Comparing Online Student Engagement in Discussion vs. Annotation

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Defining Student Engagement

Student Engagement = “students’ willingness and desire to participate and be successful in a learning process that leads them to higher-level thinking and long-term understanding” (Claire Howell Major, Teaching Online)

• motivation
• attention
• involvement
• intellectual effort
Challenge of Student Engagement

*Time for Class* - Faculty Survey (Tyton Partners 2020)

**TOP INSTRUCTIONAL CHALLENGES FACULTY SEEK TO SOLVE**

- Increasing student engagement in class: 50%
- Increasing student collaboration: 19%

*Adrift in a Pandemic* - Student Survey (Top Hat 2020)

Engagement plays a major role in ensuring students feel like they are deriving value from their education. 78% say the online class experience is unengaging.

Of these students:
- 53% are spending less time on coursework
- 39% don’t enjoy or see the value in real-time online learning
- 75% think online instruction is worse than in-person instruction
Your Challenges?

What challenges have you faced getting students to engage in online classes?

Add a comment by clicking the + Comment button at the bottom of the slide
Online Tools for Student Engagement

Tamara Girardi: “online faculty must carefully analyze, select, implement, and assess what tools best create an online community and engage students in the online environment.” (Scheg and Ruefman eds., *Applied Pedagogies*)

- student-to-student interaction
- student-to-content interaction
Discussion vs. Annotation

- General Education: Intro to Literature (max 25 students)
- Open Education: digital textbook (Lumen Learning)

Canvas Discussion

Perusall Annotation
Student Survey on Discussions

- Preferred for student-to-student interaction
- Students listed by name for replies
- Simple to post/respond
- All threads on one page
- Easy to navigate threads
Student Survey on Annotations

- Preferred for student-to-content interaction
- Text and comments side-by-side
- Easy to find evidence from text
- Highlighted text distracting to read
- Only one highlight per annotation
- Threads on separate pages
- Students listed by initials more difficult to identify for replies
## Analytics Comparison

### Discussions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Avg. per student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Posts</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Word Count</td>
<td>500+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replies Received</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zero Replies Received</td>
<td>0-3 students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Annotations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Avg. per student</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Posts</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Word Count</td>
<td>360+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Replies Received</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Zero Replies Received</td>
<td>7-8 students</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Discussions: higher averages for posts and word count
- Annotations: replies not evenly distributed with many students receiving zero replies
### Comments Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Discussions</th>
<th>Avg. per class assignment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Quotes from text</td>
<td><strong>93</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Questions to other students</td>
<td><strong>23</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
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<td><strong>21</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Quotes: show student-to-content interaction and use of evidence to support argument
- Questions: show student-to-student interaction and shared knowledge construction
- No significant differences (despite student preferences)
Your Tools and Best Practices?

• What tools do you use to engage students online?
• What are your best practices for creating and facilitating online engagement?
• Questions for me?

Thanks for viewing and commenting!
Please feel free to add comments through 18 Nov 2020 or email me directly at Christopher.Schedler@cwu.edu
I look forward to collaborating with you!