

## Are Students Learning in Your Online Course?




In this issue of Online Teaching Coaching newsletter, we explore how to use **Classroom Assessment Techniques (CATs)** to get just-in-time feedback from your students about their learning.

CATs are brief non-graded or low-stakes activities used for assessment & feedback from students. CATs can tell you about students' understanding, skills & knowledge, and also their reactions to instructional methods & course design. You then can use results and feedback from CATs to guide just-in-time changes or adjustments needed to improve learning in your online course.

### USING CLASSROOM ASSESSMENT TECHNIQUES (CATS) IN YOUR ONLINE COURSE

Here are steps to plan and use CATs for just-in-time feedback about student learning during your course.

(Adapted from "Classroom Assessment Techniques Teaching Guide" by Vanderbilt University Center for Teaching, Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial 4.0 International License) 



View the CATs infographic [online](#) | Check Out [Classroom Assessment Techniques](#) (Stearns Center)

#### Learn More about Using Classroom Assessment Techniques Online

- Bergquist, E. and Holbeck, R. (2013, September 23). [Using Classroom Assessment Techniques: A Proactive Approach for Online Learning](#). *Faculty Focus*, Magna Publications.
- Cross, T. (2016, October 14). [Online Discussion Forums as Assessment Tools](#). *Faculty Focus*, Magna Publications.

## Examples of CAT Activities for Feedback about Students' Learning Online

(Click on the name of each activity to learn more)

### Exit Tickets

**Exit Tickets** can help you quickly assess student understanding of specific concepts. What concepts do students feel they've mastered and what they may still find challenging or unclear?

For **asynchronous online course**, create CAT activity at the end of a module using Blackboard survey tool.

For **synchronous online courses**, create a poll in Zoom or Blackboard Collaborate Ultra to check students' understanding of important concepts during the class session.

### KWL

**KWL** is acronym for "what you **know**, what you **want** to know, what you have **learned**".

For **asynchronous online course**, KWL can be done in a Blackboard discussion forum, with students sharing their KWL for a specific week or module. Review the student postings, and then revisit important concepts with the class.

For **synchronous online course**, use Zoom breakout rooms for students to discuss KWL. Then have groups report-out KWL with the entire class.

### Muddiest Point

"**Muddiest Points**" are concepts that are unclear or confusing to students. At appropriate intervals during your course, consider having students each identify their "Muddiest Point". Use the list of "Muddiest Points" to guide possible changes in your course and teaching.

For **asynchronous online course**, create a "Muddiest Point" discussion forum in Blackboard. Set up the forum so that students don't see others' postings until after they post first.

For **synchronous course**, prompt students to post their "Muddiest Point" in the chat area during a Zoom class session.

Encourage students to help each other to clarify their "Muddiest Points" in the discussion forum or in the real-time session.

### One-Sentence Summary

Want a quick snapshot of what students are learning and understanding in your course? Have students prepared a one-sentence summary. You can ask for one-sentence summary of what they've learned to check for their understanding of important concepts. You can use this CAT after they've viewed a video or completed a reading, activity or assignment.

For **asynchronous online course**, have students post their one-sentence summaries as brief videos into a Blackboard discussion, using tools such as [Harmonize](#) or [VoiceThread](#). ([Submit request](#) to Stearns Center Digital Learning for licenses to access to these tools in Blackboard.)

In **synchronous online course**, have students post their one-sentence summaries to Zoom chat at the same time, creating a "[chat waterfall](#)". Then read some of the chat postings to the class; save the chat and share with students after the session. Review offline to check their understanding and learning.

### Contact Us!

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