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Engaging Students in Asynchronous Online Courses

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Background

- Assistant Professor, Leadership Education, WSU
- Served 21 years as a PK-12 district leader
- Served five years as a high school administrator
- Taught for five years at the secondary level
- Taught graduate courses since 1995
- Have been developing virtual learning courses since 1997

Engaging Students is Essential

LA SCHOOL REPORT

NEWS

More than half of students are not tuning in to online classes, informal teacher survey shows

Laura Fay | April 20, 2020

92% of Southeast MN Teachers report not being prepare for remote learning

Forthcoming study, Waterbury, T & Champa, T.

Google Survey for Feedback

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSeIetomSrufEmhmoHbntXd7LbnDcwBPHst2jYwloi45fq_jgg/viewform?usp=sf_link

What to Do?

Build engaging instruction:

- ✓ Use video
- ✓ Modularize course material
- ✓ Provide for choice
- ✓ Interact and provide feedback
- ✓ Provide for peer interactions
- ✓ Provide synchronous opportunities

Engaging Video

- ✓ Micro-lectures
- ✓ Video introductions
- ✓ Video feedback

Why Video

- ✓ Gives students more control
- ✓ Students generally prefer videos to written resources
- ✓ Connects more efficiently with students
- ✓ Make sure you show your face; it personalizes the videos!

Micro - Lectures

- ✓ 1- 3 videos per module
- ✓ Aim for 5-to-10-minute videos. *Seven minutes was the target I have been given.*
- ✓ Video over PowerPoint/Google Slides is the most impactful
- ✓ Make sure you show your face

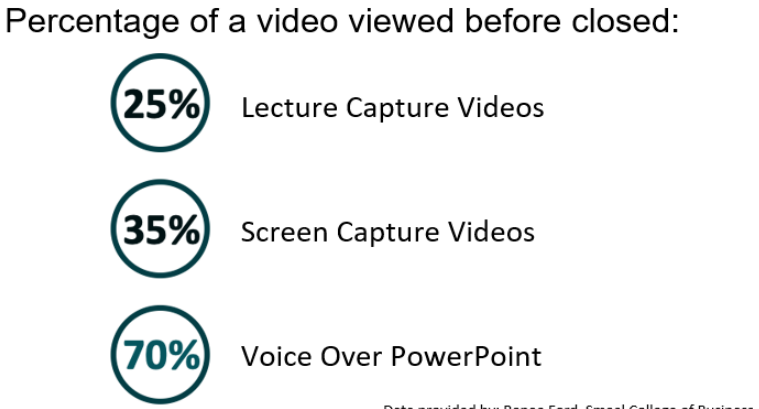


Chart from Penn State's Asycnhronous learning presention. August 2020. Available at https://psu.pb.unizin.org/engagingstudents/chapter/engaging-students-asynchronously/.

Video Introductions

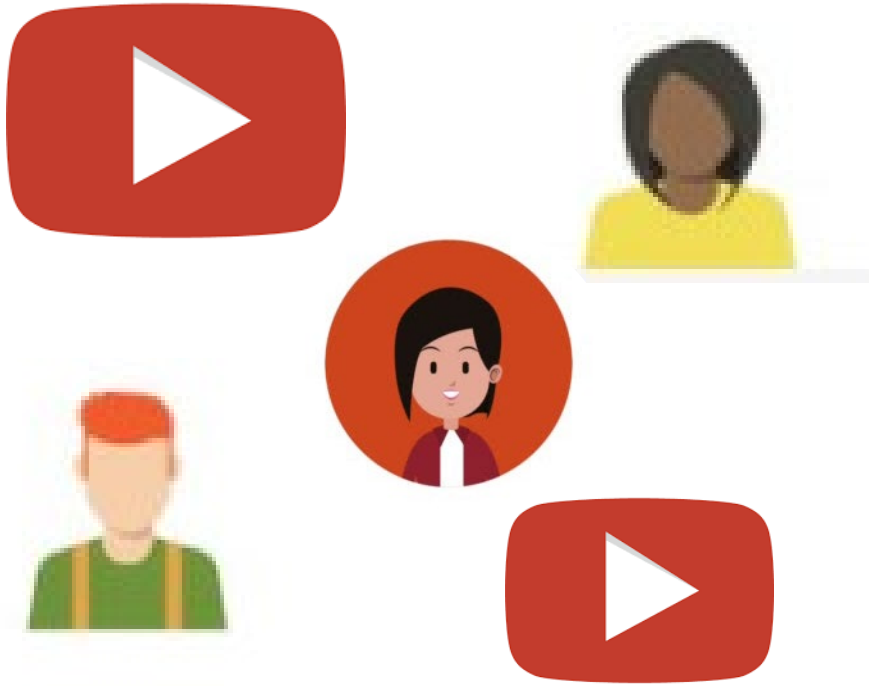
- 3-5 Minute Video
- Gives students a chance to show their personalities
- Builds a stronger fellowship among the students

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tJ7W-p2QpPA&feature=youtu.be

Introductions: What Teachers Thought

Using helped to engage students and to help the faculty get to know the students as individuals.

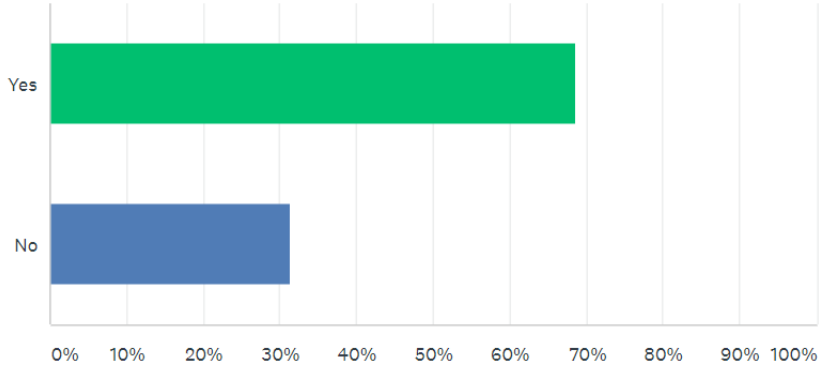
Some faculty stated they returned to the videos throughout the course as a way to remind themselves of the students' backgrounds and interests.



Student Feedback

Do you find the video introductions helpful as a way to get to know each other?

Answered: 35 Skipped: 1



Simple PD Task

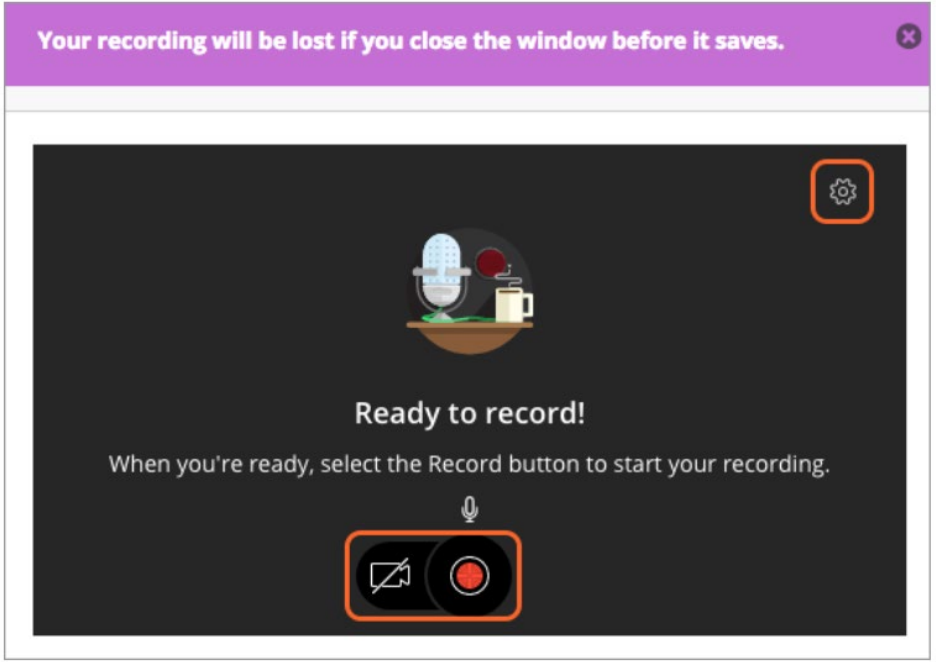
Ask your teachers to take their phone an create a 1–2-minute video introduction to share with the rest of the class.

This gets teachers over their initial fear of making a video and posting it

Prompt: How are you currently using video within your online courses? What are your favorite tools to use?

Post the URL of your video introduction so I can see who was watching?

Video Feedback is available in most LMSs



Sample Videos & Feedback

- Sample Student Video

Some Student Feedback

- Laura and Jill's feedback

Instructor Feedback

- Tanya Skaleki's insights
- Jessica Cook discusses the impact of choice

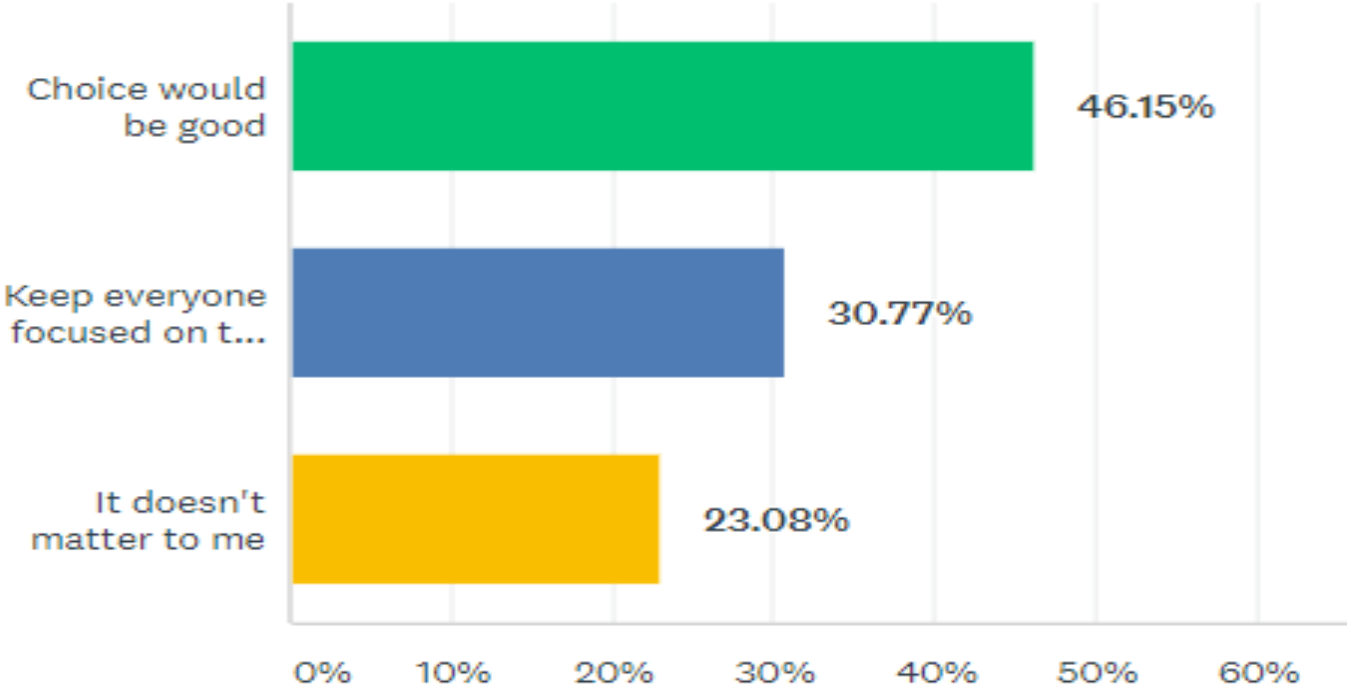
Modularize the Content

- ✓ Short sections of material are easier for students to manage
- ✓ Allows for easier differentiation
- ✓ Can be more easily gamified with badges, etc.
- ✓ Makes updating sections to keep them current easier
- ✓ Checklists in some LMSs allow students to track their progress within the course

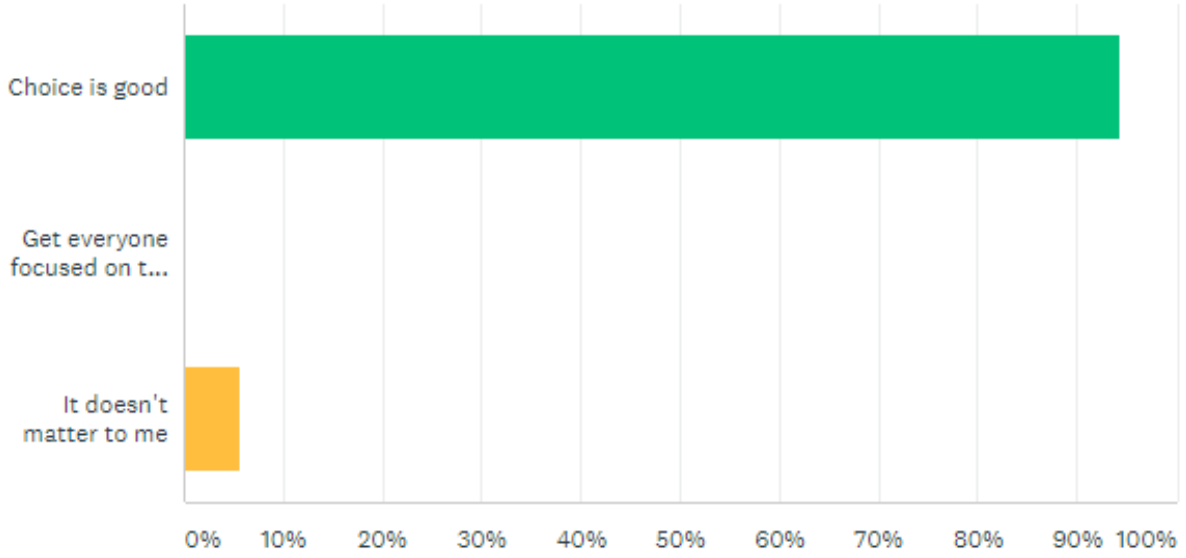
Everyone likes Choice

- ✓ Allow multiple prompts for discussion threads so students can choose to which they want to respond
- ✓ Multiple assignment options
  - ✓ Often *Select 2 of 5*
- ✓ Provide multiple content options

Gathered Student Input



After Exposure to Choice



Asynchronous Collaboration:

Set Expectations

1. Intent
2. Response methods
3. Start simple
4. Plan interactions
5. Consistency & relevancy

Create Meaningful Prompts

1. Aim to prompt variety in students' responses
2. Ask "why" or "what if"
3. Ask for pros/cons
4. Invite analysis of a scenario or real world problem
5. Seek examples or applications
6. Seek possible solutions to a problem or concern

Slide from Penn State's Asycnhronous learning presention. August 2020. Available at https://psu.pb.unizin.org/engagingstudents/chapter/engaging-students-asynchronously/.

Sample Prompt with Choice

Please provide your initial response to each question by Wednesday at 11:59 p.m. so you and your classmates will have time to reply by the Sunday 11:59 p.m. deadline.

Please address two of the following:

- What school of educational philosophy appears to be behind legislative changes to curricula?
- What are your thoughts regarding how well your school has aligned to the CCSS?
- Looking back to last week, do you favor process or content when developing curriculum? Please provide examples to support your opinion.

Maintain a Presence

- ✓ Check into the course every day
- ✓ Interact in the discussion forums
- ✓ E-mail students with positive feedback
- ✓ Include your face and voice within the course as often as possible
- ✓ Post a welcome video

Some Thoughts on Feedback

https://www.ecampusnews.com/2020/10/29/strategies-for-individualized-feedback-during-pandemic-learning/

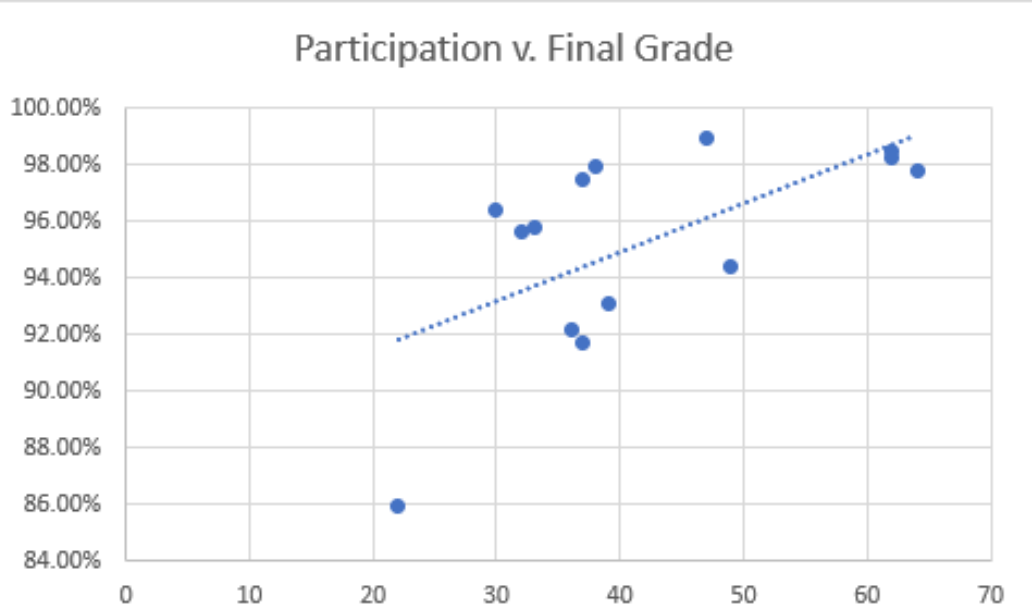
Provide your ideas via the Google Survey document

ABCs of Discussion Posts

- ✓ Acknowledge the student's input. A quick response by the instructor helps to begin the interaction with the students and keeps them motivated.
- ✓ Build on students' ideas by adding content, perspectives, experience, reference to the readings, etc.
- ✓ Conclude with a focused follow-up question as a way to tie off the conversation with all students. I like to use a provocative question that facilitates critical thinking that goes beyond the facts.

From https://elearningindustry.com/abcs-high-quality-online-discussions

Maintain a Presence



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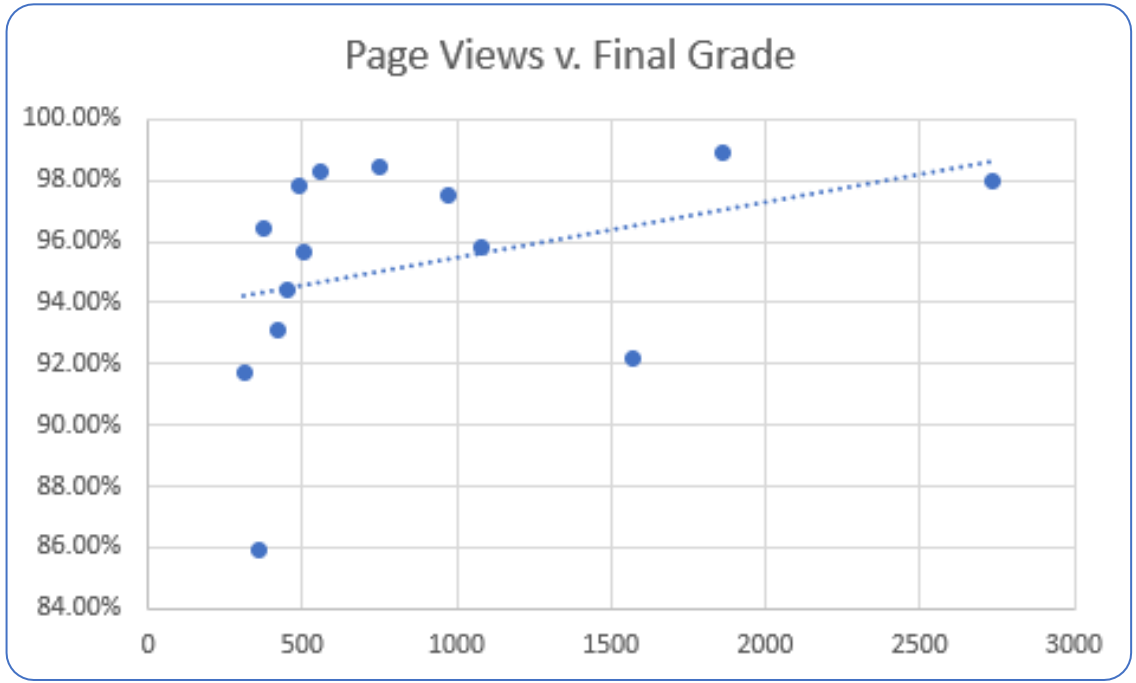
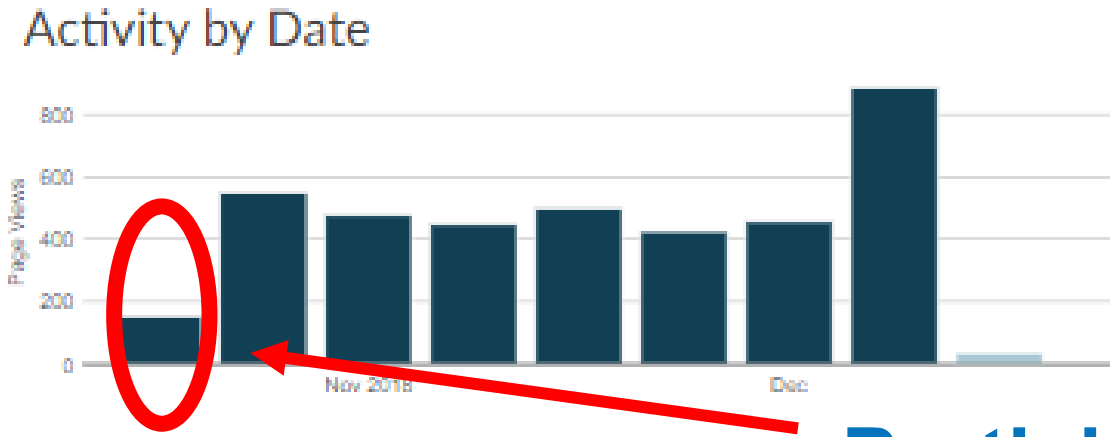


Provide a Course Preview Period



Participated during Course Preview

Provide for Peer Interactions

- ✓ Build the discussion rubric to require student responses to each other
- ✓ Match students for peer review assignments
- ✓ Encourage group work
- ✓ Provide backchannel options

Up Front Survey

?

What are three things I can do this semester to help build your confidence and ensure your success?

Back Channels

- ✓ Twitter
- ✓ Polling & Survey software
- ✓ Answer Garden
- ✓ Google SlideShare backchannel

- ✓ Zoom's chat is a synchronous option

Synchronous Opportunities

Synchronous Opportunities

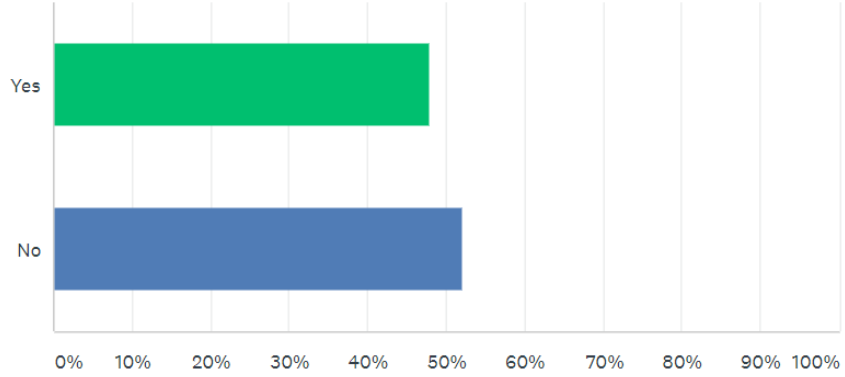
These meetings help me connect with you and my classmates. These connections motivate me to extend myself on the discussion board posts. The meetings are also good springboards for the weekly writing assignments.

Although online independent study really fits my career/lifestyle with my family at this time, nothing can replace the face-to-face conversation and thought process you get when talking outloud. I really appreciate these meetings and having them to "add" to what we are discussing, reading, researching, and experiencing.

Synchronous Opportunities

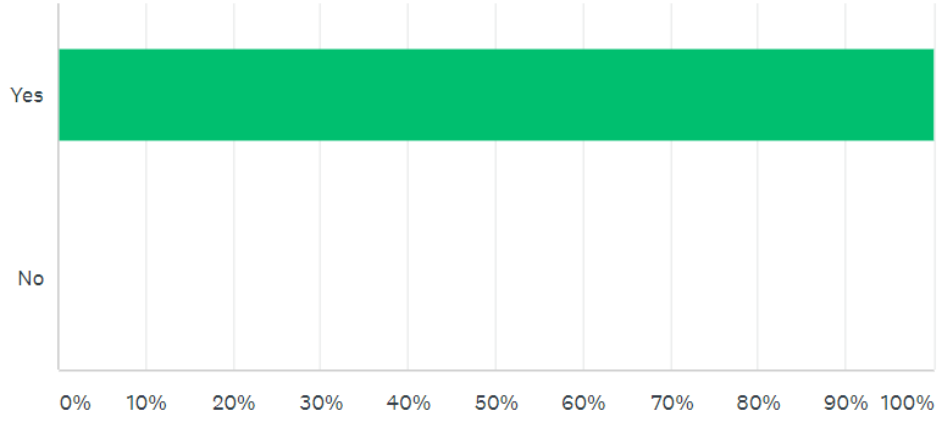
Would you like to have optional Zoom meeting times for reviewing the week's materials, getting questions answered, etc.?

Answered: 23 Skipped: 13



Synchronous Opportunities

Do you feel the optional Zoom sessions are helpful?



Easter Eggs

Hide them:

- ✓ In the syllabus
- ✓ In micro-lectures
- ✓ In other videos
- ✓ At the end of announcements
- ✓ In assignment descriptions

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Engaging students in asynchronous online courses

Remember to evaluate my session !

Complete this session's survey within the event listing.

An auto - generated certificate of attendance with credit hours will be emailed to you following the event.

Thank You

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