

The Classroom: Taking Content Out; Putting Application In

Interface 2017: Creative Assessment, Beyond Multiple Choice

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The Content

- A collaboratively developed, interactive, online program to teach the basic vocabulary, grammar and syntax of two early musical notation systems (9th and 10th Century chant – some of the earliest musical notation)
- Supplementation of the program with 50 instructional videos
- A methodology that could be applied to any subject

Advantages

- Collaboration among a computer scientist, a musician, and a graphic designer allowed for a substantially superior outcome than any of us could have done alone.
- With the basic content done outside of class, more class time can be devoted to the application of the content to the goal of achieving a nuanced interpretation of the music.
- Online content can be leveraged into instruction across multiple platforms, from residential to various forms of online.
- Moving beyond an exclusively residential platform allows instruction to people around the world of a subject in which there is limited – but avid – interest.

Challenges

- A - Online students (in Skype, Adobe Connect, etc.) are far more hesitant to sing in class than are residential students.
- B - Communicating among team members from different disciplines in ways that enabled everyone to make effective contributions to a common goal

Fixes

- A - Online students were given the option of applying the interpretive signs of the early manuscripts to performance by singing selected chants, or they could critique recordings.
- B - We developed a system of tables that contained all the required information in formats that enabled the programmer to create various exercises and assessments.

Bonuses

- Feedback from a study with several groups of students about what keeps them engaged in different formats of instructional videos
- Working with CITT and DCE, I developed a guide with best practices that can be incorporated into instructional videos that I can produce at home – with minimal software and hardware and without the need for a studio and studio crew.

