



Douglas Boin, Ph.D.
Department of History
Saint Louis University
3800 Lindell Boulevard
St. Louis, MO 63108

February 7, 2017
Final Report for Mini-Grant F16

On-Line Polling As A Way to Practice History-Based Skills in Large Lecture Courses

In the Spring 2016, I submitted a proposal to use PollEverywhere software in my large, introductory History class, *Origins of the World to 1500*. Poll Everywhere allows students to respond, in real time, to questions that I ask during my lectures. An added benefit is that the software allows instructors to run reports with a list of poll participants—in effect, giving me, through the metadata, an attendance report for my lectures.

The following tables were created to show the measurable impact of using PollEverywhere software in my Fall 2016 class. I recorded data for the second quiz of the semester (Quiz 2), for the first exam (Exam 1), and for the last quiz of the semester (Quiz 3). These graded activities took place approximately two weeks into the semester, four weeks into the semester, and six weeks into the semester. The tables are on the next page.

As the data shows, I saw a marked increase from F15 to F16 in the number of students who were more quickly ascending to the A and B level, which I would like to attribute broadly to the PollEverywhere software (motivating attendance, for example; and/or facilitating comprehension; and/or providing me, as the instructor, as sense of what kinds of questions were considered easy or difficult). What the data also shows is that, once students did reach these higher grade levels, they reached a performance plateau. In fact, the number of As, Bs, Cs, and Ds for the second exam were virtually identical between semester F15 and F16. The number of those grades for the final course were virtually identical, as well.

In conclusion, although it is disappointing that the F16 introductory class could not ultimately pull away from their F15 peers in terms of performance, I was pleased that the overwhelming number of the F16 class was able to achieve a higher level of competency more quickly. I would use PollEverywhere again in this large, lecture format.

Douglas Boin, Ph.D.
Department of History
Saint Louis University

Appendices

Table 1			
A Comparison of “Quiz 2” Scores F15 and F16 (Quotation Passage and Image Identification)			
	Student Scores as Percentage of Class F15 ¹	Student Scores as Percentage of Class F16 + <i>Poll Everywhere</i> ²	Percentage Change F15 to F16
Grade of A (90-100)	9 students = 7 %	29 students = 23 %	+ 16%
Grade of B (80-89)	41 students = 31 %	57 students = 46 %	+ 15%
Grade of C (70-79)	53 students = 39 %	30 students = 24 %	- 15%
D and Below (60-0)	29 students = 22 %	9 students = 7 %	- 15%
	Number of students = 132	Number of students = 125	
¹ Quiz given after three lectures. ² Quiz given after three lecture and three uses of the Poll Everywhere platform.			

Table 2

Comparison of "Exam 1" Scores F15 and F16
(Multiple Choice, Quotation Passage, and Image Identification)

	Student Scores as Percentage of Class F15 ¹	Student Scores as Percentage of Class F16 + <i>Poll Everywhere</i> ₂	Percentage Change F15 to F16
Grade of A (90-100)	11 students = 9 %	27 students = 22 %	+ 13 %
Grade of B (80-89)	32 students = 26 %	36 students = 29 %	+ 3 %
Grade of C (70-79)	39 students = 31 %	37 students = 30 %	- 1 %
D and Below (60-0)	43 students = 34 %	23 students = 18 %	- 16 %
	Number of students = 125	Number of students = 123	

¹Exam given after six lectures.

²Exam given after six lectures and six uses of the Poll Everywhere platform.

Table 3

Comparison of Quiz 3 Scores
(Quotation Comparison and Image Comparison)

	Student Scores as Percentage of Class F15 ¹	Student Scores as Percentage of Class F16 + <i>Poll Everywhere</i> ₂	Percentage Change F15 to F16
Grade of A (90-100)	61 students = 50 %	58 students = 49 %	- 1%
Grade of B (80-89)	41 students = 33 %	42 students = 35 %	+ 2%
Grade of C (70-79)	13 students = 11 %	13 students = 11 %	No Change
D and Below (60-0)	6 students = 5 %	6 students = 5 %	No Change
	Number of students = 123	Number of students = 119	

¹Quiz given after three lectures.

²Quiz given after three lecture and three uses of the Poll Everywhere platform.