

Course: Calculus for Industrial Engineers

Type of data collected: Student feedback

During which period: 2007–10

Textbook in use:

Calculus, 7th edition, 2009, Adams

MyMathLab course structure

Course design

I teach Calculus 1-2-3 for Industrial Engineering students at TU Eindhoven. This comprises the basic mathematics that students cover in their first year. The enrolment for these courses is usually about 200–50 students. My students typically arrive with a wide range of mathematics ability.

There are 20 hours' of lectures and 20 hours' of instruction classes where students work on their homework assignments, assisted by my colleagues.

In addition to this, students are expected to actively study the material at home in order to increase their understanding. Many teachers would agree that the best way to learn maths is by doing maths. I use *MyMathLab* mainly as a tool to encourage students to continually practise the newly learned techniques.

Assessment

In my courses, students can qualify for up to one bonus point (on a ten point scale) toward their final grade for the course. There is a weekly deadline for one or more *MyMathLab* tests. Nonetheless, everything relating to *MyMathLab* remains optional.

Implementation

MyMathLab provides an environment in which students receive challenging questions in a motivating, game-like atmosphere. Students can get step-by-step help, they can review similar examples, and they can look up textbook pages electronically (helpful when travelling since the hard copy is over 2 kgs!). Students like the fact that they can get online help at home, at any time that suits them.

In the past three years my students and I have used *MyMathLab* intensively, and I have discovered many tips and tricks that I think can significantly enhance the effectiveness of the system. Which of these are important may strongly depend on the way one would like to use and integrate *MyMathLab* into one's classes.

MyMathLab course results

Whilst, typically, there is a wide variety of reaction to *MyMathLab* (some students absolutely love it, some prefer not to use it after a short review period), the average evaluation is always positive.

Conclusion

My experience is that *MyMathLab* can be a welcome addition to maths courses, and I would be happy to share my views on best practice with colleagues.