

Three Things!

Thematic News and Views about Distance Learning
Welch Center for Graduate and Professional Studies



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THREE THINGS! IS A NEWSLETTER FOR FACULTY IN GOUCHER COLLEGE'S ROBERT S. WELCH CENTER FOR GRADUATE AND PROFESSIONAL STUDIES. EACH ISSUE GIVES YOU NEWS AND VIEWS THEMED AS THREE THINGS! WE AIM TO INTRIGUE, INSPIRE AND GUIDE YOU IN TEACHING AT A DISTANCE.

"POLL EVERYWHERE" FOR ENGAGING YOUR STUDENTS

Student engagement refers to how much attention, curiosity, interest, optimism and passion students feel or show in a learning environment. When students experience engaging feelings, they are more motivated to learn and make progress.

In this issue of *Three Things!* we visit with Anna Ralph, faculty member in the Master of Arts in Cultural Sustainability program (MACS). Anna uses a tool called *Poll Everywhere* to help students engage and learn in *Topics and Issues in Cultural Sustainability: Culture and Spirituality* (CSP 653)—an in-person residency course with an online component.



"Poll Everywhere facilitates 100% discussion participation from my students!" —Anna Ralph

THE "POLL EVERYWHERE" TOOL

[Poll Everywhere](#) is a live-audience participation app that displays students' answers to instructor-generated questions, in real time. Using any text- or web-enabled device, students visit the instructor's voting page (or they send text messages to it) at www.Pollev.com. Responses are instantly displayed on the classroom screen. Polls can be designed for multiple-choice or open-ended responses.

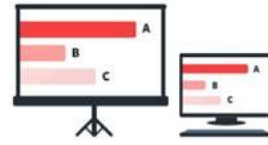
How *Poll Everywhere* Works:



1. Ask your audience a question with the Poll Everywhere app



2. The audience answers your question in real time using web browsers, mobile phones or Twitter



3. See the responses live on the web or in a PowerPoint presentation

ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES

Anna uses *Poll Everywhere* multiple times daily during the in-person portions of her residency class. Student responses are used as cues for class interaction. After responses are displayed, students have opportunities to explain their answers. Here are examples from class:

BREAK THE ICE:

- *“What is something no one else in the group knows about you?”*
- *“What if...”*
- *“I can’t believe...”*
- *“How many hours of sleep did you get last night?”*

DISCOVER STUDENT EXPECTATIONS:

- *“What were the first things you thought of when you saw the title of this course?”*

INFORMALLY ASSESS THE IMPACT OF THE PREVIOUS DAY’S CLASS:

- *“Something from yesterday’s class that kept me thinking was...”*
- *“After yesterday’s discussion, I still have questions about...”*

RECEIVE GUIDANCE TO HELP SHAPE THE CURRENT DISCUSSION:

- *“Something I found intriguing in today’s readings was...”*
- *“The article I enjoyed most was...”*

ELICIT STUDENT STORIES:

- *“When was a time you made a cultural gaffe?”*

COMPARE DEFINITIONS TO BEGIN CREATING A COLLECTIVE ONE:

- *“How did you define spirituality?”*

CREATE A WORD CLOUD FOR A CLASS EXERCISE:

- *“Sustainable _____”*

GATHER INFORMATION THAT SHAPES THE INSTRUCTOR’S APPROACH TO THE PLANNED ACTIVITIES FOR THE DAY:

- *“I read this fraction of today’s readings—all, $\frac{3}{4}$, $\frac{1}{2}$, $\frac{1}{4}$ ”*

“THINGS I APPRECIATE ABOUT POLL EVERYWHERE”

Anna describes what she especially likes using the polling tool:

- It generates full-class participation in discussions!
- It is user-friendly for instructor and students.
- Students enjoy it.
- The free version of the app is sufficient.
- You can easily add poll questions in the midst of class.
- Students can answer anonymously.
- Polls and student responses remain in my account for future reference and evaluation.
- With some creativity, *Poll Everywhere* could be incorporated into WebEx meetings.

RESOURCES

- [Poll Everywhere](#)
- [Polling \(with and without clickers\)](#)
- [Best Practices for Polling in Web Conferences](#)

Special thanks to Anna Ralph!

THREE THINGS!

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