

Digital Initiatives

Office of Innovation
and Technology

Fall 2015

Stanford
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF
EDUCATION

Using Google Forms to Pilot and Distribute Online Assessments

The Stanford History Education Group examines digital tools for measuring what learners do when they're online.

In a world where massive amounts of information and news are shared over the internet every day, how well do today's learners evaluate the social and political material they encounter online? To answer this, the Stanford History Education Group (SHEG) is developing and validating a bank of assessments measuring information literacy and civic engagement through projects funded by the Spencer Foundation and the Robert R. McCormick Foundation.



Over the summer, GSE-IT worked with SHEG Project Manager Teresa Ortega, and Sarah McGrew, a PhD student working with Sam Wineburg, to develop a platform for piloting, distributing, and disseminating digital assessments. They shared how they made the decision to use Google Forms for the project.

Q: WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO PUT THESE ASSESSMENTS ONLINE?

A: We are developing a bank of assessments for a range of ages and levels of complexity that address what learners do when they're online. The measures look at things like whether they read closely and evaluate sources, claims, and quality of evidence provided. So, it makes sense to administer the assessments in the same environment where students encounter online news and information.

We also think that creating and sharing the assessments in digital format will make educators more likely to use them. Our goal is for the assessments to be used by teachers and

students from across age groups. Many college courses are already online, and K12 schools are moving in that direction, so digital resources will have a longer use value there.

In addition, we think using web-based assessments will serve us by making pilot testing easier – instructors can send a URL to their students (rather than passing out and collecting papers in lecture halls or large classrooms), and we'll have their responses automatically entered and saved in one place.

Q: THERE ARE A VARIETY OF ONLINE SURVEY AND ASSESSMENT TOOLS AVAILABLE. WHAT FACTORS DID YOU CONSIDER IN CHOOSING A PLATFORM FOR THIS PROJECT?

A: We definitely wanted to find software that was easily accessible to middle, high school, and college teachers. Google products are already in use in a lot of classrooms, so building the assessments in Google Forms will mean that fewer teachers have to navigate new software in order to implement them.

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Because we want our digital assessments to have broad use and staying power, software sustainability and longevity were other important considerations for us. Some of the tools we found had hardware or browser dependencies, making them less practical to use across classrooms and different tech scenarios. We also looked at newer tools with some interesting features that Google Forms didn't have, but we had to weigh the risk of their being acquired, abandoned, or changing their pricing models – things that happen frequently to products from new companies and startups. In the end, Google Forms was the most reliable option.

Q: ANOTHER PRIORITY WAS DEVELOPING AN APPROACH WHERE STUDENTS' ASSESSMENT DATA ENDED UP IN THE RIGHT HANDS. CAN YOU SHARE ABOUT THIS?

A: The tricky part was that we needed something that would enable educators to administer our assessments and have their students' data go back to *them* instead of back to us. The technical process involves configuring the Google Form's sharing settings and having teachers create their own copy of the assessment in a very specific way so that when they circulate the assessment, their students' data is sent to their own Google Drive account. This is where you really helped us out--I don't think we would have been able to figure out how to use Google Forms in that way.

Q: WHAT ADVICE WOULD YOU GIVE TO OTHER RESEARCHERS OR EDUCATORS CONSIDERING THIS OR A SIMILAR APPROACH?

A: One thing is to invest some time in seeing what the full capacity of the tool is. We've found that even without all of the same features as other tools, we can still get at the same things through Google Forms.

We are also realizing that because we're learning how to use these digital assessments ourselves, we need to go a little bit slower in rolling them out. So, we're going to pilot test them at a small scale first just to see if they make sense, and then move into bigger samples of high school and college students.

Interested in using Google Drive in your courses or research? Email instructionalsupport@stanford.edu. To learn more about the Stanford History Group, visit sheg.stanford.edu.



A Place for Educational Technology Outside of the Classroom

GSE-IT has been advocating and supporting the use of education technology to emphasize communication, drive inquiry, and create engaging and personalized learning opportunities in teaching and learning contexts. Recognizing that these are also the right ingredients for successful workplace meetings and interactions, this summer we put these same software programs and apps to use in our team retreat.

To create a space for expression, relationship-building, and fun, we began with an icebreaker on Nearpod, an interactive presentation tool. In this activity, colleagues worked in pairs to envision and create something new out of two existing concepts.

Later, in order to foster meaningful conversations and generative processes, we worked in groups to analyze

perspectives, plan, and record videos using video production mobile phone apps. In this activity, the video itself was not the end product, but rather the lens through which to examine our group's work in new and refreshed ways. While watching the videos as a group, we discussed emerging ideas and themes.

Education technologies can add value to workplace interactions in the same ways that they do in the classroom. Leveraging the technologies we support in GSE courses in our team retreat enabled new formats for conversations, and offered new ways to connect with our meeting objectives and with each other. If you are interested in having GSE-IT plan or facilitate technology-enabled activities in an upcoming team meeting, email instructionalsupport@stanford.edu.

Promote Your Event

Submit your event at ed.stanford.edu/events to promote it on the GSE online event calendar.

To promote your event on GSE kiosks, please submit a request to Lyudmila Christie at lyudmila@stanford.edu.

TechLits

Find previous presentation materials and upcoming seminar details at gse-it.stanford.edu/training.

Canvas at GSE and Stanford

In 2013, the Graduate School of Education began exploring new learning management systems for GSE courses and ultimately selected and migrated to an open source version of the learning platform, Canvas. Last year, the Office of the Vice Provost for Teaching and Learning (VPTL) hosted an open pilot of Canvas and the Graduate School of Business began using Canvas for several of its education programs. Canvas is now available to the entire Stanford campus, and GSE has moved from its locally-hosted open source Canvas instance onto the University-wide system (at canvas.stanford.edu).

There are a few new tools now available to GSE Canvas users on the University platform:

- **Chat:** A chatroom tool for live discussion and interaction at a distance.
- **Conferences:** A video conferencing tool for instructors and students to conduct office hours or collaborate outside of class.
- **Collaborations:** A space for students and groups to create, share, and collaborate on GoogleDocs.
- **Mobile application:** Canvas apps (for iOS and Android) work on phones and tablets and provide instructors and students access to most Canvas features.



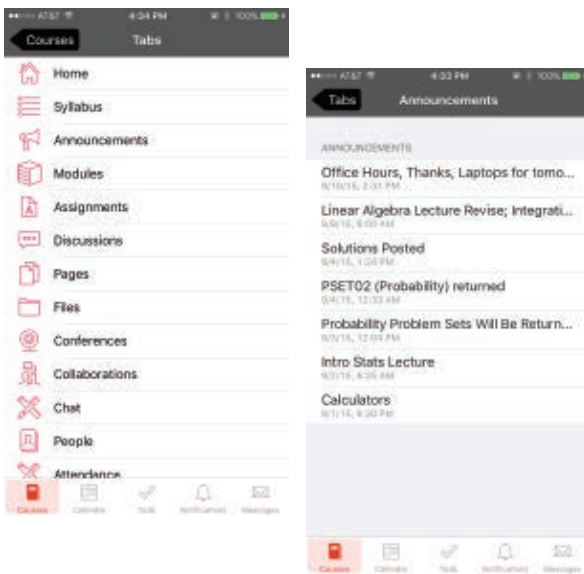
canvas

VPTL has launched gocanvas.stanford.edu, a resource for instructors and students with instructional materials and videos, announcements, upcoming events and workshops, and critical details about the University's timeline and process for transitioning to Canvas as its primary LMS. Meanwhile, VPTL and GSE-IT will continue to support courses in CourseWork through December 2016. Beginning in January 2017, CourseWork will run in archive mode and all new courses will be created in Canvas.

GSE-IT meets regularly with Canvas administrators and instructional designers from VPTL, GSB, and Continuing Studies in order to stay informed about platform feature updates, relevant University policies, and Canvas user practices, as well as to collaborate on the development of resource materials, presentations, and trainings.



Canvas is an easy-to-use, reliable and adaptable Learning Management System. Learn more at gocanvas.stanford.edu



New Edtech in GSE Courses

Ann Porteus and Candace Thille have transitioned from a hardware-based clicker system to PollEverywhere for formative assessment and peer learning in Introduction to Data Analysis and Interpretation (EDUC200A). They are also using SUClass (powered by OpenEdX) for the online component of this course.

David Labaree is also using PollEverywhere to catalyze discussion and dialogue in his History of School Reform: Origins, Policies, Outcomes, and Explanations (EDUC 220D/HISTORY 258E) and Proseminar 1 (EDUC 325A) courses.

Bruce McCandliss and Gillian Starkey are enabling students

to generate interactive video lessons using Zaption in their Cognitive Development in Childhood and Adolescence (EDUC 368). Students in the course use Zaption to add interactive elements, supplementary resources, and formative assessment questions to educational videos hosted on YouTube, Vimeo, Khan Academy, TED, and other platforms. They distribute the video lessons to their peers to watch and complete outside of class, and then use those responses to guide in-class discussions.



GSE-IT's Latest Offerings

GSE-IT regularly designs and leads courses, presentations, and workshops aimed at building technology literacy for education, research, and productivity tools. Our Fall Quarter events included:

"Assessing and Providing Feedback on Student Work in Canvas," presentation with VPTL's Kimberly Hayworth and Kristen Motzer for GSE TechLits, October 2015.

"Qualitative Data Analysis with Nvivo," guest lecture for Community-Based Research as Tool for Social Change: Discourses of Equity in Communities & Classrooms, Professor Arnetha Ball, November 2015.

"Web-Based Presentation Tools," workshop for GSE Academic Services Team, November 2015.

"Analysis Software for Qualitative Research," guest lecture for Qualitative Analysis in Education, Associate Professors Ari Kelman and Mitchell Stevens, November 2015, Stanford, CA.

"Google Drive Education 'Add-Ons' for Assessment and Document Management," workshop for GSE TechLits, October 2015.

"Collaboration and workflows for teams using Stanford.Box.com," workshop for the Center to Support Excellence in Teaching, October 2015.

"Mobile Technologies and Practices for Conducting Field Research," guest lecture for Stanford University, Policy, Organization, and Leadership Studies Seminar, Associate Professor David Brazer, October 2015.



"Building Digital Classroom Culture with Tech-Enabled Icebreakers," exhibitor at Stanford University's Academic Technology Expo, October 2015.

"Using Creative Work Responsibly: Copyright and Creative Commons," presentation with Stanford University Libraries' Mimi Calter for GSE TechLits, October 2015.

"Create, Collect, and Manage References with EndNote," workshop for GSE TechLits, October 2015.

"Comparison of Different Reference Management Tools," workshop for Stanford Center for Opportunity Policy in Education, October 2015.

"Stanford Data Security Policies and Resources," workshop for YouCubed New Staff Orientation, September 2015.

GSE-IT can deliver presentations and trainings to your students or work group. Take a look at some of our past offerings and inquire at gse-it.stanford.edu/training.

