HOW DO I CHECK FOR UNDERSTANDING ONLINE?

INTRODUCTION

One answer to these questions is to include frequent assessment opportunities in your online course. For example, short questions that provide immediate answers and descriptive feedback; doing so will not only engage students in the material, but will help guide student learning. Integrating questions in discussion forums, providing rubrics, and incorporating peer evaluations offer other valuable assessment opportunities. Frequent assessments throughout your course, preferably before major assignments or exams are due, will enable you to determine if students are tracking the material and will provide additional opportunity for you and your students to connect.

A CLOSER LOOK

Some Best Practices to keep in mind as you consider different assessment tools:

- Integrate frequent assessments.
- Provide descriptive feedback.
- Create forums that include key course concepts.
- Provide rubrics to help guide peer evaluation.

EXAMPLES

Assessment can take the form of questions designed to give instant feedback and are integrated throughout a course or embedded in videos or narrated presentations.

Embedded Questions

The first example shows a question that is embedded in a video. Students must answer to continue. Note the “Explanation” button that provides access to descriptive feedback.

Non-graded ‘formative’ assessments present low stakes and low risk to students, with the added benefit of providing ongoing feedback.
**Practice Exercise**

In this French course example, the instructor provides several practice exercises in every lesson, along with the answers. Although these exercises are not submitted, students can check their work, thus receiving immediate, correct feedback.

To learn the correct pronunciation of montagne, follow along in your textbook on page 202 while you listen to Prononcez bien!

Complete Allez-y! exercise A on page 203.

**Right-and-Wrong & Open-ended Questions**

In a narrated presentation, the instructor includes both right-and-wrong answer and open-ended questions.

**Discussion Forums**

A well-crafted forum not only helps create community by asking specific questions that get students talking, it can also act as an assessment tool, providing a way for instructors to monitor student understanding along the way. Additionally, it’s proven that instructor involvement in forums raises student motivation and overall success in the course. In this example, the instructor provided an explanation of point distribution and examples to guide students when they comment on each other’s work.

**Rubrics**

A well-designed rubric establishes and communicates your standards for acceptable student work. You may already use rubrics in your course to provide consistent feedback, as well as to streamline and guide the grading process, but they can also provide students with a guide for commenting on each other’s work.