Nearpod for Deeper Learning

In looking at my university’s Student Course Evaluations recently, I came across the following statement about one of my classes: “This is the best class that I have ever taken. I learned so much and have so much information to take with me into my new career. You take your time to make sure that students understand the information. You are the best teacher that I have ever had on this campus. All the horror stories were lies.”

Of course, I was focused on that last line. What are those horror stories that precede students arriving in my class? I believe it has to do with me holding students accountable for completing all of their numerous readings and assignments. My course is tough, and I expect my students to work very hard!

Want to get students to read the assigned readings ahead of time? Tired of lecturing and death by PowerPoint? Running out of class time to actually have students apply their skills and knowledge?

I have found Nearpod a useful tool in flipping learning and ensuring that my students come to class ready to apply their knowledge. I post all my PowerPoint slides ahead of time using Nearpod, and embed within the slides a variety of multiple choice, open-ended, and fill-in-the black questions based on the week’s readings and the content of the slides, along with videos and useful resources. Completion of these student-paced Nearpod activities is tied to hefty participation points, so students know that completing them is essential for a good grade in my course.

This leaves the students and me with the luxury of more in-depth discussions and meaningful activities that allow them to think more deeply about and apply their knowledge and skills. Using the Nearpod app on their Smartphones or logging in on a laptop, students can also actively participate during in-class sessions in which you can embed poll questions, or use an interactive brainstorming tool in which students view text and images they share with the whole class in real time.

You know, creating a class where students hear horror stories and fear the amount of work required, but then think you are the best professor they’ve ever had!

[Nearpod](https://app.nearpod.com/home) can be found at <https://app.nearpod.com/home>.

**Submitted by:**

Leila A. Ricci, Ph.D.

Associate Professor

California State University, Los Angeles

Lricci@calstatela.edu