

Using Assessments & Polls (in and out of the classroom)

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Overview

Hopes for our time

- Meet new people
- Share experiences with one another
- Gain ideas for how to use polls and assessments effectively in the classroom

Session Plan

- Describe three basic types of assessments / polls that I use
- Discuss technological options
- Discuss possibilities for and barriers to your use of polls and assessments

<http://apknight.org/t/>

Some benefits of assessments and polling

- Increased attendance
- Increased participation and engagement
- Enhanced learning

Further information

Bruff, D. (2009). *Teaching with classroom response systems*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Caldwell, J. E. (2007). Clickers in the large classroom: Current research and best practice tips. *Life Sciences Education* 6, 9-20.

Kay, R. H., & LeSage, A. (2009). Examining the benefits and challenges of using audience response systems: A review of the literature. *Computers & Education*, 53, 819-827.

- How might polls or assessments add value to the specific courses that you teach?
- What barriers do you see to actually using polls or assessments in the future?

Three types of polls / assessments that I use

- In-class poll: Non-anonymous
- In-class poll: Anonymous
- Out-of-class assessment

In-Class Poll (1): Non-anonymous

- When is hand-raising for polls particularly useful?
 - Learn about your students' backgrounds or opinions
 - Questions are binary and not too personal
 - Quickly show majority / minority positions; specific distributions aren't that important
 - Highlight individual positions
- Common classroom applications
 - Taking a stand (e.g., "Whose support is *most* critical?")
 - Turning the tide (e.g., "Should you take the promotion?")

In-Class Poll (2): Anonymous

- When is a de-identified poll most useful?
 - Quantifying positions quickly and showing distributions
 - Minimizing social influence in responses
 - Gradations are important (i.e., continuous response scales)
 - Devices are in use for other reasons
- Common classroom applications
 - Plunge into a topic
 - Highlight polarized views
 - Show a class distribution for touchy subjects
- Example: How ethical is it to use tactics like the pharmaceutical salespeople?

Out-of-Class Assessment

- When is an out-of-class assessments most useful?
 - Longer, multi-item assessment or questionnaire
 - Reflection is important
- Common applications of data in the classroom
 - Identifying norms / Patterns of central tendency
 - Are we all on the same page? / Patterns of variance
 - Solving a mystery
- Example: [Leadership Beliefs](#)

Technology Options: Out-of-Class Assessments

- Good old paper and pencil
 - Strengths: Quick / easy design, could use optical scanning
 - Weaknesses: Extra steps for data processing, copying / paper
- Web-based survey packages:
 - Examples: [BlackBoard](#), [SurveyMonkey](#), [Qualtrics](#), [LimeSurvey](#)
 - Strengths: Available, reliable, flexible, commercial support
 - Weaknesses: Limited default data displays, extra steps for processing
- Custom [assessment centers](#)
 - Strengths: 100% tailored to instructor goals, data displays “on the fly”
 - Weaknesses: Large upfront costs

Technology Options: In-Class Polling with Hardware (i.e., *Clickers*)



Pros

- Easy PPT integration
- Commercial support
- School / dept may support

Cons

- Fixed costs
- Relatively expensive
- Lug devices around
- Time handing out devices

Examples: [Turning Technologies](#), [iRespond](#)

Technology Options: In-Class Polling with Software

Examples

- [Poll Everywhere](#)
- [LectureTools](#)
- Most web-based survey packages:
 - [BlackBoard](#)
 - [SurveyMonkey](#)
 - [Qualtrics](#)
 - [LimeSurvey](#)

Pros

- Range of price points
- Variable cost structure
- Minimal in-class setup time
- Very flexible and expandable

Cons

- Very flexible – lots of options
- Students must bring devices

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- What barriers do you see to actually using polls or assessments in the future?