



The No-Fault Quiz¹

By this time in the quarter, students are anxious about their mid-term grades. First-year students usually need extra support in learning, and they also need high-quality opportunities to raise their grades as they adjust to the expectations of academic work in college.

The “no-fault quiz” is one idea from a faculty member who teaches introductory science courses. Usually it’s best to incorporate this tactic into the class from the beginning, but it can be added in because it’s basically rigorous extra credit.

The no-fault quiz is a weekly quiz of 5 to 15 questions of various types (short answer, fill-in-the-blank, multiple choice, etc.), based on the previous week’s work. All correct answers earn points toward the next test. Because the quizzes are extra credit, make-ups are not available for any reason. Points for questions covering the same material are also available on the test itself.

Immediately after the quiz is completed, the professor gives a key and the class spends some time discussing the answers. This way, students receive immediate feedback on their work. The quizzes and keys, but no extra credit, are provided to students with excused absences so that they can still benefit from the learning opportunity.

This professor found that attendance on quiz days rose dramatically. Students even reported that they got up early to look over their notes. The professor felt that good discussions ensued, with students learning to evaluate and analyze their knowledge. Students were better able to persevere in learning because mistakes did not count against them in the quizzes; instead, they were able to re-learn material that they missed on the quizzes.

The no-fault quiz is a win-win situation – students learn the material better **and** have a chance to raise their grades. Both of these outcomes can help students to succeed in large introductory classes.

To read the entire short article, please see the following reference:

Sporer, R. 2001. The No-Fault Quiz. *College Teaching* 49(2):61.

College Teaching is available as a full-text, on-line journal from CSU Libraries.

Material on this topic and other topics may be found in the CTL Library located in the Mason Room of the Smith House.

¹ Cal Poly Pomona Faculty Center for Professional Development, “The No-Fault Quiz,” *The Weekly Teaching Note Blog*, posted October 28, 2008 and retrieved on December 7, 2010 from <http://weeklyteachingnote.wordpress.com/2008/10/28/the-no-fault-quiz/>