Poll Everywhere

Using Mobile Response Technology in Higher Education

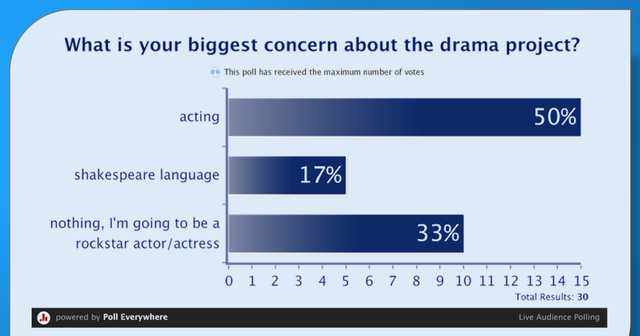
Sarah Beam, Lauren Kurkowski, and Dr. JoAnne C. Juett
University of Wisconsin-Eau Claire

Background

This research explores how mobile technologies can be used in higher education face-to-face classes, with a specific focus on Poll Everywhere mobile response technology.

What Is Poll Everywhere?

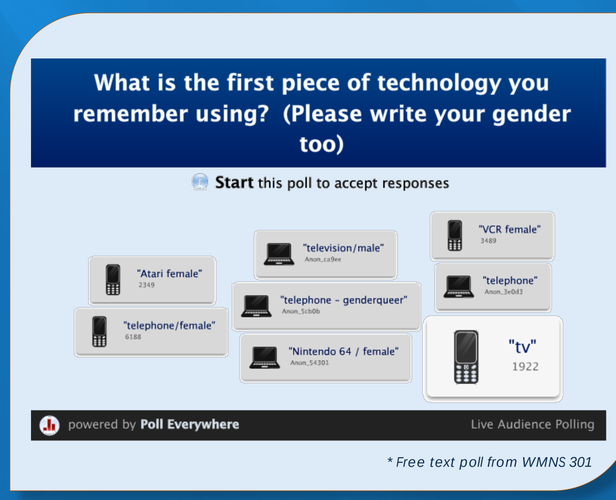
Poll Everywhere is a mobile response technology that can be used by educators and students in many disciplines for instant communication. Through Poll Everywhere, students can use technology with texting, Twitter, or internet access to respond to educators' in-class questions and assessments. Poll Everywhere is a secure and easily-accessible Web tool for higher education.



** Multiple choice poll from ENGL 150*

How Poll Everywhere Works

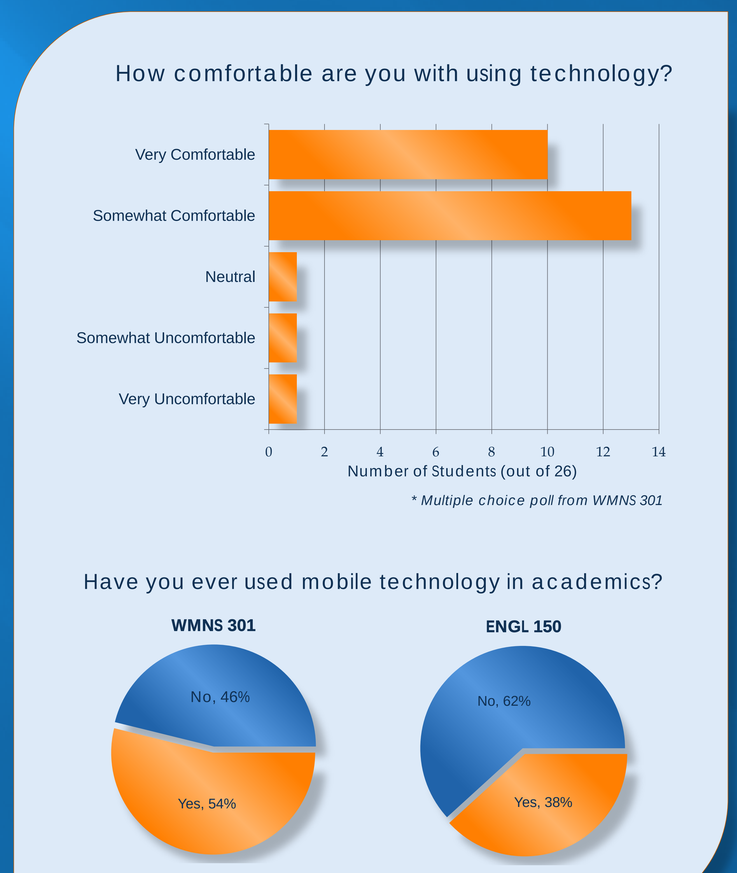
As a beneficial and free tool for higher education classes, Poll Everywhere can be used to ask multiple choice questions or free text (open-ended) questions. Responses to questions appear immediately on the poll site and can be projected on a master screen. The instructor can specify whether students can respond once or multiple times and in which ways students can respond. Polls can also be imbedded in PowerPoint slides so the instructor can see student responses without leaving the presentation.



** Free text poll from WMNS 301*

Application to Higher Education

In this mobile response research, students' comfort levels and productivity with Poll Everywhere were examined through technology-enhanced lessons in two different classes at UW-Eau Claire: a 100-level English literature class and a 300-level Women's Studies class.



** Multiple choice poll from WMNS 301*

ENGL 150 - Introduction to Literature

Poll Everywhere was used in ENGL 150 through response activities involving book review analysis. Each student was asked to respond to free text questions about book reviews via their cell phones, smart phones, or other mobile devices. The answers were anonymously displayed on a master screen for the whole class to view. The students' responses allowed for instant assessment of students' comprehension and immediate response by the class instructor. The instructor then used a Poll Everywhere multiple choice question to gauge students' concerns regarding an upcoming project and an open text poll to answer any questions students had during the lesson.

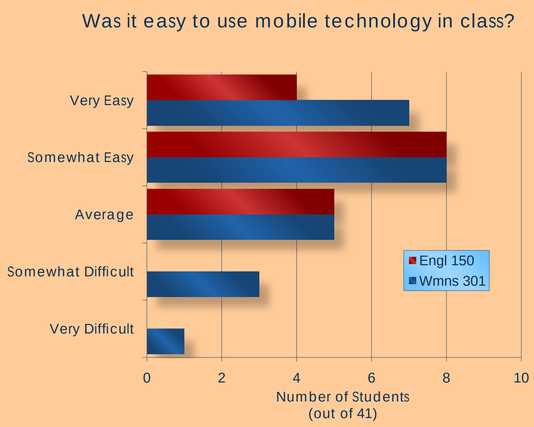
WMNS 301 - Examining Women's Studies

Poll Everywhere response technology was used in WMNS 301 in a lesson to analyze the relationship between gender and technology. Using mobile devices and laptops, students responded to both multiple choice and free text questions that appeared on a master screen in front of the class. Using Poll Everywhere, their responses appeared on the master screen just seconds after the students sent them via texts and the web. These instant responses allowed for the instructor's assessment of the class and also allowed the students to view and engage with their peers' ideas.

Discussion and Future Research

Based on this research, Poll Everywhere is very easy for students to use; students can respond via their cell phones or other mobile devices that they have immediate access to and are already comfortable using. Poll Everywhere is similar to the iclicker in that both technologies allow for instant responses to posed questions; however only through Poll Everywhere can educators ask open-ended questions and receive longer, more in-depth student responses. Poll Everywhere mobile response technology can be an effective replacement for iclickers.

Through pre– and post-surveys and technology-integrated activities in ENGL 150 and WMNS 301, the data showed that students have a high comfort level with using Poll Everywhere even though the technology was initially unfamiliar. Students' comfort levels with Poll Everywhere had a positive and direct correlation to students' familiarity and enjoyment with using cell phones and other mobile devices. Poll Everywhere offers an easy and affordable way for instructors to embrace the rapidly advancing mobile technology world, effectively integrating these advancements and student interests into higher education learning.



Sources and Acknowledgments

This research could not have been done without the resources provided by www.polleverywhere.com, the Blugold Fellowship program, Office of Research and Sponsored Programs, the Center for Excellence in Teaching and Learning, and the Learning and Technology Services. A special thank you to professors Traci Thomas-Card and Dr. Audrey Fessler for allowing us to integrate our research in their classes.

University of Wisconsin Eau Claire