Top Hat--a Mobile Audience Response System and Learning Platform for Classroom Engagement

**Objective:**
Explore the functions of Top Hat and learn how to integrate a mobile audience response system (ARS) in the classroom to improve student engagement. [https://tophat.com](https://tophat.com)

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**From Gosseau et al. (2016)** use mobile ARS as a tool to support teaching, not as the focus of your teaching.

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**Rationale for using ARS technologies**

Mobile (BYOD) ARS technology replaces older clickers and provides meaningful and timely feedback in large and small classroom settings that is sometimes challenging and difficult. This technology also engages all students simultaneously with material, as a basic active learning strategy.

- ARS technology can be used to review past material or break up a lecture into smaller mini-lectures using content driven questions that emphasize key points.

**A Brief Description of Top Hat**

The Top Hat system is one example of BYOD classroom engagement platforms that can be accessed from any mobile device. *(FYI: Top Hat it has now been adopted as the ARS for DVM students in all 3 years of the curriculum.)*

Top Hat has excellent support as you work through issues [https://support.tophat.com/s](https://support.tophat.com/s) as well as they have articles to aid instructors.

**What can Top Hat do?**

- **In-class questions (w/ multiple question types available)**
  - Anonymous or not
  - Graded or not, participation credit or not
  - Synchronous or asynchronous (self-paced)
  - Option to leave open for review

- **Out of class questions and discussions**
- Answer submissions with or without hints or feedback
- Assign Questions for Homework or Review
- Assign Questions to individual students as homework
- Anonymous discussions

- **Attendance feature (NOT A REASON TO USE TOP HAT!!)**
- **Pages** – more complex content +/- embedded questions; Electronic Documents

A Top Hat Course called "Top Hat How To" Sandbox Course, was created go to the following URL [https://app.tophat.com/e/948529](https://app.tophat.com/e/948529); to show you how Top Hat looks from a learners perspective (which was extremely important to me when I was first using Top Hat).

Top Hat use for instructors is always free, and the instructor simply creates an account, and can immediately invite students to join his/her course.+

**Activity**

1. Go to [https://tophat.com](https://tophat.com) and create an instructor account and course (If don’t have a course already).
2. With the idea of a tangible product spend the next 5 minutes putting together a question to share, either regarding your content or just a sample practice question. (Then pair up and share with someone.)

**REFERENCES**


