

Title: Teaching Statistical Literacy Using Odysseys2Sense: a Web Discussion Forum

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Abstract: Statistical literacy is the ability to read and interpret summary statistics in the everyday media. Critical thinking is central to this kind of course. But teaching critical thinking is generally an instructor-intensive activity especially in large classes. This paper focuses on the use of Odysseys2sense: a new online discussion forum that develops civil discourse and critical thinking through anonymous peer review. Odyssey2sense is like a game: players get power based on scores from other players using rating criteria that involve civility, accuracy and conceptual integration. It was used in teaching a hybrid statistical literacy course and then in teaching the first online statistical literacy course. Student feedback, grading and outcomes are presented along with the strengths and weaknesses of the program. This first use indicates that Odysseys2sense can encourage critical thinking with minimal teacher involvement and in a way that is scalable for very large class sizes.