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“Daily Online Testing in Large Classes: Boosting College Performance While Reducing Achievement Gaps”

What is the study about?

This study investigated the effect of daily quizzes on the performance of college students. Students in an introductory psychology course used their own wireless-enabled devices to take short Internet-based quizzes at the beginning of every class. The quiz items were drawn approximately equally from material covered in the readings and the lectures. The study authors examined impacts of the daily quizzes on student performance in the psychology course in addition to other classes taken during the same semester and during the semester following the introductory psychology class.

The intervention took place during the fall 2011 semester, and the performance of intervention students was compared to students from the fall 2008 semester. About 50% of the students in the sample were racial/ethnic minorities, and about 60% were female. About 20% of students were first generation college students, and most students were in their first or second year of college.

What did the study report?

The study authors reported that there was a nearly statistically significant effect ($p = 0.06$) of the daily quizzes on student performance in introductory psychology. Specifically, the daily quizzes incorporated 17 items that were also used on tests given during the comparison semester. Students in the daily quiz condition scored higher on these 17 items (77%) than the comparison students (71%). In addition, students in the intervention condition earned higher grades in their other courses during both the fall (3.07 vs. 2.96) and the

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Handy Definitions

- ▼ *quick review*
- ▼ *study rating*
- ▼ *meets WWC evidence standards without reservations*
- ▼ *meets WWC evidence standards with reservations*
- ▼ *does not meet WWC evidence standards*

See the *full glossary* ►

subsequent spring (3.10 vs. 2.98) semesters. However, it is unknown whether these differences are statistically significant. Finally, the authors reported a statistically significant interaction suggesting that these effects were strongest among lower-middle SES students.

How does the WWC rate this study?

This study is a cohort-based quasi-experiment, and as such could *meet WWC evidence standards with reservations*. However, more information is needed from the study authors regarding the baseline comparability of the intervention and comparison groups before a rating can be given. A more thorough review (forthcoming) will determine the final study rating and report more fully on the study's results.

Citation

Pennebaker, J., Gosling, S. D., & Ferrell, J. D. (2013). Daily online testing in large classes: Boosting college performance while reducing achievement gaps. *PLoS One* 8(11): e79774. doi:10.1371/journal.pone.007977

Posted: December 2013

This quick review was prepared for the WWC by Development Services Group, Inc. under contract ED–IES–12–C–0084.