Learning Technology Toolkit: Spotlight on Classroom Recordings

The students’ situation:
The average professor speaks at 120-25 words per minute, but students write around 20 words per minute. Writing faster affects attentiveness.

~ Multiple sources

A solution – classroom recordings or lecture capture
EDUCAUSE Learning Initiative (ELI) succinctly explains lecture capture:

Lecture capture systems include a suite of software applications with specifications for preferred hardware, which typically consists of items such as a camera and a microphone that are available in classrooms. These applications integrate with audiovisual hardware to capture a lecture. Pushing a single button is enough to activate turnkey systems and begin capturing a lecture. Recordings can be viewed on the web or in formats compatible with MP3 players and portable video devices.

(EDUCAUSE, 2008, para. 1)

Why embrace it?

1. Enhance student learning through review and repeat: Students’ learning benefits, indeed in some cases depends, on repeated viewings of course content – the ultimate study aid:
   a. additional chances to digest post-class allows for divergent thinking without losing the linear progression of the lecture
   b. opportunities to preview difficult course concepts promotes easier understanding during class time and/or deeper discussions (i.e. the flipped or inverted classroom).

2. Flexibility and accessibility: Capturing lecture content optimizes flexibility and accessibility in learning, having the potential to resolve conflicts with family and work responsibilities. Allow students to access learning experiences when and where they want it – at home on the computer; on the bus to work with an iPad; on a Smartphone in the doctor’s office.

3. Create community of practice: Create shareable content and promote a community of practice across programs and disciplines.

Researched benefits to students

Benefit 1 - Improved student retention: Sonic Foundry compiled and presented 20 universities’ and colleges’ independent research into the impact of lecture capture. The percentages finding lecture capture “a valuable resource” that “helps students achieve their educational goals” and “improves students’ overall experience and retention” ranged from 87.5-100% (Sonicfoundry, 2011).

Benefit 2 - Give students options for learning how and when they wish: The University of Wisconsin-Madison’s latest lecture capture research involved 7,500 undergraduate and graduate students where an overwhelming 82 percent of students preferred courses that offer online lectures over traditional classes that do not include an online lecture component (Veeramani, 2008).

Benefit 3 – Students have increased control over their learning: Of particular note are the affordances lectures recorded for EFL and non-traditional students (Cooke et al., 2012; Simpson, 2006). Simpson’s research includes student reflections beyond the benefit of convenience to empowerment. “Asynchronous access was valued as much for empowering the learner with control of the lecture as it was for the issue of convenience” (p.527). Students of today are no
longer consumers of information; they expect to participate in, influence, and control their own learning experiences that take place in lives that are more hectic and varied than ever before.

**Considering the common caveats**

**Caveat 1 - Attendance:** A typical concern is that students will stop attending class in favour of watching the archived class recording, but the consensus is that it does not happen, or at least not to a noticeable degree. Al Ducharme, Associate Dean at University of Central Florida, a leader in hybrid and online education, states: “The truth is, students are going to access the content they paid for in the most convenient way...For 30 years we’ve been offering recorded classes and people still attend” (McClure, 2008, p. 60).

**Caveat 2 - Constructivist teaching and learning:** Since post-secondary education is moving away from the lecture and embracing more active learning strategies, where does lecture capture fit in the new paradigm? Overall, your learning environment strives to be active and engaging. However, there remains course content suited to a straight-forward lecture with concepts where many students would benefit from additional opportunities to review and reflect. Capturing lecture content is also a main component of the new move to the inverted or flipped classroom. Prior to class, students gain an understanding of the basic concepts/issues/techniques, but in-class activities delve more deeply and extend their learning (e.g. TED-Ed, Khan Academy).

**Caveat 3 - Intellectual Property and Copyright:** EDUCAUSE admits, “a complicating element of lecture capture is ambiguity over who is responsible for providing the recording resources and who owns the intellectual property once the recording has been made. Using these systems for classes, conferences, and guest speakers might require a legal release, particularly when lecture capture depends on a complex infrastructure provided by the organization” (2008, para. 11). Please review the communications from administration for clarification and note the differences between college and university policies, both in Canada and the United States, on this issue if doing your own environmental scan.

**Gauging your readiness**

As with all educational technologies and strategies, faculty members need to balance: benefits to students; their own ability and willingness to use the method/strategy; and institutional goals.

**Facilitating faculty use**

Mohawk College is mindful in its adoption of lecture capture. Inter-departmental consultation and communication is a focus along with research into best practices. The College recognizes, “just as in the pyramid of Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs where the physiological and then safety needs must be met before higher level needs are met, the same holds true for lecture capture. Faculty must learn how to use the lecture capture system and then the technical fundamentals before advancing to integrating interactivity and improved learning outcomes” (Martyn, 2009, para. 14). For information on the process, please contact Jenn Horwath, Project Manager (jenn.horwath@mohawkcollege.ca).

**On the horizon**

Social media and lecture capture converge!


2. “At Carleton University (Ottawa, Canada), a technology team devised a video mashup tool called Video Notes that lets students personalize recorded lectures by tagging, editing, and annotating them. Even better, they can share their results. We got the idea from similar tools that let sports enthusiasts make their own highlight reels of NBA games, says Carol Miles, head of the educational development center. The sharing component is wiki-like, with different people contributing to one mashup to make one study tool. Passive watchers become engaged and decide what is critical.” Carleton professors watch the mashups to see what students deemed essential and what they cut out, helping them determine their instructional prowess” (Ullman, 2010, p. 74). [http://videonotes.carleton.ca/](http://videonotes.carleton.ca/) will give you a sense of the tool, but without a login you can’t really demo.
References


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1 Mediasite was the platform used for this third-party research. However, functionality does not differ among the common lecture capture solutions.