

A PROJECT OF THE UC BERKELEY GSI TEACHING & RESOURCE CENTER

How Students Learn

WITH SPONSORSHIP FROM THE TEAGLE FOUNDATION'S
GRADUATE STUDENT TEACHING IN THE ARTS & SCIENCES INITIATIVE

Designing Activities that Enhance Student Learning

Please use this form to describe a teaching activity that you have modified or developed (or will modify or develop) in response to the working group sessions.

Name: Colleen Lewis

Role (circle one): Graduate Student/GSI

Home Department(s): Education/Computer Science

Course(s) in which you would use this teaching activity: CS61A

Activity Title: Integrating Clicker questions into lecture

Description:

Please give a short synopsis of the activity and its learning goals, maximum 100 words.

I plan to integrate Clicker questions into my lectures for CS61A this summer. I have used a similar strategy before but will use Clickers this time to reduce the experience of stress for the students. This will be my first time lecturing for this course which I believe will be a lot of work integrating Clicker questions.

If this is an activity you have used in the past but now will modify in response to the Working Group sessions, please describe the activity as you previously conducted it:

I have previously used multiple choice questions during lecture to increase engagement and participation. However, in the past I have had students indicate their answer option by showing a thumbs-up, down, or sideways.

Describe the changes you made or will make to the activity and the reasoning behind these changes.

I plan to adopt Clickers for executing the voting process. This will give me the opportunity to have a larger portion of the students participate without the fear of embarrassment. I believe many students felt uncomfortable voting in the past. This will also allow me to gather feedback during lecture more quickly and consistently.

Which session(s) of the Working Group influenced the changes you made or will make to this activity? How so?

The talk by Daniela Kaufer motivated this change. Part of what she discussed was avoiding stressing students, because it leads to decreased cognitive functioning. Low-stakes Clicker questions seem to balance the need to provide some, but not too much, stress during lecture.

How will you assess the effectiveness of this activity in enhancing student learning?

I plan to query students regarding their attitudes toward the clicker questions. If they identify that they are very successful I will take actions to reduce the pressure. This activity will be effective for me if I am able to engage more students in the questions and have them vote.