

SPECIAL REPORT
of the
UNDERGRADUATE EDUCATION COUNCIL
concerning
SUPPORT FOR THE INTERWRITE PERSONAL RESPONSE SYSTEM
AT THE
UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS AMHERST

Presented at the
654th Regular Meeting of the Faculty Senate
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Background:

There is a growing use of classroom response systems where students using “clickers” submit answers to questions and their responses are recorded by a laptop computer connected to room receivers. The UMass Amherst campus received two Davis Educational Foundation Grants over the last 5 years to install and use such systems. To date, we have installed Interwrite Personal Response System [PRS] receivers in all major lecture auditoriums and several classrooms. We have also linked the PRS system to OWL, our online web-based learning tool to improve and extend the system. This past academic year [F05 and S06], we had 50 courses use such classroom response systems and all but five used the Interwrite PRS hardware (see attached spreadsheet). Four of the five courses that did not use the Interwrite PRS did so because other vendors offered a newer, improved radio frequency transmitter with enhanced performance and pedagogy. Now Interwrite PRS offers a radio frequency version that we pilot tested for Interwrite PRS in two courses this semester and we were impressed with the results. This new radio frequency Interwrite PRS offers the best set of features with an attractive business model where we buy the hardware once and there are no site licenses, student registration fees, or software expenses. In addition, the software is backward compatible to the older Interwrite PRS we still have and use on campus.

Textbook publishers have entered the clicker business by bundling specific clickers with textbooks and their sale’s forces have been pitching their clickers to individual faculty. The concern is that students will be asked to buy more than one clicker because certain instructors use a different clicker because it was bundled with the textbook. Although we are not mandating that UMass Amherst instructors use the Interwrite PRS, we are only providing support, both for the hardware and software, for the Interwrite PRS—both the older and the newer systems. Faculty still decide what’s best for their students and courses, but the adoption of one company’s product as the one we support should encourage the use of the system that has been nearly universally used on our campus and reduce the financial burden on our students.

Recommendation:

That UMass Amherst, under the direction of the Office of the Provost working in collaboration with OIT, provide support for the classroom response system sold by GTCO CalComp under the Interwrite PRS brand name. Such a policy will encourage instructors to use the same system and reduce costs to our students.

MOVED: **That the Faculty Senate approve The Interwrite Personal Response System as the**
44-06 **classroom response system that is supported at the University of Massachusetts**
 Amherst, as presented in Sen. Doc. No. 06-039.

Known users of "clickers"

Fall 05

Term/Year	Courses	R/O	QTC	EXP ENR	ACT ENR	ACT/EXP%	INSTRUCTOR	Course Note	Type
Fall 05	Astron 101 2	REQ	0	301	291	97%	Tripp, T.	The Solar System	PRS IR units
Fall 05	Biochem 100 1	REQ	0	125	222	178%	Fitzgerald/	My DNA/RDNGS Online	PRS IR units
Fall 05	Biochem 523 1	REQ	0	88	99	113%	Normanly/TH	General Biochem	PRS IR units
Fall 05	Biology 100	REQ	0	768	762	99%	Phillis/Col	Intro	PRS IR units
Fall 05	Chem 110 1	REQ	0	180	187	104%	Reed, E.	General Chemistry	PRS IR units
Fall 05	Chem 112	REQ	0	212	209	99%	Chem Dept	Same as SPR'05 111	PRS IR units
Fall 05	Chem 261	REQ	0	327	323	99%	Snyder, G.	Organic Chem	PRS IR units
Fall 05	Econ 104 B	REQ	0	307	298	97%	Aitken, N.	Intro to Macro	PRS IR units
Fall 05	English 270 01	REQ	0	143	141	99%	Bromell, N.	DTFFT	PRS IR units
Fall 05	Nutritn 130	REQ	0	469	467	100%	Atallah, M.	For Healthy Lifesty	PRS IR units
Fall 05	Physics 116	REQ	0	120	100	83%	Dallapiccol	Relativity	PRS IR units
Fall 05	Physics 151	REQ	0	402	399	99%	Blayblock/H	General Physics I	PRS IR units
Fall 05	Physics 152 01	REQ	0	193	166	86%	Candela, D.	General Physics II	PRS IR units
Fall 05	Physics 181 1	REQ	0	53	55	104%	Gerace, W.	Pick one title	PRS IR units
Fall 05	Physics 287 01	REQ	0	46	36	78%	Hertzbach,	PhysicsIII-Waves&Th	PRS IR units
Fall 05	Res-Econ 102 1	REQ	0	208	206	99%	Stevens, T.	Intro Resource Econ	PRS IR units
Fall 05	Res-Econ 211 1	REQ	0	240	236	98%	Lass, D.	Intro Stat/Life Sci	PRS IR units
Fall 05	Res-Econ 212 1	REQ	0	301	317	105%	Rogers, R.	Intro Stat/Soc Sci	PRS IR units
Fall 05	SCH-MGMT 210 A	REQ	0	264	144	55%	Sorcinielli,	Int Busin Inf Sys	PRS IR units
Fall 05	SCH-MGMT 210 C	REQ	0	70	70	100%	Sorcinielli,	Int Business Inf Sys	PRS IR units
				4728					
Fall 05	Astron 100	REQ	0	300	300 est		Schneider,S		eInstruction RF units
Fall 05	Pysch 100	REQ	0	900	900 est		Feldman, R		eInstruction RF units
Fall 05	Physics 131	REQ	0	300	300 est		Miskimen,Rory		Turning Technology RF units
				1500					

Spring 06

Term/Year	Courses	R/O	QTC	EXP ENR	ACT ENR	ACT/EXP%	INSTRUCTOR	Course Note	Type
Spring 06	Biochem 285 1	REQ	0	100 ?	NA		Normanly, J.	Also Biology 285	PRS IR units
Spring 06	Biology 285 1	REQ	0	100 ?	NA		Downes, G.	Also Biochem 285	PRS IR units
Spring 06	Chem 110	REQ	0	150 ?	NA		Whelan, T.	Sec 1&2/General Chm	PRS IR units
Spring 06	Chem 111	REQ	0	416 ?	NA		Chem Dept	General Science	PRS IR units
Spring 06	Chem 112	REQ	0	495 ?	NA		Chem Dept	General Science II	PRS IR units
Spring 06	Chem 262 1	REQ	0	242 ?	NA		Snyder, G.	Organic Chem	PRS IR units
Spring 06	Chem 312 1	REQ	0	57 ?	NA		Tyson, J.	Analytical	PRS IR units
Spring 06	Econ 104 C	REQ	0	315 ?	NA		Aitken, N.	Intro to Macro	PRS IR units
Spring 06	English 270 1	REQ	0	180 ?	NA		Carlin, D.	American Identities	PRS IR units
Spring 06	Envirdes 205 1	REQ	0	91 ?	NA		Pader, E.	Dynmcs Human Habtat	PRS IR units
Spring 06	Finopmgt 301 1	REQ	0	206 ?	NA		Lacey, N.	Corporation Finance	PRS IR units
Spring 06	History 101 1	REQ	0	120 ?	NA		Donson, A.	DT	PRS IR units
Spring 06	Nutritn 130	REQ	0	405 ?	NA		Atallah, M.	All Sec/Nutr Hlthy	PRS IR units
Spring 06	Phil 160 A	REQ	0	270 ?	NA		Klement, K.	Intro Ethics	PRS IR units
Spring 06	Physics 100 1	REQ	0	120 ?	NA		Kawall, D.	Conceptual Physics	PRS IR units
Spring 06	Physics 114 1	REQ	0	80 ?	NA		Koffer, R.	Thry Sound/Spch/Hrg	PRS IR units
Spring 06	Physics 152 1	REQ	0	245 ?	NA		Emam, M.	General II	PRS IR units
Spring 06	Physics 182 1	REQ	0	48 ?	NA		Wong, P.	II Electricity/Magn	PRS IR units
Spring 06	Polisci 101 B	REQ	0	100 ?	NA		La Raja, R.	American Politics	PRS IR units
Spring 06	Res-Econ 102 1	REQ	0	200 ?	NA		Stevens, Tom	Intro Res Econ	PRS IR units
Spring 06	Res-Econ 211 1	REQ	0	242 ?	NA		Morzuch, B.	Intro Stats/Lifesci	PRS IR units
Spring 06	Res-Econ 212 1	REQ	0	275 ?	NA		Mozumder, Pal	Intro Stats/Soc Sci	PRS IR units
Spring 06	Sch-Mgmt 210 A	REQ	0	140 ?	NA		Sorcinielli,	Int Business Inf Sys	PRS IR units
				4597					
Spring 06	Astron 100	REQ	0	300	300 est		Schneider,S		eInstruction RF units
Spring 06	Physics 131	REQ	0	150	147 est		Hatch, Heath		Turning Technology RF units
				450					
Spring 06	Res-Econ 312	REQ	0	60	66		Lass, D.	Intro Econometrics	PRS RF units pilot-free clickers tc
Spring 06	Physics			250	275		Andres Corrada-Emmanuel		PRS RF units pilot-free clickers tc