table 1. Correlation of Final Grades and Time Spent Using MyEconLab, Fall 2006 ($n=98$)

Table 1 indicates a clear and positive correlation between time using MyEconLab and student success. To clarify this point, Schiming notes that of the students taking Principles

of Macroeconomics in the fall semester of 2006 whose score increased 10 points or more from one exam to another, 80 percent spent more time on MyEconLab between exams.

There is a strong correlation between the time students put into MyEconLab and their performance on tests and quizzes. The program is rich with resources for success in the classroom and in today's global economy.

—Richard Schiming
Minnesota State University, Mankato

Similarly, of the students in those same classes whose score decreased by 10 or more points from one exam to another, 66 percent spent less time on MyEconLab between exams.

Of the students enrolled in the fall semester of 2007, the top third of students in the class on exam performance averaged over 50 percent more visits to the homework, graded quizzes, and sample exams than did the bottom third of students.

Those same top students in the fall semester of 2007 spent more time on the graded quizzes and optional sample exams than did students in the bottom third of class performance.

What Students Are Saying

In a fall 2008 class survey, Schiming's Principles of Macroeconomics students cited the following ways MyEconLab helped them succeed:

- *Practice makes perfect.*
- *It helps me to understand.*
- *The homework and quizzes are practical applications that help me understand the concepts.*
- *The hands-on work shows me my mistakes and how to correct them.*
- *It helps me study for tests and lets me practice what I learned in class.*

- *I like that I can use the program to review questions and get ready for the exam.*
- *It helps me prepare for tests by giving critical-thinking questions. It's a great review for the test.*

Students in Schiming's previous MyEconLab classes were equally as enthusiastic about the benefits of the program—specifically about its practice opportunities and time management options.

I originally was hoping for a C in the class, but I think I'm actually getting an A now. I attribute that to MyEconLab. The more I'm on there, the better I do on homework assignments, in-class assignments, and exams.

MyEconLab is definitely flexible. I can study on there and take online quizzes whenever I have an open half hour or so.

Conclusions

Schiming sees an undeniably positive correlation between use of MyEconLab—with both mandatory and optional assignments—and student success. “Good students make good use of MyEconLab,” he says. “And good use of MyEconLab makes better students.”

Schiming understands that students need to do economics to learn economics. MyEconLab enables him to clearly see and track the level of individual student effort. “If a student is not doing well in the class, I can see immediately that the student may, for example, not be doing the graded quizzes,” says Schiming. “That information shows up right away in the Gradebook and is a red flag to me and can be a red flag to students.”

Schiming plans to use the data he's collected to help him advise students who seek to improve their performance. “I think that the biggest advantage of MyEconLab from the students' perspective is that when it comes to a skill like economics, practice makes perfect,” he says. “The more practice a student has, the better the student will be. MyEconLab is a tool that can definitely help.”

Schiming's plans for next semester include informing his students of the other capabilities MyEconLab makes available to them, such as the sample exams for each chapter and the individual Study Plans.

Submitted by Richard Schiming, Professor
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