

Assessment of Learning in Large Classes Using the Playing Card Model

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Goals for the Presentation

- Share a model for teaching large groups
 - Promotes student engagement and cooperative learning
 - Minimizes faculty time spent on classroom management and grading
- Provide you with the tools to use the model
 - Folders with sample materials to review
 - Email access to all the files you will need
 - Demonstration of the method

Objectives for Students

- Learn from one another through group process
- Manage their own learning experience
- Fully participate in classroom activities
- Stay on task

Objectives for Teachers

- Spend less time on classroom management
- More fully engage with students
- Do quick assessments of student performance, with on-the-spot corrections
- Easily monitor activity within groups, including learning and group dynamics

Methods for the Workshop

- Describe the Playing Card Model
- Demonstrate the process
- Tips on grading
- Share evaluations
- Question and answer session
- Sign up for materials

Rationale

- Difficult to teach classes of over 100 in auditorium style classroom
 - Students feel lost in the crowd
 - They find it hard to ask questions or offer opinions
 - Tend to skip class, and taking roll is a pain
 - Those sitting in the back of the room tend to be disruptive
 - Group work is difficult...too many groups!
 - Grading can be a huge burden

Cooperative Learning Model

Felder, Brent, Millis, & Cottell, 1998

- Based on research and best practices
- Structured cooperative group work increases learning by one-half standard deviation
- Benefits include...
 - Cognitive growth
 - Academic achievement
 - Better attendance
 - Social competence
 - Greater harmony in multi-ethnic classrooms
 - More enthusiasm for the subject matter

What students need

- To feel connected to the teacher
- Structured interactions with peers
- Exposure to diverse perspectives
- Stimulating class sessions
- Active learning
- Prompt feedback
- Monitoring of their progress

Playing Card Model

- Students are assigned to groups (4 per group)
 - Use student records to mix them up
- Each student in the group is assigned a suit
 - ♥ ♦ ♣ ♠
- Each group is assigned a card (Ace-King)
- This accommodates 52 students; use folder colors to expand to larger class sizes
- Each student in class has a unique identifier:
 - Three of hearts in the yellow folders
 - Five of spades in the blue folders

Folders

- Each group has a folder
- The folders have...
 - A Tent Card
 - A Roll Sheet
 - Yellow Role Cards
 - Quiz Cards
 - Handout: Folder Organization
 - Handout: Role Assignments
- Each set of folders (color) has a tote bag
- Student work is collected and distributed in the folders

Roles

- Each student has a role in the group that rotates each week...
 - Folder monitor
 - Recorder
 - Discussion leader
 - Spokesperson
- If a student is absent, others in the group have to do double duty
- Please choose one of these roles in your group
- The folder monitor will get us started

- **Folder Monitor**

- Open the folder for your group
- Put the tent card on the table
- Give out the yellow Role Cards
- Find the Role Sheet
- Find the Role Assignments Sheet
- Hand out the take-home packets to members of your group

- **Recorder**

- Check Role Assignment Sheet to identify the suit for each person in your group
- Take roll...Record each person's name under the appropriate suit

- **Group members**

- Read your role card to see what your responsibilities are for today

How it works...typical class

- Folder monitor
 - Picks up folder, set up tent card
 - Distributes role cards to group members
 - Distributes any materials handed back
- Recorder
 - Monitors attendance
 - Takes notes for weekly email report
- Discussion leader
 - Looks at the activities for the day and figures out how to keep everyone on time and on task
- Spokesperson
 - Gets quiz cards ready and prepares to take notes for the oral report
- Everyone is ready to go, and I start class

Activities

- I have at least one activity each class period
 - Break it up with video clip and discussion
 - Controversial issues (e.g., gay marriage)
 - Self-assessment and sharing
 - Case studies (e.g., what would you do if...)
 - Pros and cons
 - Sharing of personal experiences related to the topic
- If the topic is important and you want everyone to pay attention, draw cards to determine the spokesperson

Try it...

- Discussion: (5 minutes)
 - What is the largest class that you have ever taught?
 - What were the biggest challenges you had with that class?
- Discussion leader...
 - Make sure everyone has time to share
 - Finish in 5 minutes
- Spokesperson...
 - Take notes and quickly summarize your group's feedback when I call on you

Weekly Quizzes

- I give un-graded MC/TF quizzes each week
 - Students take quiz and then discuss answers in group
 - Decide on one group answer
 - Spokesperson holds up quiz card when I ask for answer
 - Students learn from each other and I can see when class did not get something
 - Give instant feedback to clear up the confusion
 - I use similar questions on tests, so the quizzes also serve as a study guide

Grading

- I use two grade sheets
 - One organized by groups (for recording grades)
 - The other organized alphabetically (to find students quickly)
 - The grade sheet is self-calculating (available to you in Excel)
- Written assignments (5)
 - Turned in and returned in the folders
 - Put grade on last page to hide it
- Tests (3)
 - Use MC/TF and short answer
 - Use alternate forms of tests, color coded
 - Use Scantron for MC/TF
 - Turn in tests on table; return to students in folders
 - Set up tent cards so students know where to put different versions of test
 - Make sure students put name and group ID on all work

Evaluation of My Experience

- Every student is engaged in some activity every class period
- Activities, quizzes and weekly emails help me stay on top of things without a lot of grading
- I walk around during the activities which makes it more personal
- Students are much more engaged and verbal
- Grading of the assignments and exams is done by folder...always organized and in place
- I can quickly identify a student from the tent cards and groups...promotes accountability
- Test scores improved by an average of 5 points per student after adopting this process

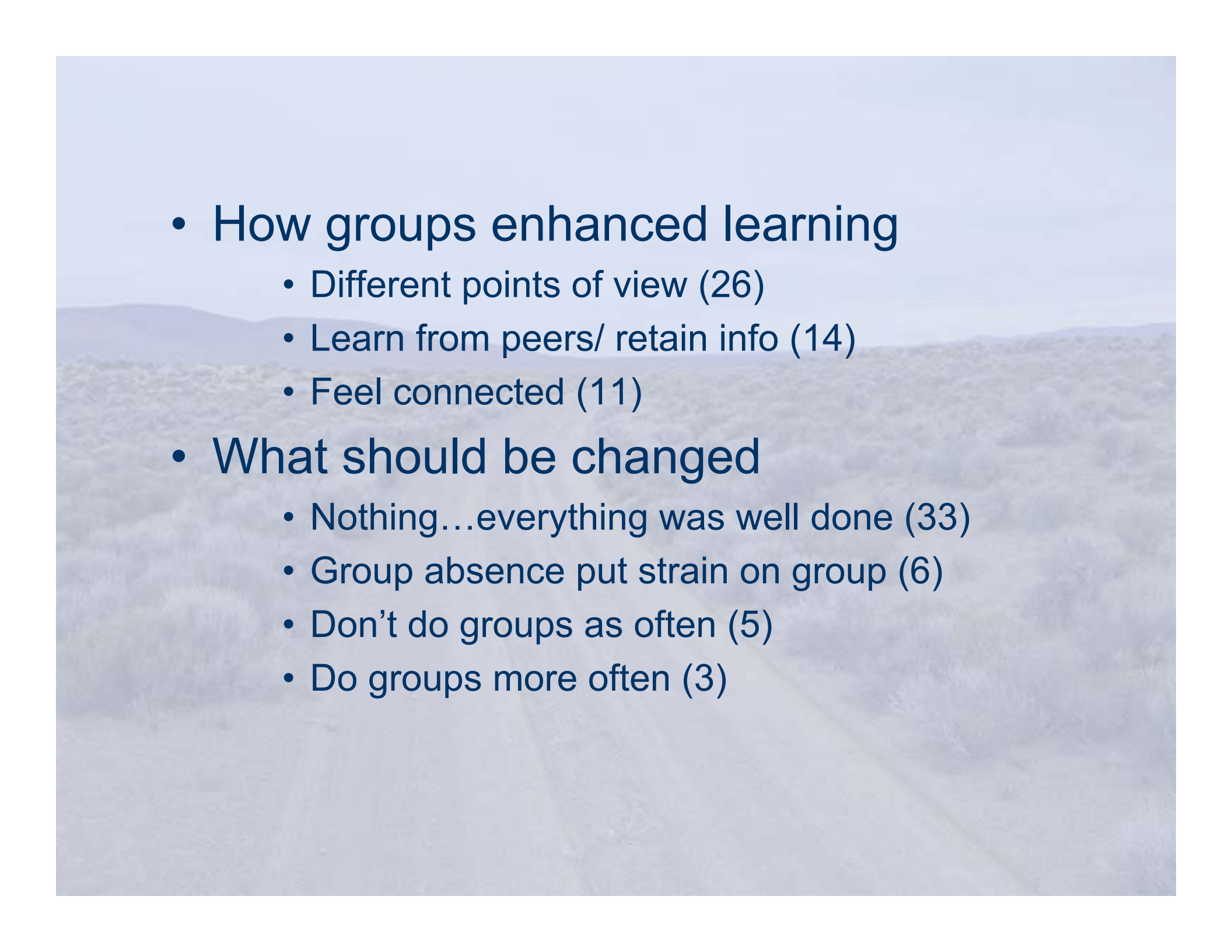
Formal Course Evaluation

- Student evaluations (1-5; 5 highest)
 - Course rating: 3.97 → 4.40
 - Overall rating: 4.16 → 4.53
- Also did an informal qualitative survey
 - What did you enjoy most about the class?
 - Did group experiences enhance your learning? How?
 - What parts of process worked best? Why?
 - If you did not like anything, what might work better?
 - Anything else you would like to tell me?

Course Feedback

(ranked frequencies; n=74)

- **Enjoyed most about class**
 - Lecture material (30)
 - Groups (17)
 - Teaching style (17)
- **What worked best**
 - Quizzes (21)
 - Interaction/involvement (20)
 - Learned more (14)
- **Didn't like about groups**
 - Liked it all (43)
 - Group roles (6)
 - Absences put strain on group (6)

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- How groups enhanced learning
 - Different points of view (26)
 - Learn from peers/ retain info (14)
 - Feel connected (11)
 - What should be changed
 - Nothing...everything was well done (33)
 - Group absence put strain on group (6)
 - Don't do groups as often (5)
 - Do groups more often (3)

Anything Else?

- It was fun and informative
- Brings issues to life
- Good learning experience
- Made me comfortable instead of scared
- Great class
- Changed my major to HDFS (5)
- Excited to major in this
- I will recommend this class to others

Wrap Up

- Any questions; suggestions; requests; comments?
- Feel free to email me: hilton@unr.edu
- Sign up sheet...I will send my self-calculating grade sheet and all forms to set up the folders
- Folder monitors...please return the folders to me

THANK YOU!