



The Intersection of Ethical Decision-Making Modules and Classroom Response Systems in Business Education

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Abstract

This paper supports the idea that cutting-edge classroom technology tools can blend seamlessly with “old school” teaching techniques, and produce a higher quality of student learning. More specifically, it discusses how Classroom Response Systems (CRS) provide the crucial classroom ingredient for frank ethical discussions in business courses: Anonymity. To teach ethics in business, I use a module entitled Ethical Decision-Making in Employment Contract Negotiations (a business scenario fraught with ethical dilemmas), and ask questions which challenge students’ moral codes and levels of empathy. With an old school “raise your hand” feedback method, there is a high probability that students will not provide candid responses (or they may not respond at all), for fear of what peers and/or the professor may think. Alternatively, by utilizing CRS, I get anonymous feedback and 100% class participation. However, there is an ongoing debate in academia on whether Clicker (Hardware) Technologies should be utilized or the emerging Free Application Technologies. The former is an effective tool, yet it is expensive for students to purchase and their professors may use different devices in class. On the other hand, all of my students bring a smartphone, tablet, or laptop to class, thus permitting the use of free CRS apps. These apps are easy to use and are equipped with multiple choice, short answer, and true/false questions/polling features. The results of each question are instantly viewable by students on the classroom projection screen, whether the professor uses a computer or a document camera to project data from a smartphone or tablet. In sum, this paper details my model to teach ethics, which is adaptable across the curriculum. The model is divided into three sections: (1) CRS student reaction multiple choice questions on ethics, leverage, and empathy, prior to discussing the Ethical Decision-Making in Employment Contract Negotiations module; (2) Introduction and discussion of the module; and (3) CRS post-module reinforcement multiple choice questions which assess what students learned about themselves. Finally, this paper addresses the classroom limitations of merging traditional teaching methods with app technology, most particularly when the technology fails.