PEARSON

MediaShare educator study

A powerful way for instructors to monitor student progress and provide feedback

Key findings:

Professor Laurie Metcalf reported many perceived advantages of using MediaShare for her online public speaking course. Specifically, she named her ability to accomplish the following in MediaShare:

- Time-stamping specific feedback in students' videos to support their development of public speaking skills
- Providing more feedback to students' videos because of the ability to copy and paste feedback in MediaShare's grading rubric
- Looking across assignments for the same student to determine whether a problem is recurring and adjusting her grading and communication with the student accordingly

Laurie's recommendations for improvements included making tech support easier to access and simplifying the process for students to both upload assignments and view instructor feedback.

About MediaShare

MediaShare is a tool for sharing, assigning, discussing, and evaluating media in different formats, including video and audio files. It enables students and instructors to comment on media, and instructors can provide timestamped feedback to students on their assignments.

School name: Blinn College, Bryan, TX

Course name: Public Speaking

Course format: Online

Timeframe: Online

Educator: Laurie Metcalf, Professor

Summary

For her online public speaking course, Professor Laurie Metcalf has used MediaShare for five or more years. She teaches at Blinn College, a community college in Bryan, Texas. MediaShare's role in her class is primarily for students to submit four required speech assignments and for Laurie to provide grades and detailed feedback on those assignments. She views MediaShare as benefitting students in two main ways:

- MediaShare is set up to allow very specific comments that are timestamped so that students can see in their own speeches where they struggled as well as where they demonstrated a strong skill. This ability, according to Laurie, aids the development of students' source citations and use of appropriate language.
- MediaShare facilitates Laurie's understanding of how the student is progressing over time, which she used to identify where an issue was repeating itself and take action to support the student's learning.

Laurie has found the setup of rubrics beneficial for grading, allowing her to copy and paste to provide more feedback to students. Her recommendations for improvements center on making it easier to connect with tech support and simplifying the steps for students to upload assignments and view grading rubrics.

> Students in Professor Laurie Metcalf's online public speaking course used MediaShare to submit four assigned speeches. Laurie graded these assignments and provided timestamped feedback in MediaShare as well.

About the course

Professor Laurie Metcalf used MediaShare for her online public speaking course at Blinn College in Bryan, Texas. The course attracts both Blinn College students and students from Texas A&M and has a mix of traditionally-aged and older students. It fulfills a speech requirement for the college and is a basic-level course. Although Laurie teaches the same course in person and with blended learning, she primarily used MediaShare for the online version of the course, which is the focus of this study. Students in the online course accessed MediaShare through Revel—the required e-text for the department. Laurie reported using MediaShare for the past five years or longer.

Regarding the course program and requirements, Laurie described students doing the work for her online public speaking course "on their own." Though the course is paced, it does not include any live or real-time class meetings. Instead, Laurie makes use of online resources for public speaking. Instructor lectures are not a major component of the course, but she does post some recorded class lectures on YouTube. She estimates that students spend about 3 to 6 hours a week on coursework.

Goals for the course are to help students structure speeches, deliver speeches extemporaneously, and build confidence when speaking publicly. The specific skills targeted for the course, in addition to the overall skill of communication, are research and message delivery.

> "The area where I find [MediaShare] particularly useful is I can see trends in individual students more than I had been able to before. Instead of just thinking, OK, this [issue in the student's assignment] is a one-off issue, I can go back and look...I love that I can go back and check and see."
>
> —Laurie Metcalf, Professor

Implementation

Students in Laurie's online public speaking course used MediaShare for four required speech assignments. The students recorded themselves on video delivering each speech and uploaded it to MediaShare. Laurie had tried a couple of other tools before adopting MediaShare in Revel. She prefers MediaShare for two main reasons. First, MediaShare comes with tech support that students can access directly. Second, MediaShare allows instructors to provide very specific, timestamped feedback.

Since the four speeches were required assignments that students had to submit through MediaShare, use of MediaShare was tied to their course grades. Peer review also accounted for a small portion of course grades. Students would watch peers' speeches in MediaShare and then offer feedback outside of MediaShare for the peer review assignments.

Laurie provided students with several ways to become familiar with the technical side of MediaShare. She offered a unit on Revel with an invitation to link to Revel, videos on how to sign up for Revel, and links to Revel apps. She also had a subunit on MediaShare specifically that covered how to submit speeches and how to compress files. Additionally, she provided all students with the option to submit an ungraded practice video ahead of each of the four speech assignments so that they could go through the technical steps of uploading a video in advance. If students encountered difficulties with MediaShare, Laurie encouraged them to contact Pearson tech support and share with her the incident number so they could work together to resolve the issue.

Laurie credits the setup of MediaShare as helping her to identify recurring issues for individual students so that she could respond accordingly. She provided the example of a student failing to use extemporaneous speech (e.g., not using contractions). With MediaShare, she could determine whether issues such as this one were coming up for the first time or had been a consistent problem. When they were a consistent problem, Laurie would seek out the cause of the problem, such as the student ignoring or not understanding past feedback. In these cases, she would reference feedback from prior assignments or take off extra points to draw the student's attention to the problem. "I love that I can go back and check and see," she said.

> "When students engage with the feedback that they're given, because of the format of the grading in MediaShare, I can give them a whole lot more feedback. Typing it in or having a document open and copying and pasting feedback into the comments, and timestamping them, and all of that good stuff, I can give them so much more than I could in another setting."
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> —Laurie Metcalf, Professor

Instructor Experience and Perception

Perceived Benefits of Using MediaShare

Laurie views the capacity to provide timestamped feedback in students' videos as very beneficial to learning. As she explained in her own words, "I love the ability to stop a recording and timestamp a comment in a specific spot in the recording... The students...can know, this is exactly where this issue was, or this was something that they did particularly well. I really do like that... It's an advantage that is huge for us. We don't even have that ability in a live class to do that. To stop a speech and say, look, 'Did you hear what you just said? Did you hear how that sounded?' And, 'Here's the problem.' Or, 'Here's why it's great.' So that in and of itself I think is fantastic."

Relatedly, Laurie has found the setup of MediaShare to enable more of her feedback for those moments. "When students engage with the feedback that they're given, because of the format of the grading in MediaShare, I can give them a whole lot more feedback. Typing it in or having a document open and copying and pasting feedback into the comments, and timestamping them, and all of that good stuff, I can give them so much more than I could in another setting."

Regarding the instructor's experience, Laurie mentioned the advantage offered by the layout of the rubric. It has allowed her to do all of her grading work on one screen. She found that functionality useful when working at home over break without access to the multiple monitors set up in her office. For the school break that extended through the end of the year because of the coronavirus pandemic, this functionality proved especially useful. "I do really appreciate the way that's laid out," she added. The visual from MediaShare helps illustrate Laurie's point.

Perceived Impact on Learning
Laurie believes student performance has improved in two areas because of MediaShare. The first is source citations. Since MediaShare allows for such specific feedback, she can make clear to students where they need to give more information for a source citation or, conversely, emphasize why their source citation was exemplary. For exemplary source citations, she would make her positive feedback public so that other students in the course could use the citation as a model for their own work.

The second area where Laurie believes students improved due to MediaShare is their use of appropriate language. A student may have used gendered language without realizing it, for example. The specific feedback made possible by MediaShare helped the student see where in the speech the gendered language occurred along with Laurie's explanation of why the language was problematic.

Potential for Improvement
In the five or more years Laurie has been using MediaShare, two changes to the product and accompanying services leave room for improvement in her view. The first involves tech support. Whereas both instructors and students used to have a phone number they could call day or night, now users go online where help can be harder to find. Laurie also described a prior version of MediaShare that included an autocomplete feature in the grading rubric. If she started a comment with the same phrase she had used for previous comments, the previous comments would appear. She could then simply click on the relevant comment to have it complete what she was beginning to write, but this feature is no longer available.

With respect to the student experience, Laurie mentioned that steps for uploading videos and viewing the grading rubric could be streamlined. When uploading videos, students needed to click "submit" once the video was done processing, but she reported that not all students appeared to know about that final action. For students to access feedback, they had to go into Revel and then into MediaShare and finally into the assignment itself. Eliminating some of these steps could make MediaShare more intuitive to use while enabling more students to benefit from the detailed, timestamped feedback that the product makes possible.

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Conclusion

Laurie believes that MediaShare can help achieve the goals for the course. "I think it's a partnership between the professor and the student," she added. However, she will not be using MediaShare next year. Her department will be adopting another product for her public speaking courses. When the department is ready to consider a change, she believes that they would be willing to return to MediaShare if tech support improved. From her perspective, the positive aspects of MediaShare give her online course advantages above and beyond what is possible for an in-person class.

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