

**EDUC  
762**

## MIDTERM

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**Assessment in E-Learning - Summer 2013**

## - JIGSAW ASSESSMENT TOOLBOX -

### INTRODUCTION: THE JIGSAW METHOD

Jigsaw was originally developed by Elliot Aronson et.al. in their book *Jigsaw Classroom* (1978) as a cooperative learning design lesson where each student has a piece of information he/she is responsible for and when the pieces are put together, the whole picture or Jigsaw appears. The main goal of this midterm is to experience cooperative assessment so each of us chose an assessment tool and became an expert in it. We chose Edmodo for Web 2.0 assessment tool, Groove (renamed Microsoft Sharepoint Workspace) as a peer-to-peer/instructor-to-student collaboration tool, Zoomerang/Survey Monkey from the quiz/test builder category and Excel spreadsheet as a course tracking tool. We added to our toolbox Audacity which is an audio/visual assessment tool which, we believe, will add rigor to our midterm. We then synthesized our materials and collectively worked on the introduction and the conclusion.

We learned early on this semester that alternative assessment is the exception not the rule (Buhagiar 2007). In this essay we will demonstrate how each of these tools will be used to emphasize the underlying philosophy of alternative assessment or “assessment as learning” not “assessment for learning.” Each of our online class plans below exhibits this notion. In Edmodo the students will assess and learn from reflecting on the badges they received from the teacher and classmates. In Zoomerang / Survey Monkey, we will use the tool to help encourage critical thinking in students. In Groove students will collaborate to compare findings as they locate reliable digital resources. In Excel Spread Sheet students will use a gradebook template to keep track of their own grades and practice accountability, and in Audacity students will produce an audio podcast to share their understanding of how a significant course concept was shaped.

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## ZOOMERANG: by Jean LaPaze

### INTRODUCTION

My original task was to provide information on Zoomerang, a software package to create online quizzes and surveys. As I navigated to the Zoomerang site to create my account, I was greeted a notification. that Zoomerang has now become Survey Monkey. So my new task is to provide information on Survey Monkey! Like Zoomerang, Survey Monkey is also a software package to create, distribute and analyze on-line surveys and quizzes. Creating the account was very easy and you can opt for the Basic package (which is free) to try it out.



### THE TOOL AND ITS BENEFIT

Survey Monkey provides an introductory video that allows the user to become familiar with the site and how to create a survey or quiz. There are three main functionalities provided by Survey Monkey:

- Designing your survey or quiz
- Distributing your product to the appropriate audience
- Analyzing the results

The uses of this tool in a classroom setting are impressive. The instructor can create a survey or quiz up to 10 questions with a limit of 100 responses per survey (if you are using the Basic version of Survey Monkey) additional plans offer higher limits for questions and response. You can also create the quiz or survey in multiple languages! Using this survey to create a classroom quiz, for example, the instructor can do the following:

- Create the quiz specifying one of 15 different types of questions. The ones I found that might be the most useful in a classroom setting are:
  - Multiple choice, one correct answer;
  - Multiple choice, multiple correct answers; and
  - Short answer essay (the instructor can define the length of the response).
- Specify the timeframe for the on-line quiz completion
- Distribute the quiz using a variety of methods:
  - Post to a class web site
  - Use an email distribution list
  - Use Facebook
- Analyze the results by using the reports available.

### WEAKNESSES AND CHALLENGES OF THE ASSESSMENT TOOL

The major weakness or challenges I identified in my reflection on how this tool would be used in the classroom are:

- Students who do not have access to a computer to take an on-line quiz would be at a disadvantage.\.
- Even though Survey Monkey does provide for password protection for access to the test, students can still have someone

else take the quiz for them if they provide their ID and password.

- Given the stress associated with testing, I think it would be best only to use Survey Monkey as a means to assess knowledge with very little, if any, grading impact. (This would also reduce the “value” of cheating for the student.)

In summary, I believe that Survey Monkey is a very robust tool—even at the Basic, free, level—and could be used to make learning material interesting and fun for both students and teachers!

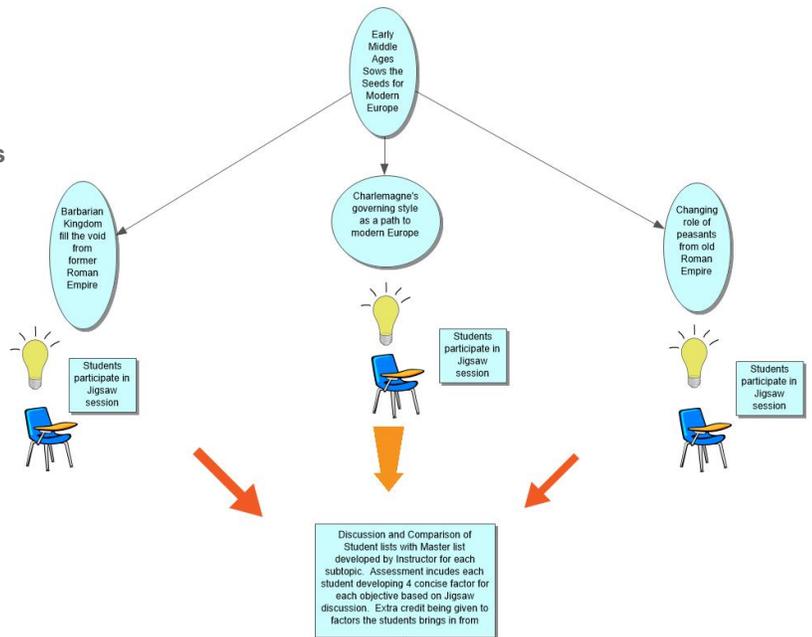
## APPLICATION OF ZOOMERANG/SURVEY MONKEY IN THE CLASSROOM AND ASSOCIATED BENEFITS

Using a learning objective that I developed for my Concept Map, I will demonstrate how student assessment can be used with Survey Monkey.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVE

The student should be able to identify five major ways that Charlemagne’s reign began a transition from the former Roman Empire to modern Europe.

The instructor can utilize many types of ways to first review the material: lecture, class discussion, Jigsaw exercises, etc. The culmination of which would be taking a quiz to test comprehension. For my example, I would be more inclined to use the short essay question format and limit the amount of space for answering to perhaps 50-80 characters. This will ensure the student will need to provide a concise answer to the question posed.



In terms of the questions posed, I would develop a short essay question that prompts the student in several ways to assess what material was learned and what was not. For example, the questions may be as follows (while I said five major ways, I will only include examples of three questions in the interest of space):

- How did Charlemagne use the role of the Catholic Church in governance?
- What were important factors in Charlemagne integrating his rule over very different populations?
- What was Charlemagne’s contribution to the development of a judicial system?

This format would allow the students the students to test their knowledge of the material in a manner that is private and non-threatening. Depending upon the distribution method, the instructor allows the student, after his/her reading of the materials and the subsequent classroom discussion has taken place, to reflect and develop their own response to the questions. An important skill in developing critical thinking is the ability to prioritize factors and concisely explain the factor(s) to others. Another benefit is the student must be able to effectively communicate their points in writing—if the instructor grades these quizzes, additional points for spelling, composition and sentence construction are possible.

## Edmodo: by Laura Khoury

### INTRODUCTION

Edmodo was first created in 2008 by Nic Borg and Jeff O'Hara in order to connect students' to the world outside of school and bring the same environment into the school. Edmodo was recognized by the American Association of School Librarians in 2011 as one of the top 25 websites that foster qualities of innovation, creativity, active participation, and collaboration in the category entitled 'Social Networking and Communication' (AASL 2011).

Edmodo is a Web 2.0 assessment tool and can be found here: <http://www.edmodo.com/>. In

general, "Web 2.0 provides students the opportunity to move from passive consumers, to active, critical consumers of information" (Klamma et al., 2007). This is what I would like to stress in my presentation here: provide the online conditions for students to become critical consumers of information. I will show how I will use it for that specific purpose below. Students should go underneath the surface to understand any social phenomenon.



### Edmodo Uses & Benefits

It is a secure social networking for teachers and students; includes blogging and microblogging tool, grading tool, and shared resources, especially shared calendar. Within Edmodo, teachers can conduct online polls, make a post for students to comment as a threaded discussion, and give badges to students that perform well on a specific assignment/s. Several applications can be added onto Edmodo, including a photo editor and SchoolTube (see Evans & Kilinc 2013). Evidently Edmodo *improves student engagement* in the classroom as postulated by Holland, C. & Muilenburg, L. (2011). Students in this study participated in literature discussions using the asynchronous discussion platform found on Edmodo.com. Reciprocal teaching strategies were used and student initiatives were encouraged, supporting the role of the teacher as a mediator or moderator, rather than the purveyor of knowledge. As a result there has been an *increase in student's participation, student engagement, with higher complexity of discussion and effectiveness* when students used Edmodo discussion boards as a tool.

In another study, Kongshan (2012) revealed that Edmodo is perceived to be a wonderful and user-friendly social learning network that enables even a *non-digital-native teacher* to take charge of her own exploring and making use of the site to set up and run her online classes, including a workshop on Edmodo for other teachers. In this study, Kongshan (2012) found that students also *strongly agreed that they liked and enjoyed working* in an online class via Edmodo. It was noted that the teacher-researcher could utilize the program successfully without any need for help or support from a computer technician. One additional benefit is the visuals that appear whether the calendar due dates markers, grades and graphs of grades and markers in colors that identify that an assignment is needed to be completed. I liked the fact that it is not widely used (compared to other tools) and that there is no limit to message length. This, to me, is a luxury by all means.

### Edmodo Weaknesses and Challenges

No tool is without challenges especially that new tools constantly compete as they make their way into the market. Edmodo is mobile friendly so users can connect continuously- via messages too, but the problem is that mobile companies are highly competitive and texting is still not free to all. Many students may not own a tablet or other. While using Edmodo, teachers and students can easily share assignments, ideas, diaries in real time but student engagements is a factor that is beyond the instructor here. Wankel (2011:26) compared Edmodo to Twitter and identified issues with connectivity, slowing down, posts take several minutes to appear, it still has bugs, and that students get limited access to the outside world.

## Example of application of Edmodo in my online classroom

Because e-learning technology is not pedagogically neutral it is therefore necessary to focus on the design of technology that explicitly supports a certain pedagogical approach. Some argue that design should direct its focus away from organization of content and towards design of activities: “technology should be designed explicitly to support activities in a learning environment, in contrast to a focus strictly on organisation of content” (Dlasgaard 2005). My goal in all my courses is to produce critical consumers of information. One characteristic in Edmodo as a pedagogical tool is that it allows for developing relationships between students by assigning badges for each other instead of teacher commenting all the time. I propose that while students are involved in the threaded discussions and microblogging throughout the four units in one semester. Students, will be using the six badges that DeBono constructed (see image) to identify the modes of thinking of the others. Edmodo as an educational platform for students allows students to create their own badge (even though Edmodo has badges).

The De Bono 6 thinking hats allows students to identify what their own thinking mode is too. Normally, students end up finding out that they use a specific color hat or have a certain mode of thinking -whether it is positive, negative, organizer, objective, creative, or emotional. (For example the use of emotions in discussions when students write “I feel that”). A student also needs to wear a black hat to be a critical consumer of information as the last stage of analytical thinking. The students will be giving badges to each other but also get badges too which helps them start assessing themselves. By the end of the first project (out of 4 larger projects/units) students have to report how many hats they received and reflect on why did they get a higher number of certain hat color. While discussions and semi-blogs are ongoing, they would need to keep reflecting but the second unit they should attempt to use the white hat in which facts with direct quotes are used in their discussions. This helps sociology students understand systematic scientific research. For the third unit they should attempt to receive blue hats. where they observe the process of their selves thinking logically (if.. so causal relationship). This is another hat that students are encouraged to use as they find support for their original argument when they were using the white hat. The fourth unit requires critical thinking (black hat). This way students learn to go under the surface and be critical consumers of information.



## Learning Objective

Students will *display their ability to determine their thinking mode by using Edmodo Badges with at least 80% accuracy to the rubric provided* (the color of hat assigned for the unit).

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## GROOVE: by Vicki Thornley

### Introduction

Social collaboration in business and education has been increasingly implemented to improve both internal and external processes. With improvements in Internet access, bandwidth issues, hardware and software applications and mobile computing devices, social collaboration in the form of shared workspaces is gaining popularity as an educational tool both for learning and assessment. Within a shared workspace, peer-to-peer collaboration allows groups to securely work on projects in real time. Composing and editing can be done by any member with access to the group, depending on permissions granted by the group owner.



Groove was originally developed by Ray Ozzie, creator of Lotus Notes. The application was developed as a collaboration space for groups with common goals and but different technical and security interfaces. Groups could sign in to a common area to exchange ideas or collaborate on projects in a secure online environment. As with all good applications, Microsoft purchased Groove Networks in 2005 and integrated the application into their Office product. With the release of Office 2010, the name changed to Sharepoint Workspace 2010 and with the release of Office 2013 the application name is Sharepoint 2013.

Sharepoint is a web-based platform designed for easy online collaboration. It interfaces with Microsoft Office products such as Word and Excel to allow for real-time document creation and editing. Additionally multiple applications are available to use in the Sharepoint environment. To quote the [Microsoft](#) product website: "Organizations use SharePoint to create websites. You can use it as a secure place to store, organize, share, and access information from almost any device. All you need is a web browser, such as Internet Explorer, Chrome, or Firefox" .

Review of the literature notes multiple benefits of social collaboration in general. These include the ease of exchanging of information, bonding among group members located at distant sites, secure communication, assurance that all parties who need information and/or access have both, and improving outcomes of projects. Sharepoint in particular offers the following benefits.

### Sharepoint Uses and Benefits

- Web based access allows for use across mobile devices
- User-friendly - does not require IT support if using simple collaboration set-up like Sharepoint Online
- Multiple application add-ons available to enhance group interaction
- New, expanded collaboration tool "[Yammer](#)" brings together multiple aspects of online collaboration
- Security enhanced with use of invitation-only or password protection
- Real-time collaboration

### Sharepoint Weaknesses and Challenges

- Fee for service ranges from \$3.00 per month for limited access to licensing options for educational institutions which provides a single, integrated platform for both internal and external networking.
- When used as a platform in an educational institution, decisions about product choice and implementation may be made by IT

departments without input from end-users.

- Free applications such as Google docs may provide an adequate platform and security for the needs of most educational pursuits.
- Data analysis features are limited and may require IT intervention to process.

### Application of Classroom Use

The use of a social collaboration tool such as Sharepoint would allow the educator to develop a formative assessment structured as an analytic memo detailed in the course reading: *Classroom Assessment Techniques*. The instructor would choose patient care issues that students will encounter during their pre-licensure education. The students would be grouped and assigned one of the care issues. As a group they would identify reliable digital resources to develop a care plan for that specific patient care issue. Through group collaboration, the students would create an appropriate nursing care plan to implement care for the patient.

### Learning Objective

Students will provide evidence-based care by locating pertinent evidence-based online resources to create a patient care plan.

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## AUDACITY: by Rob Henseler

Microblogging in Education: Audio/Visual Assessment Tools

### Introduction

Audio blogs and podcasts offer a number of opportunities for sharing ideas and information in online education, not only from the instructor to the students but perhaps more importantly from the students to the instructor.

One Web 2.0 tool for creating audio blogs and podcasts is Audacity, an open-source software that allows live recording and audio editing. Audacity allows users to record several tracks, layer them upon each other, fade them in or out, and manipulate their speed, all to create a professional-sounding audio publication. Begin your podcast with a musical introduction, fade that out as a narrator begins speaking, add background sounds appropriate for your setting, transition to a prerecorded interview with another character, go back to the narrator for commentary, fade in with the concluding music as the narrator finishes his thoughts, and stop precisely at the end of your closing tune. Audacity can help you do that and more.



## Uses and Benefits

- Audacity is free.
- It allows beginners or more basic users to employ just voice for a simple audio blog or podcast.
- It offers enough powerful tools that very creative users will not find themselves stifled or limited to simplistic vocal-only podcasts.
- Basic controls are labeled with familiar audio/video icons for intuitive use.
- Drop-down menus make other functions fairly easy to find.
- Recordings can be exported to other formats, including MP3, WAV, and many others.
- The internet has numerous user-created videos and tutorials to assist new users.
- Teachers can provide lectures, notes, and commentary via the internet at any time and place.
- Students can respond to a prompt or topic without always having to write a traditional paper.
- Engagement in projects employing Audacity seems high.
- Learners make meaning during the creation phase of an audacity project.
- Learners are motivated to improve the quality of their podcasts during the publication phase, when they know the product will be uploaded to the internet.

## Weaknesses and Challenges

- Since Audacity is free, open-source software, limited technical support is offered by the creators of the program.
- Audacity may be overly complicated and difficult to use for some students.
- Some of my students have had unexplained difficulties emailing Audacity files from school to home and back again.
- Audacity projects are separated and saved into two separate files, both of which need to be transferred from one computer to the next in order for the Audacity project to play properly.

## Learning Objective

- Create an audio podcast explaining how you define the American Dream and detailing the narratives or stories of people who have helped to shape your personal American Dream.

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## COURSE TRACKING with EXCEL: by Rob Henseler

[Microsoft Excel](#) is the spreadsheet application included in the Microsoft Office Suite of tools. Excel, like other spreadsheets, appears as a grid of numbered rows and lettered columns, and allows users to store, analyze, manipulate, and report data.

### Uses and Benefits

Because Microsoft Office Excel allows users to keep track of student data, it allows instructors' decisions to be more data-driven. Considerations about how to improve student learning and performance can be supported by analysis of individual and class results.

In general, Excel can be good for grade books and course tracking because:

- Excel is familiar—ubiquitous even.
- It is loaded onto PCs almost automatically.



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- Excel is often supplied by the instructor's employer or institution, so it is free to the user.
- It is flexible.
- Excel can integrate bars, graphs, and charts to visually illustrate statistical analysis.
- There are several free grade book templates available, so instructors don't have to create their own.

Good grade books created in Excel can allow scoring by total points, letter grades, weighted scores and categories, and terms or grading periods. They can integrate attendance records and merge with mailing features that are also stored in Excel.

### **Weaknesses and Challenges**

While *using* Excel may be fairly intuitive for a lot of people, *creating* a grade book in Excel is definitely not. Even though there are numerous tutorials on the internet demonstrating how to create a grade book in Excel, the simple ones only provide very basic and rigid options. The more sophisticated grade book tutorials are also very complicated. (Here's an example of a formula used to calculate grades based on only three weighted categories: =B5\*\$B\$4+C5\*\$C\$4+D5\*\$D\$4.) Whether basic or simple, *creating* an Excel grade book is time-consuming.

Perhaps most noteworthy, the time invested in creating or even using a Microsoft Excel grade book makes it a poor choice for many educators because of the following: in public K-12 schools, and many other institutions, using Excel would be a redundant effort because of the use of school-purchased student information systems. Instructors will often already be entering, analyzing, and reporting on student performance using applications the school has already purchased. To do so again in Excel would squander time that busy teachers don't have.

### **Other weaknesses and challenges**

- Support from Microsoft will not be tailored to education applications.
- Excel is not designed for users who are not "number people."
- While Excel is generally compatible with Macs, not all the gradebook templates are.

### **Overcoming the Weaknesses and Challenges**

If you *have* to use Excel for course tracking but don't have the time or expertise to create your own spreadsheet, there are several Excel templates aimed at education. One option is [Gradebook for Excel from Vertex 42](http://www.vertex42.com/ExcelTemplates/gradebook.html). It received an "Outstanding" rating from CNET.com. According to CNET's editors, "It's aimed at college and high school educators, but it's suitable for any teacher. It includes templates for grading based on percentages, points, and grade point averages (GPAs) or letter grades." Reviewers liked its ease of use and were impressed with the provider's technical support. [Read more of CNET's review here](#).

### **Learning Objective**

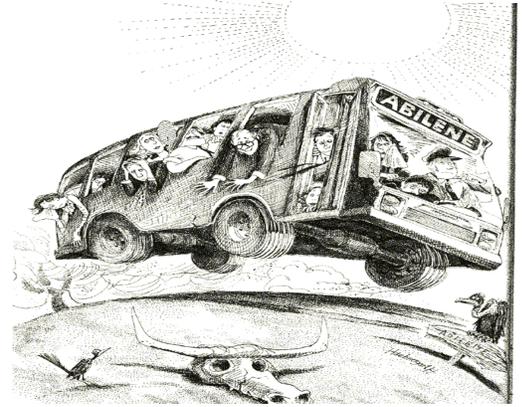
Students will use a given Excel gradebook template to keep track of their own grades and practice individual accountability.

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## CONCLUSION

*This image speaks for our journey during the midterm. We felt like we were avoiding the traditional ways of assessment underneath us. We were looking at the remains of the old ways of learning and we were in awe at the same time. This midterm was indeed a way to reflect on all that we were indoctrinated with since our birth. We were, as if walking on eggshells, avoiding a fall in the trap of the old ways of thinking. Alternative assessment is the difficult path, but we all agreed that it is the right crooked path.*



We found this midterm a good reflection of the “best practices” that we will need in our online courses in the following areas:

- Zoomerang: Survey and quiz builders, as used in our pre-course survey.
- Edmodo: Reflection tools, such as blogs and e-portfolios.
- Groove: Peer-to-peer collaboration tools such as discussions and wikis.
- Audacity: Audio/Visual assessment tool and micro blogging tool.
- Excel gradesheet: Course planning and tracking tools.

This experience of creating a toolbox and practice of Jigsaw is itself a best practice for cooperative learning. As we worked through this mid-term exercise, it became apparent that we needed to develop a quick and effective means to communicate--or students can get left behind very quickly. We suggest that perhaps when introducing the concept to our online classrooms, we as instructors should demonstrate how to use the tools chosen. Tipsheets on how to sign up for an account, navigational visuals to aid the student in getting to the tool, and how to use it once he/she is there would also be helpful. A little preparation work ahead of time will ensure the tools chosen will have the desired impact on the students' learning and will greatly enhance the instructor's ability to assess the students' progress-- both from a curriculum perspective as well as a technology perspective.

Technology is advancing at a rapid pace and as more tools become available, educators must continue to pursue expertise not only in their chosen fields, but also in the delivery of effective education. Effective education for our classrooms EDUC 762 Assessment in E-Learning reminds us that this must be the key idea in designing our assessments and selecting the tools to use. What will be best for our students? How can we engage and educate them best? This toolbox is not just for ourselves as teachers, but should also be for our students. They deserve not only our most current educational efforts, but our best educational efforts.