Using Online Peer Assessment

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A long-standing problem...
Reasons to include peer assessment in university classes

1. Allow for higher-level, more-open tasks (*with no grading resources*)
2. Increase timeliness and amount of feedback that can be provided (*from reviews*)
3. Students develop their writing/reasoning skills via constructive criticism (*from reviewing*)
4. Students learn evaluation criteria (*as exam preparation*)
Use cases

• Class types
  – Large introductory (100 - 800+)
  – Many-section lab classes
  – Medium-sized intermediate
  – Small advanced / grad student

• Assignment types
  – Paragraph-long content-focused writing
  – 1 page overview (summary) documents
  – Evidence-based research / report writing
  – Group (mini or full) project reports
  – Grant / research proposals
  – Video presentations
Reasons to use online peer assessment

1. *Anonymity* enables honest feedback
2. *Accountability* tools enables full effort
3. *Diagnostics* improve teaching practice
Teacher view of rubric reliability

Reliability of the mean peer judgments for each dimension (based on an average of 3 ratings per document)

The stability of the mean rating on each dimension; it is influenced by 1) the consistency of peer ratings with each other and 2) the number of peer ratings per document.

Tip:
Go to high disagreement cases for the problematic dimensions to see what possible areas of disagreement might be. Low reliability can result from lack of variability across documents - the differences on this rubric are too subtle or uncommon.
Benefits of Peer Assessment

Peer ratings can have high validity

Sadler & Good (2006)

Benefits of Peer Assessment

First drafts stronger when written to peers

Benefits of Peer Assessment

Effects of providing feedback on own writing


ESL students wrote timed essays at pre and post

In between, 2 groups:

- Givers: provided comments on essays
- Receivers: used these comments to revise the essay
Benefits of Peer Assessment

Providing feedback improves own writing


Students wrote after...
- Reviewing 3 example papers
- Reading 3 example papers
- No reviewing or reading of example papers

![Bar chart showing draft quality after reviewing, reading, and just writing.]
Benefits of Peer Assessment

Providing feedback improves own writing

Benefits of Peer Assessment

More and better revisions in response to multiple peer feedback

Best practices

1. Do the 1st submission + 1st review in class
2. Require 4 reviews per document
3. Require back-evaluation step / Use review grades
4. Allow at least 3 days per step (ideal = 1 week)
5. Discuss conflict case in class (to build consensus)
6. Never give assignment with just spelling & grammar rubrics