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Saving Your Time for Where it is Most Effective

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Saving Your Time for Where It Is Most Effective

or Some of the Things I Have
Struggled with and Hope I Am Using
Technology to Do Better Now

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General Problem: Too much paper

- Solution:

Use the technology – nothing hard copy that does not have to be

– Advantages:

- Saves trees
- Saves mess
- Student work does not get lost or “misfiled”
- Sets the stage for moving to on-line teaching

General Problem: Too much time spent on preparation and composing testing

- Solution:

Use the publishers of your texts— get all of the support materials you can, including course cartridges

- Advantages:

- Starting point for everything from tests to PowerPoints
- It is all editable, does not make you do it their way
- Can provide support your students with no work for you

Problem: How do we get them to read and know they are doing it?

- **Possible Approach 1:**

Ignore it – let the test sort them out

– Drawbacks:

- Issues are not obvious in a timely fashion
- Students fall too far behind
- Increases the number of “drops”

Problem: How do we get them to read and know they are doing it?

- **Possible Approach 2:**

Daily or weekly Quizzes – check up on them regularly

– Drawbacks:

- Takes class time
- Generates grading for professor
- Raises issues about “make-ups”

Problem: How do we get them to read and know they are doing it?

- **Possible Approach 3:**

Reading Journal – make them write to prove they read

– Drawbacks:

- May remove focus from in-depth reading
- Many students see it as “make work”
- Can be very time consuming to grade

Problem: How do we get them to read and know they are doing it?

- **Current Solution:**

Homework Quizzes— short True/False quizzes on Blackboard due before class

— Advantages:

- No grading time
- Automatically entered in Grading Center
- Consistent barometer of student performance
- Availability window with “no make-up policy”

Problem: How do we get them to read the Syllabus and keep referring to it?

- **Possible Approach 1:**

Keep plenty of hard copies available and hope for the best

– Drawbacks:

- Wastes paper
- No guarantee students ever read it
- Students ask professors for information they have already gone to great lengths to provide

Problem: How do we get them to read the Syllabus and keep referring to it?

- **Possible Approach 2:**

One hard copy per student- if they loose it is their problem

– Drawbacks:

- Many will lose it
- Makes it hard for the professor to refer students back to it with confidence
- Raises issues if changes have to be made

Problem: How do we get them to read the Syllabus and keep referring to it?

- **Current Solution:**

Electronic syllabi only with (electronic)
Quiz one week into class

– Advantages:

- No wasted paper
- Endlessly editable
- Short multiple choice Syllabus Quiz pressures students to read syllabus at the beginning of semester or lose points

Problem: Helping students who are looking for information/notes for classes they miss

- **Possible Approach 1:**

Ignore it- they missed class, it is their problem

– Drawbacks:

- Disadvantages students who are working hard to recover from illness or personal problems
- Makes the professor look unsympathetic

Problem: Helping students who are looking for information/notes for classes they miss

- **Possible Approach 2:**

Send them the PowerPoint and/ or lecture notes

– Drawbacks:

- Makes work / takes time for professor, especially for extended absences
- Nobody gets to see my messy misspelled notes
- Could be too much a crutch for lazy students

Problem: Helping students who are looking for information/notes for classes they miss

- **Possible Approach 3:**

Find a student to share notes with them

– Drawbacks:

- Student may agree, but be slow or forget to provide copies
- Helpful student make take lousy, useless notes

Problem: Helping students who are looking for information/notes for classes they miss

- **Current Solution- Part 1:**

Official Class Secretary/ Secretaries- notes posted on a discussion board

– Advantages:

- Each student has responsibility for one lecture
- Absent students or poor note takers know where to go to check something they missed
- Very quick to grade

Problem: Helping students who are looking for information/notes for classes they miss

- **Current Solution- Part 2:**

Post PowerPoints on Blackboard

– Advantages:

- Accessible- Students can prepare lecture outlines ahead of time to aid note taking or access them when they are absent
- Students often use them as overviews for reviewing

Problem: Testing- specifically the time it takes to grade tests

- Possible Approach 1:
- Paper tests comprised of mostly objective questions
 - Drawbacks:
 - Does not always test depth of understanding
 - Wastes paper
 - Still a lot of time grading- 35 questions x 105 students = 3,675 ✓s and ✗s

Problem: Testing- specifically the time it takes to grade tests

- Possible Approach 2:

Short paper tests comprised of mostly subjective questions

- Drawbacks:

- Does not generally test breadth of retention
- Tends to disadvantage students outside of their major concentration
- Wastes paper
- Depending on length of tests can demand time consuming detailed grading

Problem: Testing- specifically the time it takes to grade tests

- Current Solution:

Electronic tests comprised of a variety of questions types (matching, multiple choice, and essay)

- Advantages:

- Objective questions graded automatically, saving professor's time for detailed feedback on subjective questions
- Linked directly to Grade Center
- Allows for different learning styles
- Students and professors can look back at them whenever they like- nothing to misplace
- Randomized questions decrease chance of cheating
- Many editable questions available from Course Cartridges

Problem: Papers- specifically the time it takes to grade them

- **Possible Approach 1:**

Hard copy papers- with detailed editing in red pen

– Drawbacks:

- A lot of paper
- Danger of losing papers or pages
- Very time consuming
- Puts all of the work of spotting plagiarism on the professor
- Students are subjected to my handwriting
- Complicates receiving and returning late papers

Problem: Papers- specifically the time it takes to grade them

- **Possible Approach 2:**

Hard copy papers- read quickly and given an appropriate grade

– Drawbacks:

- Most of the drawbacks of 1st approach (except time) plus:
- Students often do not understand their grades
- They do not learn from their mistakes
- At least partially negates the purpose of such an assignment

Problem: Papers- specifically the time it takes to grade them

- **Current Solution (a work in progress):**

Papers submitted electronically through anti-plagiarism software
Detailed close edit of first page, with occasional examples from elsewhere

General comments for the paper as a whole, often containing stock phrases/ explanations for common issues

Comments emailed to students with quotes from their papers and corrections to them

- Advantages:

- Saves paper, nothing to lose
- Well organized, linked to Grading Center
- Makes most cases of plagiarism or poor paraphrasing obvious
- Allows students to see examples of issues in their own work without dissecting the whole paper
- Gives the students feedback to keep, without using paper

Problem: Papers- specifically the time it takes to grade them

- **Current Solution (a work in progress):**

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- **Still contemplating:**

- How do I make this more efficient (It still takes huge amount of time)?
- Would “Track Changes” be better than quoting their paper and commenting on it?
- How can I get them to do things like citation correctly the first time to avoid requiring corrections?