Make your classes more interactive

Interactivity and active learning: As technology moves into the classroom, tech-savvy students expect to use technology in order to engage with the material. Clickers allow all students to respond to the material covered in class in real time. Clickers also involve students in the learning process by making them active participants.

Students and Technology:

Increasingly tech-savvy students expect to use technology in the classroom with a growing focus on interactivity.

- Many students appreciate the interactive element and the ability to respond anonymously to question, since this makes it safer for them to share opinions and otherwise participate.
- Students who believe that an instructor is using clickers primarily or exclusively to enforce student attendance are likely to resent being tracked or monitored. If quizzes are not supplemented with other uses that more clearly benefit student learning, instructors are likely to encounter some student resistance.

Clickers allow for all students to participate.

- Increased participation – increased engagement with material
- Increased attendance
- Add an element of fun to the class, especially through use of trivia and competitions

Share your rationale for using clickers.

- Let the students know why they are using clickers – It’s not just to track attendance
- Convince students that questions are for learning and not evaluation, unless explicitly framed as a quiz or exam
- What are the benefits of clickers versus just straight lecturing
- Place the students in a position where they are responsible for their education
- If students are asked to purchase their own clickers, they often expect to use them regularly during class

Getting students to remember to bring their clickers to class.

- Students are more likely to remember to bring their clickers if the devices are used in every class session, if they are used in ways that seem integral to the learning experience, if they are used in their other courses, or if some portion of their grade depends on their use of clickers.
• Some instructors tell their students that if they forget their clickers or if their clickers are not working for some reason, such as a dead battery, then they can submit their answers to clicker questions on paper at the end of a class session.
• Another way to deal with the issue of forgotten or malfunctioning clickers is to allow students to drop some of their clicker grades.
• Some instructors will bring a couple of extra clickers with them to each class for those who might have forgotten.

**Explain to students the rationale behind using clickers:**

• Many students appreciate the interactive element and the ability to respond anonymously to question, since this makes it safer for them to share opinions and otherwise participate.
• Students who believe that an instructor is using clickers primarily or exclusively to enforce student attendance are likely to resent being tracked or monitored. If quizzes are not supplemented with other uses that more clearly benefit student learning, instructors are likely to encounter some student resistance.
• Students are more likely to remember to bring their clickers if the devices are used in every class session, if they are used in ways that seem integral to the learning experience, if they are used in their other courses, or if some portion of their grade depends on their use of clickers.
• Let students know how the use of clickers applies to their learning experience. Let them know “what’s in it for them.” This helps put students in charge of their education, to know what they gain from technology in the classroom.

**References:**