

Brigham Young University–Idaho Rexburg, Idaho

INSTRUCTOR Susan Grover

COURSE English 313 Advanced Writing for Education Majors

LEVEL Advanced composition; writing for the professions for juniors/seniors

TEXT *The Penguin Handbook, 2/e, by Lester Faigley*
Teaching Grammar Through Writing by Keith Polette

TERMS COVERED Fall 2007-Spring 2009

CONTRIBUTION OF MYCOMPLAB TO FINAL GRADE 80-85%

TYPES OF DATA REPORTED Student performance, student feedback

COURSE STRUCTURE Hybrid: 1 lecture, 1 lab, 1 day online per week

AT BRIGHAM YOUNG UNIVERSITY—IDAHO, “students teaching students” summarizes an ethos of education as a collaborative enterprise. Instructor Susan Grover teaches an intensive writing course for education majors and feels a special responsibility to create an effective learning environment for students who are training to become teachers themselves. Grover uses MyCompLab and structures her course in a hybrid format: one traditional lecture per week, one class meeting in the computer lab, and one day of independent or peer-focussed work online. In selecting MyCompLab, Grover wanted to create a learning environment that:

- Is student-controlled rather than teacher-controlled
- Enables students to make choices about their learning and holds them accountable for the choices they make
- Gives students the tools and responsibility to manage their time and other resources

The focus of Grover’s course is writing but students must leave the course with a solid mastery of grammar. Grover feels that teachers can only be credible in the classroom if they consistently demonstrate solid grammar and mechanics. Therefore, Grover’s students are required to complete both the pre- and post-diagnostic tests in MyCompLab to identify and correct any weaknesses in grammar. To achieve an A in the course, students must complete 10 hours of independent work in MyCompLab based on the results of the diagnostic pre-test.

Students spend the majority of the course working through independent and peer writing exercises culminating in a major collaborative research paper. Students work in MyCompLab using the Composing Space, the Peer Review, Pearson Tutor Services, and the Avoiding Plagiarism Tutorials.

EVALUATING MYCOMPLAB

Instructor Grover feels that MyCompLab has fulfilled the goals she set for her course and has transformed her teaching. She says, “I used to think of myself as the creator of learning materials. Now I am thinking more about the students and how I can facilitate their progress. The advantage of digital tools like MyCompLab versus traditional textbooks is that MyCompLab helps me to create experiences for students that will help them internalize the concepts they

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need. MyCompLab is an environment for students to practice authentic application of skills. Instead of quizzing students on what they have read about writing, MyCompLab asks them to demonstrate their learning through writing.”

STUDENT RESPONSES TO MYCOMPLAB

“MyCompLab gives me the opportunity to learn some things about technology that I would not have had before. [English 313] feels like a student-driven course. I like this feeling because I feel a sense of ownership. I like having the time on Friday designated to working with classmates [online] and wish my other classes were formatted similarly.”

Via email

“I really appreciated the Tutor Services. I loved that you could send in your paper and receive expert feedback, then make changes and resubmit the paper as many times as you wanted. The diagnostic tests are straightforward and completely self-explanatory—much easier and less stressful than a bubble sheet and a pencil. And you can see your results right away—I really like that immediate feedback. Overall, MyCompLab is a good idea and a great program with a lot of benefits.”

Via YouTube

“My favorite parts of MyCompLab are the ability to access my work no matter where I am on campus, the To Do links that make it so easy to track my progress through the course, the helpful grammar review, and the diagnostic tests that indicate exactly where I need to practice more. Also, MyCompLab connects students to teachers more. Instead of emailing attachments and receiving a delayed response, students can go online to look at assignments simultaneously with the instructor and receive on-the-spot guidance and feedback.”

Via YouTube

“MyCompLab made the course material more interesting for me and helped me to write better. Peer review was definitely facilitated by MyCompLab. It’s difficult to align the schedules of a group to meet face-to-face; MyCompLab made it easy and enjoyable to work with peers online to write and revise our papers. I would definitely recommend MyCompLab.”

Via YouTube

“I found MyCompLab very accessible and easy to use. The clocks and calendar prompts in the To Do section helped me to complete my assignments on time and stay on track in the course. I used the Tutor Service four or five times and received very detailed, helpful feedback each time. I was amazed and grateful not only at how detailed the feedback was but how quickly I received it—so helpful when you are juggling assignments and deadlines from several classes at once! Our collaborative projects worked so well with MyCompLab. It’s nearly impossible to meet face-to-face with your writing partners but with MyCompLab we could view each other’s work and stay coordinated as we worked through our peer writing and review assignments.”

Via YouTube

FUTURE

MyCompLab is now in use in both freshman comp and advanced writing courses at BYU. Susan Grover examines college composition instructors’ attitudes toward digital resources—and spotlights her experience with MyCompLab—in a doctoral study nearing completion.

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www.pearsonhighered.com/english

For a product tour or to find out more, please visit www.mycomplab.com