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Fall 10-28-2019

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McIntyre, Miranda, "Miranda McIntyre TSSA Winter 2019" (2019). *Teaching Skills Study Awards (TSSA) Reports*. 4.

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TSSA Grant Dissemination Report

Miranda M. McIntyre – Department of Psychology

Society for the Teaching of Psychology preconference
at the Society for Personality and Social Psychology
annual convention ([Program link here](#))



Teaching Strategy

The all-day preconference covered a wide variety of teaching strategies. Two of the presentations focused on the use of podcasts in teaching: “Using Podcasts to Teach Application, Reflection, and Critical Thinking” by Dr. Dietlinde Heilmayr and “From Podcast to Pedagogy: Learning about Hypothesis Testing in the Real World using Radiolab” by Dr. Maria Iankilevitch. These sessions addressed podcasts as a multimedia tool that can be used to stimulate classroom discussion and analysis.

Teaching Application

I applied this teaching strategy by creating a podcast-based assignment for an online course: PSYC 100 – Introduction to Psychology. One of the major topics covered in this course is intelligence, which is also the subject of an NPR mini-series called *G*. I assigned the second episode from this series (“[Problem Space](#)”) to accompany the textbook material. This episode discusses some of the legal and ethical complications surrounding the use of IQ tests in education. Currently, it is illegal in the state of California to administer an IQ test to black students ([case summary here](#)). The podcast addresses the unintended effects of this law.

Consistent with the presenters’ recommendations, the podcast was available in both audio and text formats. This ensured that the material was accessible to all students and allowed them to choose a preferred format.

The assignment had three parts:

- 1) Students reflected on their thoughts and reactions in response to the podcast
- 2) Students identified connections between the podcast and course concepts
- 3) Students expanded on the podcast topic by discussing other potential consequences or perspectives that the episode did not address

Overall, this assignment was highly successful. In their reflections, many students commented that they expected the podcast to be “boring” but were surprised to find themselves very interested in the discussion. The episode gave a new angle on the common knowledge topic of IQ tests. It also gave students a current, local perspective on how this issue affects other students *here* and *now*. Students were able to draw connections between the course material and the podcast and responded critically to the topic by integrating these sources.