The One-Minute Paper

**Background**

The one-minute paper is a quick and easy assessment tool that provides the instructor with feedback concerning what students are learning and how well they are learning it. It is designed to be done every day and thus provides feedback on a regular basis. It gives a quiet student an opportunity to ask questions and seek assistance. It can be used as a form of formative assessment so that the instructor is made aware of understanding issues that can be dealt with quickly. Unlike summative assessment which forces you to wait longer and can easily put you in a position of waiting until the next time you teach the class. Student answers can help provide some direction for their own instruction, not for future students. The purpose of this exercise is to encourage students to reflect on the class plus review and process what they learned before they leave the classroom. The answers to the questions can be used:

* At the beginning to review and clarify material
* To determine if the students are understanding the concepts covered
* To identify problems individuals are having
* To call attention to a need to review the material
* To open a line of communication with students
* To help students identify areas where they may need to spend more time studying and/or reviewing
* To ex explicitly charge students to identify what they are confused about and then to embrace, work on, and wrestle with that confusion as they participate in the learning activities of the course.

**Method**

Basically, the instructor takes the few minutes or so of class and asks students to write down short answers to two questions:

* What was the most important point made in class today?
* What unanswered question(s) do you still have?
* Alternate question – What was most confusing to me about the material being explored in class today?

Students can be allowed to respond anonymously, to encourage them to admit points of confusion they might hesitate to put their name to, or they can be asked to write their names so that the instructor can write a brief, personal response to each question or encourage thoughtful answers by giving extra credit. You can do this initially with unsigned. The primary advantage of having them signed is that the teacher can respond directly and privately to individual students. A transition might involve making signatures voluntary.

You should spend time early in the course discussing examples of the kinds of specific observations that you would like them to be able to make. Also, you can talk about how to make questions during a class as a means of sharpening attention. You could demonstrate this with examples of student’s responses in the class.

You will not be judged or penalized by expressing your opinions and feelings. Extra credit can be given to students who turn them in on a regular basis. You should respond to each question.

Variation of questions:

* Name five significant points that have made in this session.
* What did you learn today?
* What was the most surprising or enlightening moment in class today?
* What did you learn about \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ today?
* In one sentence, summarize the most important concepts from the lab, reading, etc.?
* What part of the material covered today do you still not understand?