Increasing Participation in Student Seminars

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Problems to solve...

Hard to get good attendance for student-led seminars & presentations Come only when they have to present Aware of UG's attendance policy Questions/discussion often weak • "Are there any questions?" \rightarrow glassy stares Boring for audience, unhelpful for presenter

Objectives

- . Obtain high attendance
 - Decent audience honours student prep

- Audience may learn something new!
- 2. Stimulate lively discussions
 - Stretches student presenter
 - Part of active, engaged learning
 - Feeling for all that time well-spent
 - But... don't violate UG policies

Solution with Participation Marks

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Keys:

- Make audience into engaged listeners
- Use participation marks as incentive

Mechanism:

- Use 2-part forms...
 - 1st part: Turn in for participation mark
 - 2nd part:
 - Read out jotted questions during discussion time
 - Afterward, give to presenter for anonymous feedback

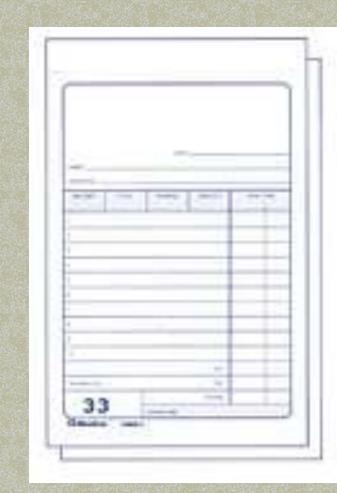
How it Works

Buy Staples Blueline Sales Order Pads, G3NCR.10, Item #36331

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- "Value Pack" of 10 pads works out to \$1.59 ea. or under 4¢ per student per seminar
- Use along with rubric that tells what to write in "Sold By" "COD" Total" etc.
- After a few times, students no longer need to consult the rubric

Form & Rubric Side by Side



Name		0		
3 SOLD BY	COD	CHARGE	ON ACCOUNT	AMOUNT FMD.
1 2 2 2 2				
			TOTAL	3
		SIGNATURE	4	

Write your name on the line.

2. While you listen, think of at least two good questions, and write them on the numbered lines.

		1	2	4	
 SOLD BY: 	Organization	Logical & easy to follow			Hopelessly confused
 COD: 	Contents	Quite appropriate for topic			Inappropriate, doesn't work
 CHARGE: 	Appearance of Slides	Professional & easy to read			Hard to read, unattractive
 ON ACCOURT 	VT: Use of Slides	Very skillful			Vary awkward
 AMOUNT FV 	WD.: Style	Lively & stimulating			Struggling to keep attention
 TOTAL: 	Overall	Outstanding! A	demuzte	Weak	Inadequate

 Rate the speaker's voice using a 4-point scale, and write the two numbers for Londness / Intelligibility separated by a slash in the SIGNATURE box (e.g., 3 / 2);

LOUDNESS	RATING	INTELLIGIBILITY				
Too loud!	4	Sounds affected				
3=Fine						
A little soft	2	Some words muddled				
Offen can't hear you	1	Often can't understand you				

5. During the reflection period, you can write comments, then tear off the top page and hand it in.

After questions/discussion, tear off the bottom page (but keep your name) and hand it in as feedback.

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Procedure

Hand out sales books before seminars

- While talk in progress...
 - Audience evaluating presentation
 - Jotting at least 2 questions on form
- 1-2 mins. "reflection" to finish filling form
 - Tear off top page, with own name \rightarrow Inst.
- **Discussion** period
 - Audience reading questions they jotted
 - Tear off 2nd page without name → Presenter for anonymous feedback

Instructor Marking

Students receive participation mark for fully carrying out instructions (not just for "being there")

I give one mark for each of 8 numerical ratings + one mark for each question = 10

Quick/easy to eyeball and tot up mark

How much weight in course outline?
I've used 10% to 20% (all-seminar course)

Objectives Accomplished!

- Close to 100% attendance at all seminars
 - Of course they want the marks, but missing the odd seminar not very costly; and yet...

- Apparently because of audience "buy in" as evaluators and discussants, students felt committed to being there
- "Endless lively discussion"
 - Everyone has at least 2 questions prepared, so always had to be cut off when time ran out

Added Benefits

 Presenters get honest, helpful peer eval
 "Honest" since does not affect presenter's mark (though Instructor could choose to do so)

- Audience engaged vs. bored
 - Eval gives something to do while listening, something to be attentive to
 - Eval reminds them of characteristics of good presentations
 - Can't formulate questions without trying to follow logic of talk

More Benefits

- Helps ESL students
 - In audience: Since questions prepared, all they have to do is read them out

- As presenters: If peers claim not to understand them, open to remedial help
- I also fill a form and use as input to my eval of seminar
 - See Seminar Evaluation Form (back)

Summary

Staples two-part forms prove inexpensive, easy way to...

Get consistent great attendance at student seminars

- Stimulate lively discussion
- Without a lot of administrative fuss

Handouts: 1) rubric; 2) Inst's evaluation