Robles and Braathen (2002), discuss how online assessment should be viewed as a system for evaluating student academic achievement. The assessment process should be viewed as a system because there are many components to measure. The principles of assessment do not change in an online environment. Just because it may be difficult to measure the amount of learning in an online class, does not mean that learning has not taken place (Beebe, Vonderwell, and Boboc, 2010). Assessment should play a crucial role in helping students to develop as effective online collaborators. Online learners need to manage their own learning through self- and peer-assessment, collaboration, and reflection. To manage their learning, students need to take an active role by planning, monitoring, and then reflecting and evaluating not only on the learning tasks, but on the processes of learning as well (Beebe, Vonderwell, and Boboc, 2010).

There are multiple effective ways you can assess online learning. One way is a method in which we are assessed in this class (Online Design and Pedagogy). This class is heavily assessed through participation. We have a rubric for participation, and what needs to be covered in our responses to demonstrate learning. One example is we have a weekly forum where we are given a topic to discuss our expertise or experience, and post our response or reflection in a forum for discussion purposes. We are assessed on our discussions on readings and resources provided within the course. There are points given for discussions within each forum from our own reflection and experience, and additional points expounding on other's posts. We are also assessed on a weekly experiment in which we need to explore, provide resources, and report out on our findings. This is a formative way of assessing, which I feel is very effective in a Masters online program.

Another method of assessing online learning is through test taking after reviewing or being presented course material. In our Web Authoring class my first semester, we were given

readings and demonstrations throughout the semester, and every 4-weeks we had to take a test on what we learned. This was a summative form of learning, as we had to read and comprehend what we learned, and then we were tested on that specific material in a true/false or multiple-choice format. One way the instructor was able to avoid cheating or looking up answers was "timing" the test. You had approximately one minute to answer each question which left you no time to look up answers. I personally do not find timed testing taking a true measure of what someone learned, as not all learners perform under pressure. However, there are times an instructor must use a summative assessment to truly find out what learning occurred during a course, and this is an effective way to assess for that type of course.

At work, we are exploring assessing learners right now in a f2f classroom, through the introduction of mobile learning apps. We are testing a mobile app called "Kahoot" (www.kahoot.com). During the f2f class, our trainers have students download the app, and then answer questions while being prompted by the instructor on their device. You can review and reinforce what you're learning while in the moment. You can also push surveys to gather the class opinions and gain insight to the learning, or facilitate a discussion amongst the class. There is a "team mode" function in the app where you can have the team play with and against each other live in class. It's a very effective way of bringing online assessments into a f2f classroom.

I find that online assessments are very effective in that there are multiple ways to assess the learner. You can use video, play games, discuss and share in forums and take summative tests to assess learning. Online assessments can work in any class whether f2f or online. It's imperative the instructor finds an effective online learning assessment tool that's appropriate to the course material for gauging student learning.

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