

PowerPoint Slides

Is There a Solution to Students Multitasking in Class?

Presented by:
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Presenter Bios:

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Is There a Solution to Students Multitasking in Class?

By Maryellen Weimer
Editor of *The Teaching Professor*

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“Digital natives”



Grown up with technology
Popular belief: Cognitive capacities have changed



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Digital natives say they can:

- ✓ Text and talk
- ✓ Text and drive
- ✓ Listen to music and study
- ✓ Check Facebook and write a paper
- ✓ Use technology in class for reasons not related to class content

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Students can't multitask
when they're trying to learn



**Learning isn't like
a lot of other activities**



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**Learning requires sophisticated
mental processing**

Think of human processing as having
two separate channels

-  Auditory/verbal
-  Visual/pictorial

Clayson and Haley



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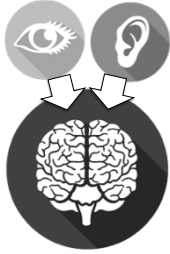
- Both organize information
- Only separate in the beginning
- Each must be integrated into:



- What needs immediate action
- What needs to be stored in memory



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Each channel has limited capacity.
Learning requires a lot of cognitive processing in both channels.



Evidence that learning tasks suffer

Research is impressive
When student multitask in class or while studying, their grades go down.
In some cases a full letter grade lower.

Kuznekoff and Titsworth



Students think they can multitask

94% say they receive texts in class
86% say they send texts in class
56% say their instructor banned texting
49% say they texted anyway

Clayson and Haley





47% say they could follow a lecture and text.
 47% say texting during class did not influence their grades.
 32% say they can text without the instructor knowing.
 >50% know texting makes it hard to follow a lecture.
 >50% know it affects their grades.
 61% say they didn't think they should text during class.





How do you get students to stop?

Is there a solution that works?

1. Forbid it. Have a policy & enforce it.

- Difficult to enforce without constant surveillance.
- Vigilant enforcement has costs.

If teacher monitors, it distracts teacher as much as technology distracts students.



2. Use technology for course-related purposes

- Challenge students to use devices to find answers
- Use cell phones like clickers
- Have a class Twitter feed
- Look at online resources



2. Use technology for course-related purposes

- This is a partial solution
- Will students do what their teacher asked?
- You may create multitasking compromises when you ask students to look at a website.



3. Let students decide

- Make problems with multitasking known.
- Confront students with the evidence. Let them discover it with an activity.
Have students trade notes
Are the main points in the notes?



On “making” students stop using devices

- Think about the climate for learning in that course.
- Students need to decide for themselves after considering the consequences.
What tech. behaviors get in the way of learning?
Help them make the right decision.



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Some behaviors may impact other students

- Use a quick anonymous survey to identify distracting behaviors.
- Agree as a class to avoid behavior that others find distracting.



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Code of conduct for the classroom

Learning is a special activity – interesting and sometimes life-changing.

- It merits our full, undivided attention.
- “Lids down, hands up” rule for difficult problem or important concept.



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Conclusion

This is a problem without a perfect solution.

- Consider these options.
- Talk with colleagues and students.
- Use devices as aids only when they support the learning task – not other tasks.



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Tell us what you think:



<https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/multitask>

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