

Survey says- GC faculty approves of in-class taping

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In response to The G's survey concerning instructors' approval or disapproval of the use of tape recorders in class, out of 300 questionnaires distributed to full and part-time instructors, 110 were returned.

Of the 110, an overwhelming 82 instructors fully supported the use of tape recorders in the classroom, while 11 supported the use of recorders, but indicated they would prefer to be asked first. Seventeen instructors disapproved of recorders being used in class.

The reasons why instructors approve of recording ran the gamut from "whatever inspires a student to learn is OK with me" to "OK for those real scholars-in-training who wish to learn." The largest group (26) fell under the "whatever" category. Most of these instructors said, "Whatever works is fine with me."

Some of the instructors cited the recorder as a valuable tool for ESL students (eight), and those who learn in different ways (10).

Rob Branch, a telecommunications instructor, offered this assessment of taping for the ESL student: "There are more reoccurring instances where Vietnamese, Spanish-speaking, and eastern students have difficulty understanding the information being given. They need time to listen at a slower pace than we can acceptably deliver in order to comprehend material."

Larry Coons, counselor, addresses the aspect that people all learn differently in this way: "Some people learn by an audio mode, some by visual, some kinesthetic. People should use whatever method(s) work."

What follows is a cross-section sam-
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pling of the various reasons given by those who approved of tape recording.

Tracy L. King, costume construction—"It is simply another form of note-taking. It allows the student to pay attention to the lecture (to) do written notes later. A well prepared teacher should not object to taping."

Richard Vessel, biology—"Generally speaking, the more repetition, the more likely the material will be put into long-term emory storage. Taping means they will listen to my lecture on more time."

Bradley Wood, humanities—"Allows the student to be attentive to what is going on in the classroom, and affords them the means to repeat the experience at their leisure. Repetition is a good method to use when trying to learn something new."

Dr. Ronald Sherood, music—"I am happy for students to record my lectures. In fact, I find it difficult to think of a reason for any faculty member to object to this practice unless the faculty member is using the classroom as a stage for the distribution of material not (related) to the official course outline."

Len Pellettiri, English—"Approve. It might help some students to learn—and to record my deathless spoken prose and wisdom for posterity."

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Finally, one instructor took a novel approach in approving taping in class. Beverly Blaylock, computer science “. . . Allows instructors to listen and assess teaching strategies when only auditory senses are being used, i.e., how do I come across without gestures, chalkboards, etc.

Of the 17 instructors who disapproved of taping in class, the majority cited that the tape recorder would hinder student participation. Some worried that students would tape a class and not focus on the lecture. Others were concerned that the tape recorder's known presence in class would cause diminished student participation.

Only three instructors cited being quoted out of context as a concern, while only one instructor objected to the recorder because he didn't want his “off-colored” class-motivating comments to be a part of permanent record.

The following is a sample of the comments of those who disapproved of taping in class:

Judith Cook, accounting ~“They encourage students to not participate in class lectures, discussions, etc., because the student feels he/she can always listen to the tape later. It is no substitute for the real thing.”

Fred Stollenwork, English ~“A tape recorder in a skill-development class inhibits student response and participation. No one wants a ‘dumb question’ to be recorded.”

Dennis Holt, telecommunications ~ “They are too constraining. I also wonder how many people would actually take all the time needed to listen to the lecture again. I know (as a student) I used to try it in class, but I never got around to listening and before I knew it, I had 15 or 20 hours of lectures to (listen to) on tape.”

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Linda Humes, astronomy ~“I have mixed feelings. I think it's terrific for the student, especially when an instructor says more than what he writes on the board, or when he speaks faster than the student can keep up with. As an instructor, it makes me uneasy because anything that is said can be taken out of context and abused. Also, knowing that you are being taped can cause some anxiety, and the class loses the personal touch or spontaneity it could have.”