



The Use of "Clickers" in the Law School Classroom


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Why Use "Clickers" in Law School Classes



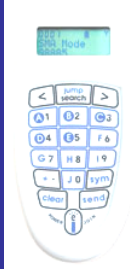
- Introduce active learning into the classroom
- Increase student engagement, participation & interaction
- Help students pay better attention in class
- Make class more fun
- Get immediate feedback
- Improve student learning

How we got started at Albany Law




- eInstruction's CPS system was chosen and then introduced to faculty.
- Last fall, 3 professors used the "clickers" along with their PowerPoint slides.
- Several classes were observed.
- Student survey revealed positive feelings toward the "clickers."
- An additional professor decided to use the "clickers."
- This professor wanted the "clickers" to be used for assessment in addition to an interactive class activity.
- A low tech option of using the clickers was explored.

Using the "Clicker" as an Assessment Tool

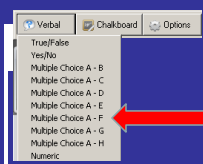


- **Why -**
 - To ensure that students take the homework assignment seriously.
 - To deter random guessing.
 - To make the professor develop "good" questions."
- **How -**
 - Students get credit for each correct answer.
 - At the end of the semester, "clicker" responses count for 10% of the grade

Low Tech Use of "Clickers" in the Classroom

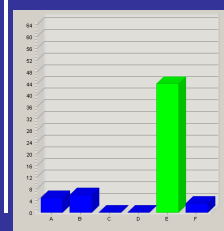


- Students go TWEN (our CMS) to access questions & respond to them before class.
- Students use their response pad ("clickers") to key in their answer to each question.
- Professor projects on the screen a graphical representation of the class' responses and then indicate the correct answer.
- A discussion ensues following each question/answer.




(After connecting laptop to the projector and opening the CPS software which is done while students take out their "clickers" and homework questions:)

1. Select the type of question.
2. Students key in their response.
3. Select "End" after all students have responded.
4. Graph appears.
5. If desired – show correct answer.
6. Discuss responses.




Benefits for the professor:



- Graphs provide instant feedback on student comprehension.
- “Pick a student” feature randomly selects students to participate in class.
- Keeps students on task.
- Reports allow the professor to self-assess his teaching (with regard to student understanding).
- Reports enable professor to keep tabs on individual students’ daily progress.


Benefits for the students:



- Better attendance (if the “clicker” is counted as part of their course grade)
- Collaboration/peer learning
- Anonymity when responding to questions
- “...Multiple choice can be more sophisticated tools than essay questions for analyzing students’ abilities to read facts and cases as well as their ability to apply an unfamiliar rule of law to a legal problem.”


(Greg Sergienko, *New Modes of Assessment*, 38 San Diego L. Rev 463, 493-505 (2001)).

Benefits for the students:



- “Students learn better when they are actively engaged in the learning process...Active learning recognizes that, during classroom time, students should be engaged in behavior and activities other than listening.” (Gerald F. Hess, *Seven Principles for Good Practice in Legal Education: Principle 3: Good Practice Encourages Active Learning*, 49 J. Legal Educ. 401, 403 (1999))


Examples of Active Learning in the “Clicker” Classroom



- All students answer ALL questions.
- Clicker system allows professor to randomly select students to explain correct or incorrect answers.
- Multiple choice questions require students to undertake higher order thinking.
- Even “poor” questions (ones with more than one correct answer or NO correct answer) can be used.


Results of the Student Survey:

How has the use of “clickers” enhanced your learning?



- *It helps to identify main issues/points that I should take away from class.*
- *The clicker questions we do everyday are helpful in understanding the material. I feel more confident with answering exam-type questions having gone through the experience of using the clicker.*
- *It's much faster than a paper quiz. Less quiz time allows for more lecture time. We learn more.*

How has the use of “clickers” enhanced your learning?



- *(The prof) is able to provide an alternate means of grading students by assessing understanding daily, and discuss certain issues more closely when there is misunderstanding.*
- *The clickers have been a great help for exam prep and to better understand the application of the law.*
- *I like the clickers. It keeps me accountable for the reading.*
- *Allows participation.*
- *It does help to get practice multiple choice questions.*
- *It forces you to become analytical in thinking about the material.*

What the professors have said:



How has the use of “clickers” helped your students?

- *It bolsters interactive and varied teaching techniques.*
- *...the in-class questions showed me that students weren't learning things and allowed me to take remedial action.*
- *The students were engaged, focused and interested.*
- *Discussions around the “correct” answer were often spirited and occurred in real-time.*
- *Even “poor” questions resulted in being good learning tools.*

Tips to Future “Clicker” Users:



- Explain to students why you are using the system and what you expect students to gain from the experience in order to get them to support the idea, especially if you are using it for non-traditional activities like active learning.
- Plan in advance for how to deal with students whose clickers are forgotten, need batteries, or are broken.
- Before teaching your first course, watch another instructor who uses “clickers.”
- Be aware that the first year of use requires extra time to prepare good questions.

Tips to Future “Clicker” Users (cont.):



- Set up the system before class, and practice this before the semester begins.
- If you want to increase attendance or reduce random guessing, use clickers on a regular basis and link clicker usage to grades.
- Spend some time in the first class training students to use clickers.
- Encourage class discussion of incorrect answers.
- Be willing to throw out or regrade a question that contains an error or is unclear.

Tips to Future “Clicker” Users (cont.):



- Give opportunities for peer learning and collaboration.
- If clicker scores are part of the course grade, make those scores accessible on a regular basis to reduce student anxiety.
- **Keep a positive attitude, and be willing to make a few mistakes as you learn!!**

(Caldwell, Jane E., "Clickers in the large classroom: Current research and best practice tips." CBE Life Science Education, 6, 2007).

Questions?

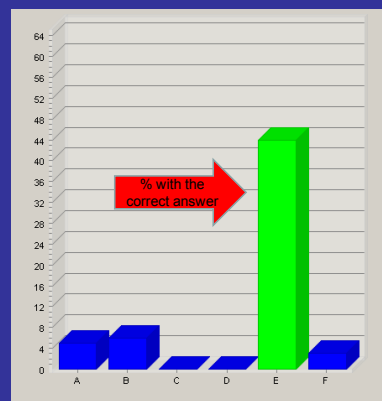


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Class: Criminal Law
Class Points Avg: 2.36 out of 3.00 (78.53%)
(Includes only students who took assessment)

1 (No Question Stem Entered)

- A 88% (No Answer Stem Entered)
- B 0% (No Answer Stem Entered)
- C 7% (No Answer Stem Entered)
- D 3% (No Answer Stem Entered)

2 (No Question Stem Entered)

- A 0% (No Answer Stem Entered)
- B 73% (No Answer Stem Entered)
- C 12% (No Answer Stem Entered)
- D 14% (No Answer Stem Entered)

3 (No Question Stem Entered)

- A 8% (No Answer Stem Entered)
- B 10% (No Answer Stem Entered)
- C 9% (No Answer Stem Entered)
- D 0% (No Answer Stem Entered)
- E 75% (No Answer Stem Entered)
- F 5% (No Answer Stem Entered)

Assessments - All

Assessment	10/10/07	10/11/07	10/12/07	10/13/07	10/14/07	10/15/07	10/16/07	10/17/07	10/18/07	10/19/07	10/20/07	10/21/07	10/22/07	10/23/07	10/24/07	10/25/07	10/26/07	10/27/07	10/28/07	10/29/07	10/30/07	10/31/07
10/10/07	10/11/07	10/12/07	10/13/07	10/14/07	10/15/07	10/16/07	10/17/07	10/18/07	10/19/07	10/20/07	10/21/07	10/22/07	10/23/07	10/24/07	10/25/07	10/26/07	10/27/07	10/28/07	10/29/07	10/30/07	10/31/07	

Class [icon] [chart]

Pick a Student

Take Attendance

Selected Student

1: Darlene Cardillo

[Options] [OK]