

Can a note taking support improve students' grades?

Introduction

This whitepaper was produced by Glean's Content & Community team using results from our latest survey of North American Glean users.

We gathered responses from Glean users at 290 institutions across North America, aiming to learn how Glean has supported them in their studies.

The research question was this:

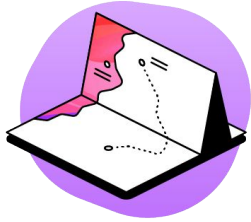
Does providing students with a note taking accommodation that teaches an independent note taking process lead to improved student success?



Author

Paddy Heaton
Events & Community Lead
paddy.heaton@glean.co

Contents



Context

4 - 6



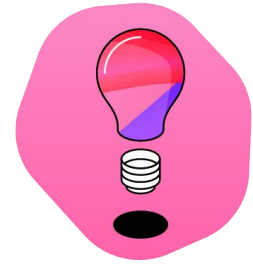
Research

7 - 10



Results

11 - 17



Conclusion

18 - 22



Context

Retention, success, and note taking

The college dropout rate

40% of undergraduate college students drop out each year¹. It's a staggering number, and a costly one for both students and colleges.

Students that drop out face debt from student loans and grants, and a higher unemployment rate. For colleges and universities, high dropout rates mean high loss of revenue from tuition fees.

It's no surprise that in 2022, reducing the dropout rate is high on the agenda for colleges and universities. Retention is a key success metric for departments across higher education institutions.

The graduation rate for students with disabilities is 17.5% lower than the rate for all students². Disability services departments have a key role to play in supporting this student population and improving graduation rates.

¹ <https://admissionsly.com/college-dropout-rates/>

² <https://www.nsba.org/ASBJ/2019/April/Graduation-Rates-Students-Disabilities>

Retention, grades, and note taking

Academic success and retention are inextricably linked. 28% of students who drop out of higher education do so due to academic disqualification¹. As students' grades improve, so do the outcomes for individuals and institutions.

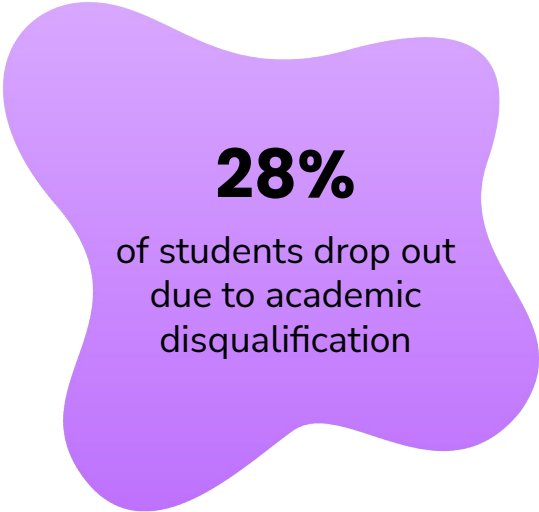
Student success and learning outcomes are therefore rightly a priority for higher education right now.

The connection between note taking and effective learning runs deep. Research² has identified a positive correlation between independent note taking and student achievement, and that students that review their notes score higher on tests.

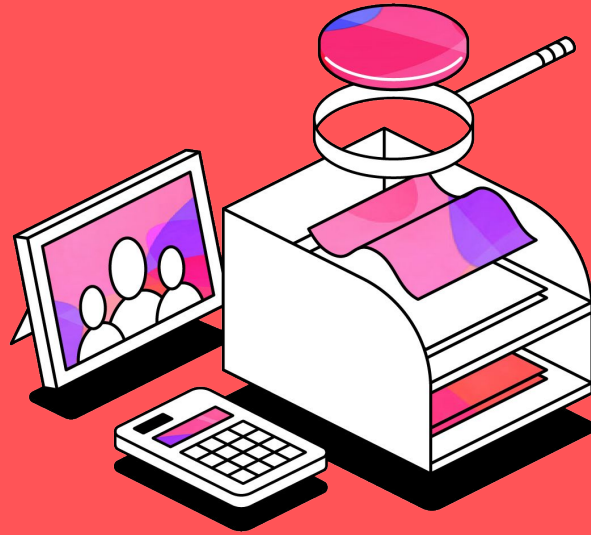
In other words, taking independent notes and using them effectively improves learning.

¹ <https://educationdata.org/college-dropout-rates/>

² 'SOAR vs SQ3R: a test of two study systems' by Kiewra et al, 'The role of working memory abilities in lecture note taking' by Bui & Myerson



28%
of students drop out
due to academic
disqualification



Research

Who, what, and why?

Why did we undertake this research?

Glean has been working to help students with disabilities develop study skills for 15 years. Our inclusive note taking technology has since helped over 200,000 students at over 600 colleges.

There's one thing that drives us every day, and that's our mission to empower more than a million learners with the confidence and ability to build useful knowledge.

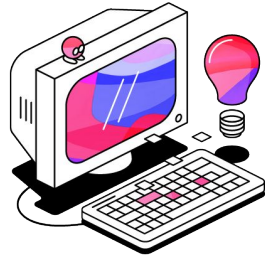
Glean helps students to take notes independently, which as we've seen has been linked to student achievement. The question we wanted to answer is:

Does providing students with a note taking accommodation that teaches an independent note taking process lead to improved student success, and therefore retention?

More specifically, we wanted to know:

Does Glean create better learners and help students to achieve better grades?

Who did we survey?



Over

400

students using Glean as
part of their studies



from

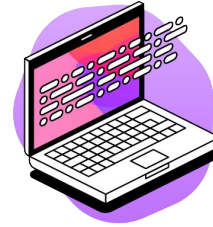
290

North American Higher
Education institutions

What did we ask students to share?



Start & end of semester grades
How did students' GPA change over Fall semester 2021?



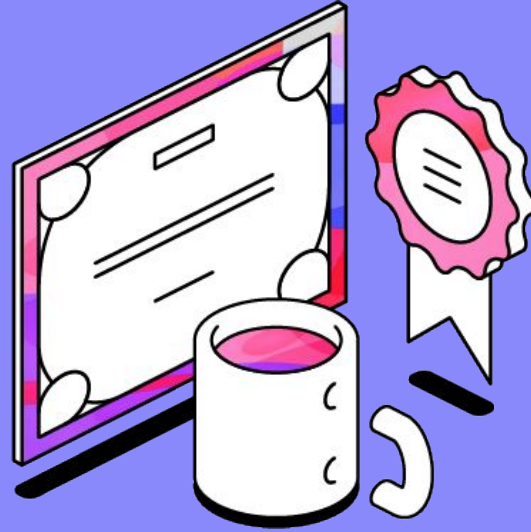
Short reflection on using Glean
How did Glean support students in their studies in Fall 2021?



Effect of Glean on study skills
Did using Glean help students improve their learning skills?



Effect of Glean on note taking
Did using Glean help students take notes more confidently?



Results

How did students respond?

91% of students improved or maintained their GPA over the semester.

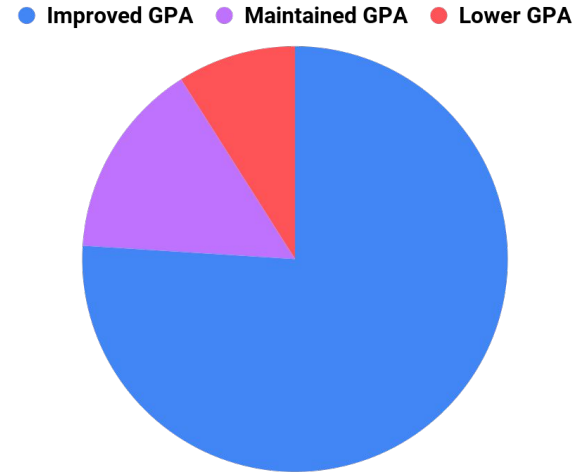
Almost all students' grades rose over the semester.

76% of students saw their grades rise over the semester. Students who improved their academic results on average saw their GPA rise by **+0.52**.

For just one semester, there were some very significant grade increases, with several students improving their GPA by more than **+1**.

15% of students maintained their GPA - most of which were high to begin with. In fact, 94% of students who maintained their grades started with a GPA of at least 3.

The average GPA change across all students was **+0.36**.



What did students say about their grades?

I can not even begin to explain how Glean has played a significant part not only in helping my grades improve for the better, but also allowing me to learn, understand and retain the material better. I will never stop using Glean.

Morgan, Concordia University Wisconsin

Glean made it easy to take notes. Glean made getting great grades easy!

Linda, Moraine Park Technical College

Glean has been a lifesaver. I don't know if I would have a 4.0 without it.

Bridger, University of Montana

I will graduate by the end of this academic term with a GPA higher than 3.0. Before using Glean, I was at a 1.9 GPA.

Dinara, University of California Santa Barbara

Glean helped students improve their study skills

We asked students a series of questions to find out how they felt Glean supported their learning and note taking.

In addition to improving grades, having access to independent note taking in Glean helped students to improve their study skills.

- **90% of students** said that using Glean helped them to **achieve better grades.**
- **95% of students** said that using Glean helped **improve how they learn.**
- **87% of students** said that they became **more organized and productive** when using Glean.

95%

of students said using
Glean helped improve
how they learn

Students also felt more confident and less stressed

Student success is not just about grades. As well as considering college outcomes, student success must take into account student experience.

Students reported that Glean not only helped them improve their study skills, but also improved their experience of college.

- **85% of students** said that using Glean helped them become a **more confident note taker**.
- **88% of students** said that they **find studying less stressful** using Glean.
- **96% of students** said that using Glean helped them **better manage an overload of information**.



88%
of students find
studying less
stressful with Glean

What did students say about success?

Glean has changed the way I take notes and has helped me become a better student because of it.

Sidney, Gardner Webb University

Glean helped me build study techniques that led me to feel optimistic about my academic performance especially because I felt better prepared for comprehensive exams and tests.

Luke, Trinity University

Previously I had just taken notes on my own but Glean has improved my learning and study skills. I am less agitated about what I may have missed and what I may need to know.

Sariah, Xavier University

Glean helped me to become successful at taking notes and studying for exams!

Abigail, Endicott College

Student Spotlight: Marissa

University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

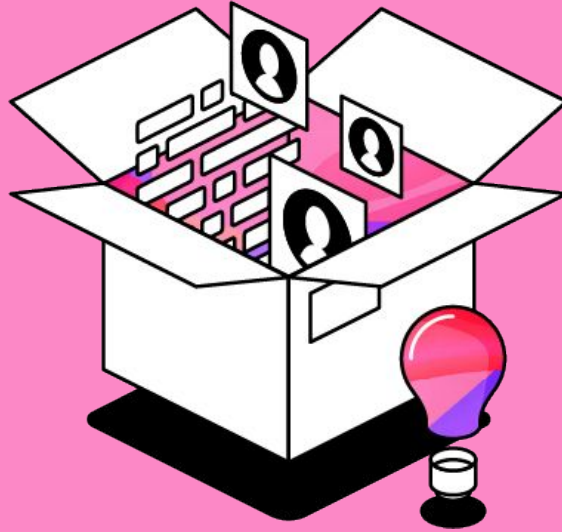
“Before having Glean, I was starting to think that I wasn’t going to make it as an academic. My brain wasn’t as fast and effective as it needed to be to succeed in this fast-paced, competitive environment.

I really considered dropping out of my program until I realized how much Glean could do for me. Now my grades are MUCH better and my general performance is making the cut!

I went from being told “it doesn’t seem you are as suited for a research-based career” to getting dissertation research funding & recommended as a collaborator!!”

Marissa’s story is a real example of where the rubber hits the road for student success and retention. She wasn’t performing well academically, and was actively considering dropping out.

When she received Glean and had the tools she needed to take notes effectively to support her learning, two things happened: her GPA improved dramatically, and she has a newfound confidence and excitement for her future academic career.



Conclusion

How can disability services respond?

Can a note taking support boost students' grades?

In short: yes.

Students using Glean achieved better grades, improved their study skills, and had a better learning experience.

Choosing the right note taking support that helps students to take their own notes independently can have a significant impact on not only their ability to take notes, but also:

- **Grades:** 90% of students said that using Glean helped them achieve better grades.
- **Study skills:** 95% of students said that using Glean helped improve how they learn.
- **Student experience:** 88% of students said that they find studying less stressful using Glean.



91%

of students using
Glean improved or
maintained their GPA

Empower your students with Glean for Education

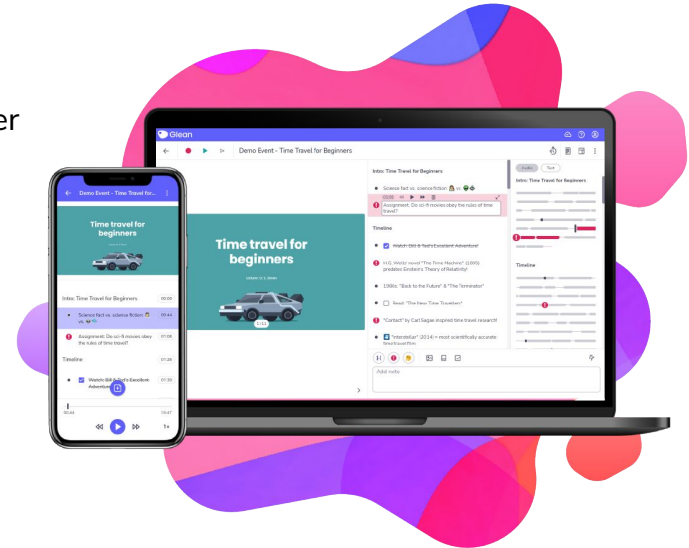
Glean for Education offers your department a unique opportunity to **boost grades, student success, and retention.**

Glean is proven to help students take better notes and achieve better academic results. Support your students to achieve the results like those featured above by investing in Glean for Education.

In one fell swoop, Glean for Education can help you deliver...

- **Ease of inclusivity**
- **Success for every student**
- **Learning for the 21st Century**

The program brings you the power and flexibility of Glean, backed by a plan and structure designed to help you accommodate learners at scale (and even across departments).



“Glean for Education is a full-service solution designed specifically to digitally transform note taking support and bring colleges’ systems and processes into the 21st century.”

Dave Tucker

Founder & CEO of Glean
Note taking for learning specialist





Empower all learners with Glean for Education, proven to help students improve grades

Visit glean.co/institutions to discover more