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GRASP: a free app to manage group work and active learning classrooms

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In teacher-centered classrooms, instructors know in advance what will happen in 5, 10 or 20 minutes time. In an active learning classroom, students control the learning sequence. Hence, many instructors have trouble managing many groups working simultaneously. This is known as the "Orchestration load"problem in learning sciences. A simple case is that of a problem session with N groups working on the a given number of problems. It is possible that one group is very efficient and can solve 3 or 4 problems quickly before they request help from the instructor. Suppose that a noticeably small moment later, another group requests help too. However, this second group is still struggling with the very first question. Typically, instructors will help the group that requested help first. This creates an even greater lag before the second group completes their first question. We developed a free mobile application called GRASP (Group Response and Ambient Student Participation system) to avoid these issues and provide useful data for real time classroom management as well as exportable data to analyze your active learning classrooms. We will demonstrate the ease of use of GRASP, some data collected and the process that any attendee can use to adopt the app in their courses.

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