



## 10 Strategies for Engaging Learners with iPads and Other Mobiles

### Overview

This document outlines 10 strategies for engaging your learning with the iPad. These strategies are designed around the assumption that students have an iPad or another mobile device that can be utilized effectively. This is not a how-to document; we simply describe some of the types of activities and strategies that may be useful in your course.

### What is an iPad?

The iPad is a type of tablet computer that can perform such functions as taking pictures, playing music, recording and viewing videos, and browsing the Internet. Features of the iPad can greatly be enhanced by installing third party applications which can be downloaded from Apple's App Store. These features can be commandeered by faculty members for instructional purposes. This document contains third party applications links that will take you to App Store if you are browsing this document on an iPad.

*"Mobile technologies have the potential to fundamentally change the ways that learning and teaching are carried out, greatly favoring constructivist and collaborative approaches to learning, and flexible and adaptive approaches to teaching" (Manuguerra & Petocz, 2011)*

### 10 Strategies for Engaging Your Learning

#### Strategy #1: Have Your Students Explore

*The basics:* Send your students to problem based exploratory field trips. Give them an authentic problem to explore and guide your students to investigate this problem using their iPads. You may require students to document their activities by taking pictures, shooting videos, writing notes and recording their reflections.

*Variations on the approach:* Divide your students into small groups to investigate a real-life problem. Using iPad students can share their notes and pictures with you and other group members to facilitate working in groups. Note that iPads are location aware devices. This means that you may set up notifications or reminders based on specific location to improve student experiences.

#### Strategy #2: Flip Your Course

*The basics:* Use your iPad to create interactive lectures that your students can watch before the class time so that you can spend more time interacting with your students instead of lecturing.

*Variations on the approach:* You may create digital lectures and you may upload these materials to D2L for your students to watch before the class time. These lectures can be embedded with interactive

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features such as quizzes, illustrations, and popup notes. Have your students review these materials before your class time so that you can reserve your class time for discussions and questions.

### **Strategy #3: Employ Peer Instruction Strategies with Student Response Systems**

*The basics:* "Peer Instruction involves students in their own learning during lecture and focuses their attention on underlying concepts" (Mazur & Hilborn, 1997). Peer instruction can be an effective way to engage learners. Combined with iPads and student response systems, it is possible to create highly effective learning environments. Have students review your class materials and submit their questions via a student response system. In class time, based on students responses, pose your students a challenging question. Give your students some time to think then have them discuss their answers in small groups. After discussions, you may use again a student response system to answer the same challenging question to see if any change. Your students and you can use iPads to facilitate discussions and to submit their responses.

Variations on the approach: You may adjust your teaching based on the responses you received from your students. Students may use an iPad app or our own web-based student response system (ChimeIn) to submit their responses.

Tools to power this strategy:

- [Polleverywhere](#) (MNSU web-based student response system)

### **Strategy #4: Digital Storytelling Activities**

*The basics:* "Digital stories are short vignettes that combine the art of telling stories with multimedia objects including images, audio, and video," (Rossiter & Garcia, 2010). You may have your students convey events in words, images, and sounds by working collaboratively to create a digital story and share their stories using iPads. Examples of digital stories

### **Strategy #5: Teach Straight from Your iPad**

*The basics:* Use your iPad in the class to teach and engage your students with your content. The iPad is a portable device with wireless Internet connection and this allows you to create more interactive, collaborative and mobile learning environments.

*Variations on the approach:* With your iPad, move around the classroom and interact with your students. This means that you are no longer restricted to the podium by using your iPad as a remote computer in the classrooms. This way you can check your documents, share presentation and browse the Internet. You may also share your content with your students.

### **Strategy #6: Documented Problem Solving Activities in Class**

*The basics:* Documented problem solving is an active learning technique that require learners to document the steps they take in solving a problem. This method allows learners more aware of their learning and progress. You may ask students to keep track of the steps they take to complete your assignments to implement this strategy. Students may employ the iPad to document their activities. This

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documentation can be a note, audio or video describing the steps.

*Variations on the approach:* By sharing screens, you may see students progress as they complete the assignment. This will let you scaffold your students and give effective feedbacks when necessary.

### **Strategy #7: Provide your Students with Multiple Ways to Express Themselves**

*The basics:* One of the main purpose of assessments is to determine what a learner knows. To measure student learning can be difficult. An effective lesson planning involves learners to be assessed in multiple ways. Allow learners showcase their creativity. iPad can be a great tool for students to create learning artifacts that can be also used as assessment purposes.

*Variations on the approach:* Have your students complete a project in groups. Ask students to demonstrate their understanding in various formats. For instance, some groups may decide to present their ideas by creating movies or music or while others may select to design presentations, concept maps or e-books.

### **Strategy #8: Enhance Your Course by Integrating interactive Reference Apps into your Teaching and Learning Activities**

*The basics:* Enrich your course by providing your students with interactive audio, video, and interactive educational resources. Not only may these resources teach your students knowledge, they also enable your students to have social, historical, scientific and economic encounters.

*Variations on the approach:* These apps can be integrated in your course. Have students explore and investigate various resources and use these interactions to stimulate discussions in any discipline such as English, Geography, Science, Art or Word Languages.

### **Strategy #9: Have Your Students Explore Case Based Scenarios**

*The basics:* Case based teaching methods are common in higher education settings. Cases are real life problems designed to stimulate discussions and collaboration by bringing real life into student learning.

*Variations on the approach:* This strategy may be a part of your flipped course. Create a case that requires your students to reach a judgment or recommendations and have your students read or watch your case and ask them to come to the class prepared. Also include in pre-class activities, reports, news articles, original documents or artifacts about your case for students to review. All these activities can be prepared via your iPad. In class time, divide students into groups and guide discussions and invite active participation and innovative solutions to your case. Students in class may also use iPads to facilitate discussions and brainstorming.

### **Strategy #10: Teaching with Simulations and Games**

*The basics:* "...games [that] are both motivational and when well-designed can improve learning. ... well-designed simulations can offer instructional environments for practice and learning that are unavailable or

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unsafe in the workplace" (Clark & Mayer, 2008). Educational simulations and games promote active learning. Simulations and games can be great teaching techniques as they spark student interest and curiosity. They may engage learners in critical, evaluative and problem-solving thinking. An iPad can help you design games and simulations. Based on your objectives, you may create interactive and engaging simulations and games that can be used as a teaching tool. You may also ask your students to design simulations and games as a learning activity.

## References

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