



MEETING STUDENTS' EXPECTATIONS OF FEEDBACK WITH LEARNING ANALYTICS

Celebrate SoTL October 22, 2020

Goals of the Project

This poster presents the findings of an ongoing study that examines the use of learning analytics (LA) to enhance students' motivation, learning, and participation. As class sizes in higher education institutions continue to increase, instructors may experience difficulties delivering effective personalized feedback to students. LA tools help instructors compile information from Canvas to personalize support and target specific learning needs. This project highlights students' perceptions of effective feedback and explores how LA tools contributed to their academic work.

Methodology

Instructors from Sociology, Soil Science, and Asian Studies were invited to pilot a LA tool, called OnTask, with their students during the summer 2020 term. Undergraduate students were sent pre- and post-course surveys by the instructors to gather their perspectives of effective feedback, including the modality, the method of delivery, and timeliness. The survey data was analyzed using Qualtrics and SPSS while open-ended responses underwent a thematic analysis.

Summary of Findings

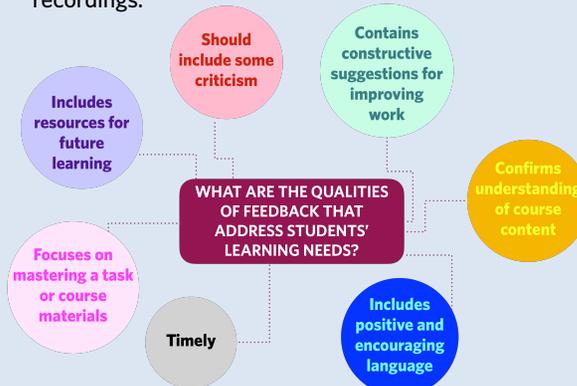
- Effective feedback is multifaceted and not dependent on a specific mode or quality
- Feedback with OnTask helped students feel connected to their instructors and the course
- Students want feedback throughout the course to help them stay focused

Acknowledgements

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Students' Perspectives of Feedback

Students reported that they preferred to receive feedback face-to-face (remotely or in-person), written in their assignments (e.g., track changes in essays), and through e-mail (as blurbs or quick notes). There was a strong upward trend for wanting feedback through audio and video recordings.



OnTask and Students' Expectations

Although not a replacement for face-to-face feedback, students reported generally favorable experiences with OnTask. Instructors sent 1-6 messages during their course and the majority of students felt they received an adequate number of messages for their learning. The frequency of the messages also helped them stay engaged in the course. Students felt they received more consistent feedback compared to courses that did not use OnTask.

"I tried applying what the personalized feedback has suggested to help better my learning. Since this was an online class, the feedback encouraged me to branch out and learn beyond the material. I feel like it's quite hard to improve and push yourself in an online course, but the personalized feedback at least gave me some sort of motivation and direction on how to better my learning experience."

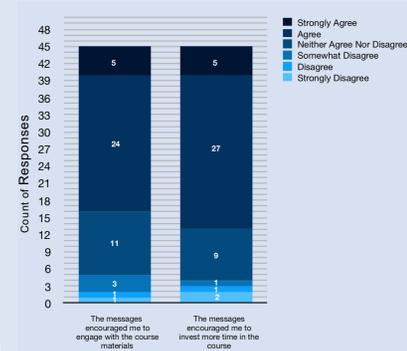
"Compared to other [courses], it was really helpful to get feedback so I can achieve more of the learning outcomes and [get] what I needed to get out of the class materials."

"I think it helped me ensure that I was on the right task because [the instructor] would mention a few topics in each message, and because I was aware that I understood what she was talking about, I knew that I was understanding [the] course content. I personally thought the feedback was useful because it gives you a confidence boost."

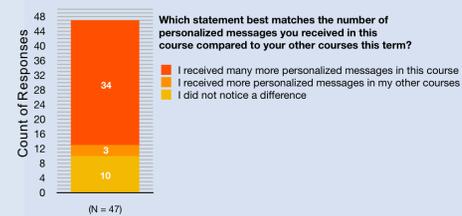
"I believe OnTask made learning more personal, as the messages I received from the professor answered many of my questions without me having to ask, and also provided additional insight into the course that appealed to my style of learning."

Findings

Student Evaluation of Engagement



Student Perceptions of Number of Personalized Messages



Learning Analytics Tools

LA tools encourage students to take responsibility for their learning, reinforce positive learning behaviors, enhance instructor-student dynamics, increase motivation, and encourage participation leading to overall improved academic achievement by students (Fritz, 2017; Pardo et al, 2019; Vigentini et al., 2017). This project pilots a tool called OnTask.



References

Fritz, J. (2017). Using analytics to nudge student responsibility for learning. *New Directions for Higher Education*, 179, 65-75.

Pardo, A., Jovanovic, J., Dawson, S., Gašević, D., & Mirriahi, N. (2019). Using learning analytics to scale the provision of personalised feedback. *British Journal of Educational Technology*, 50(1), 128-138.

Vigentini, L., Kondo, E., Samnick, K., Liu, D. Y., King, D., & Bridgeman, A. J. (2017). Recipes for institutional adoption of a teacher-driven learning analytics tool: Case studies from three Australian universities. Paper presented at ASCILITE: Shaping the Future of Tertiary Education (pp. 422-432), Queensland, Australia.