

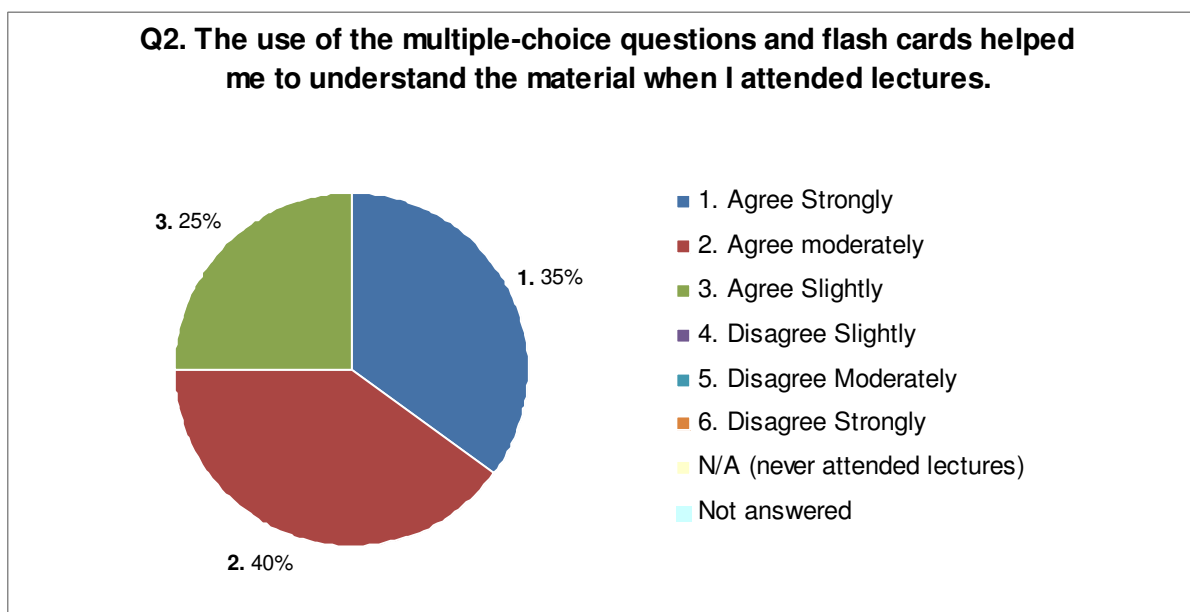
Plato and Platonism. Monash University, School of Philosophy and Bioethics. Semester 2, 2007.

Description

Peer Instruction was used in the lectures for a second year philosophy course, *Plato and Platonism*. Approximately 2-3 questions were used per lecture. 20 students completed the questionnaire, representing 47% of the total enrolment of 43.

Results

Effect on understanding of lecture material



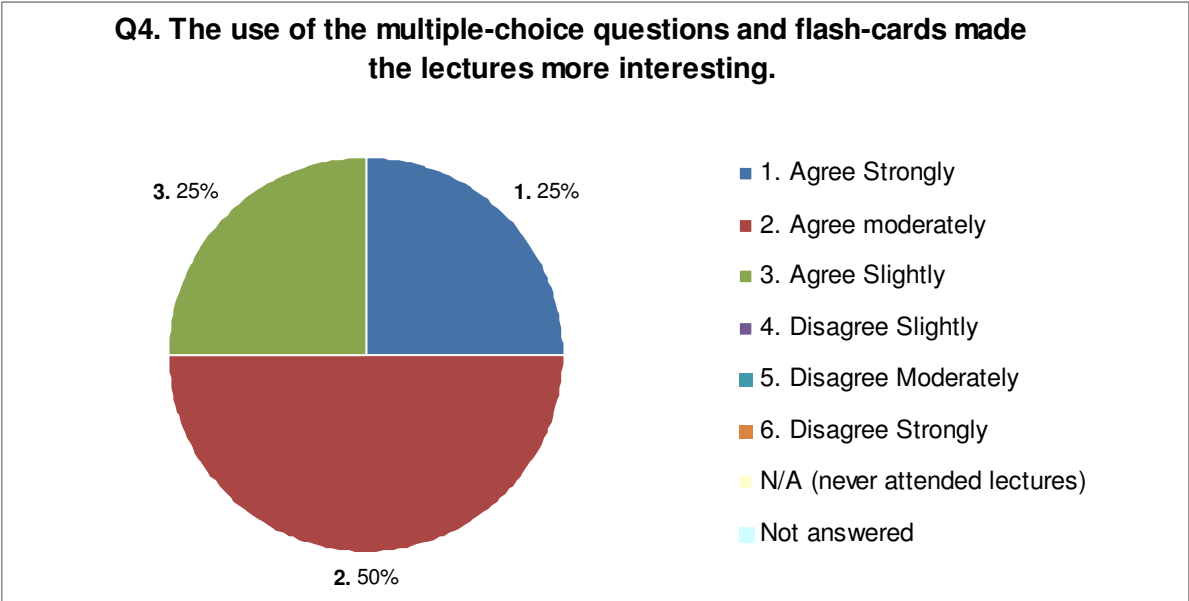
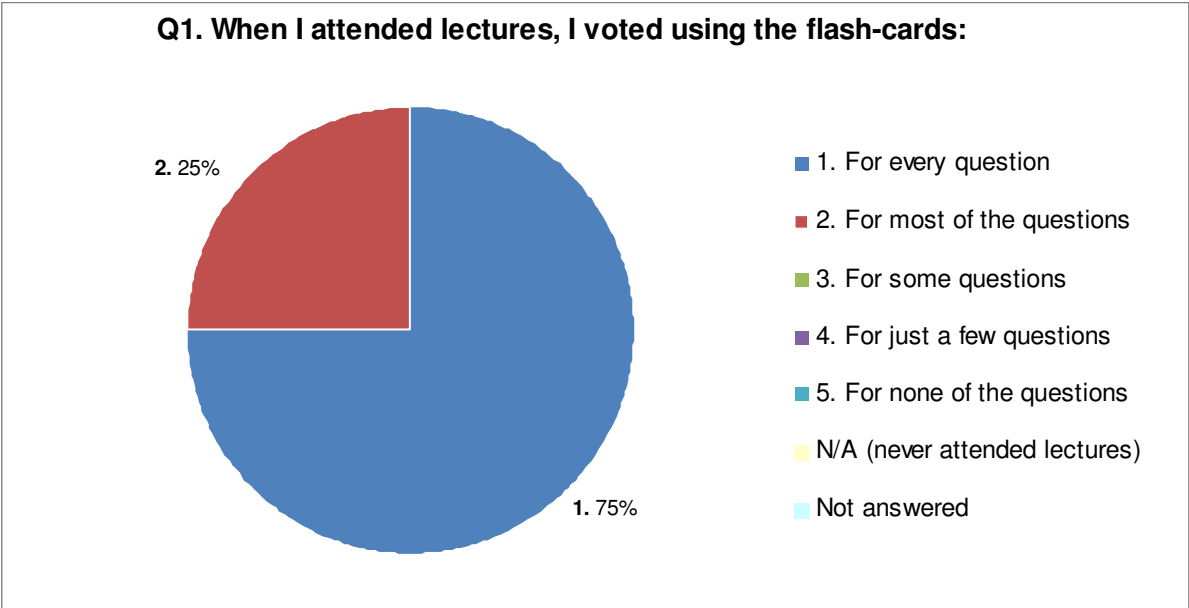
Student comments

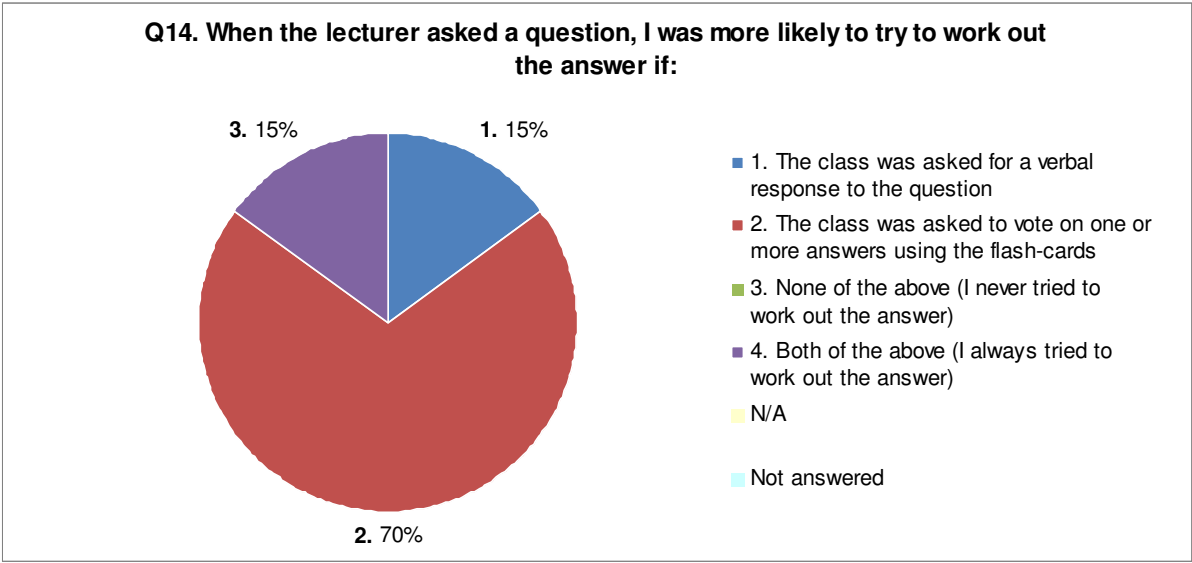
- Broke up the lecture and gave us a chance to properly understand the material in the lecture.
- Ability to engage with the material, particularly as a multiple choice question usually identifies common misconceptions.
- Able to gauge for myself how much I understood content and whether there was anything I was lacking.

Q3. This aspect of the lectures helped me to understand the material when I listened to the lecture recordings.

Not applicable – no recordings for this course.

Effect on participation and engagement

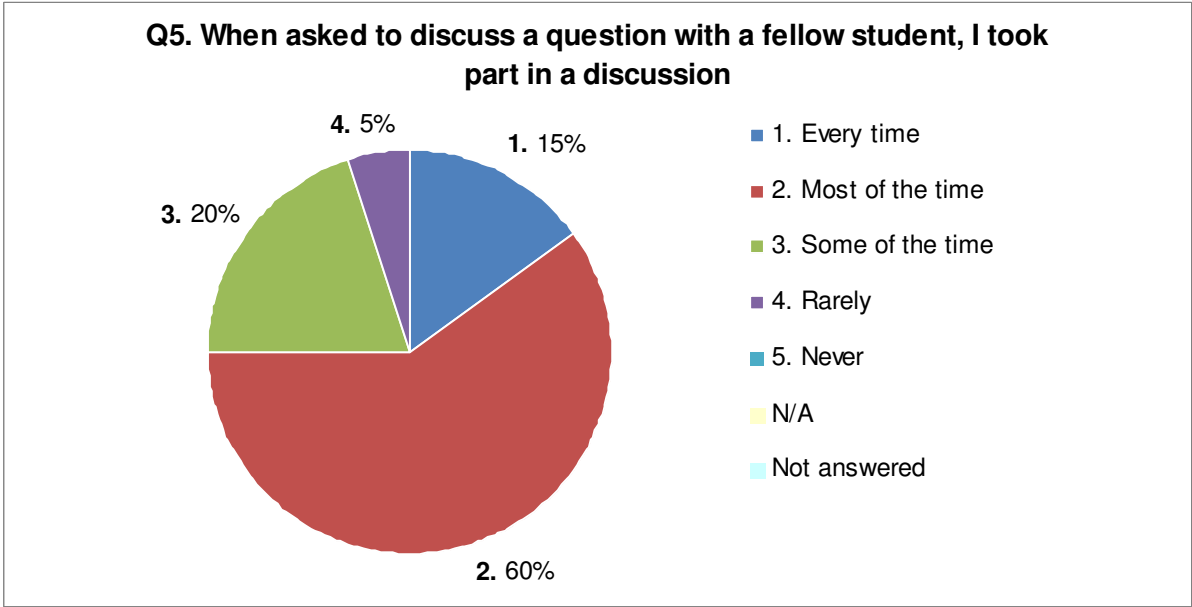


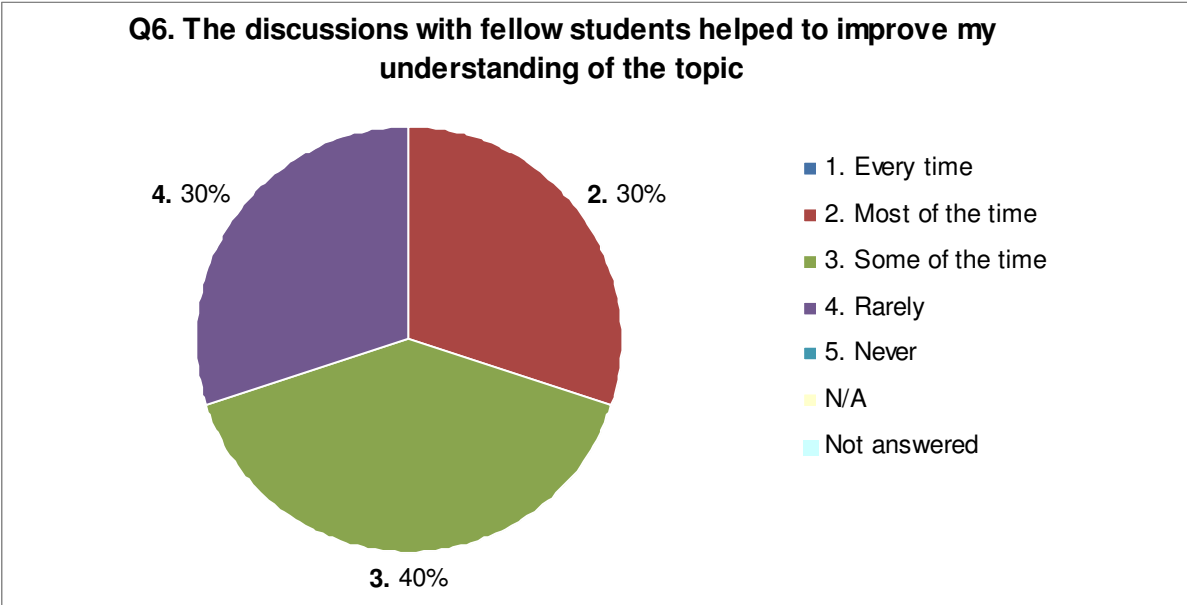


Student comments

- It made the lectures more interesting and it helped break up lectures into reasonable sections.
- They made the lecture more interesting. It kept me focused and helped me to think about the lecture material instead of just letting it wash over me.
- They were interactive and encouraged me to actively engage with the course material.
- Active involvement in material rather than just sitting and listening.

Effectiveness of discussions

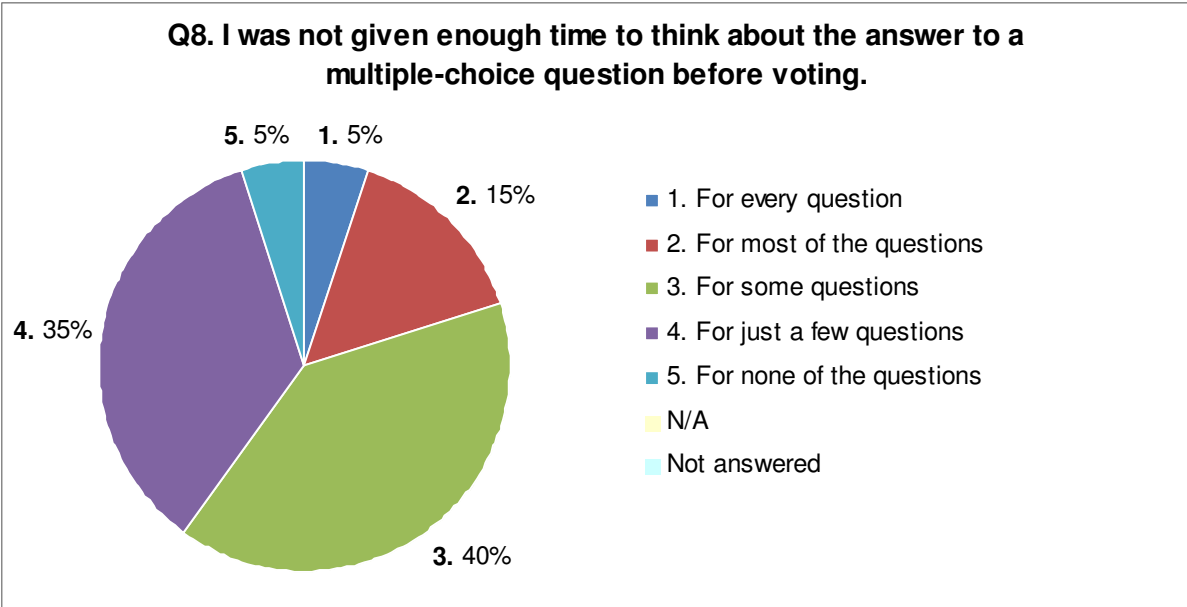




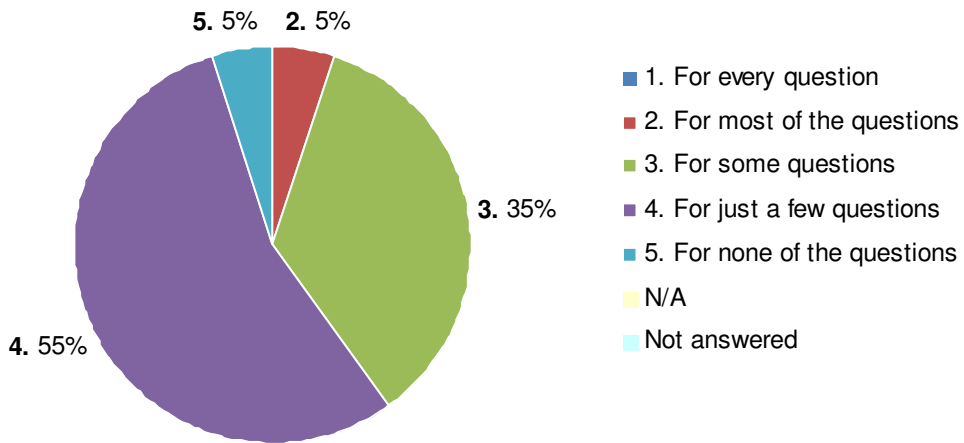
Student comments

- ... aside from having to absorb the information, it meant we also had to think the information through and organise it in such a way where we could construct reasons for voting for or against a certain answer.
- I didn't like the discussion that much. I found most students, myself included, didn't know the material well enough to properly justify our answers.

Problems with questions



Q9. The multiple-choice questions were too long, or too difficult to understand.

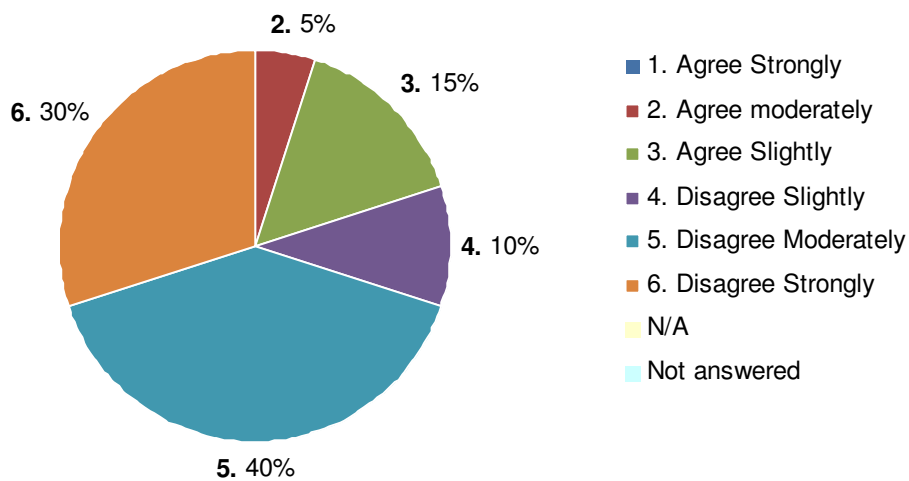


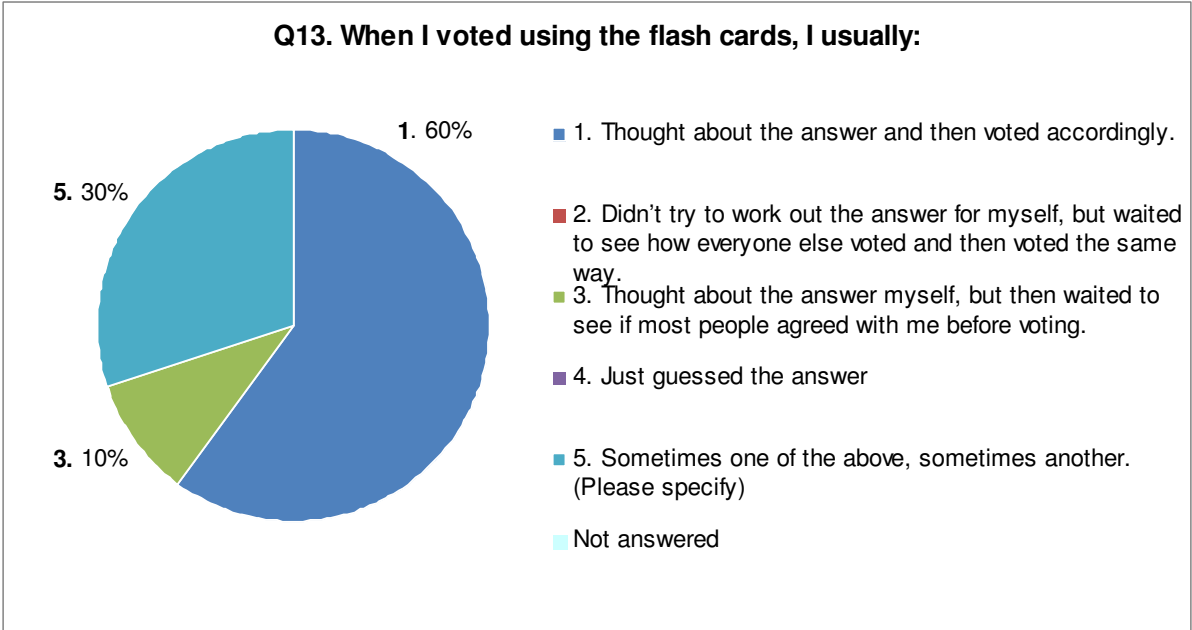
Student comments

- Lack of time to think about the questions properly sometimes.
- Questions sometimes take a greater amount of time to understand.
- Sometimes the questions were long, making it a bit hard to grasp quickly.
- Most questions were good but some I thought was unnecessary (when most people got the answers right)

Voting mechanism

Q7. A disadvantage of using the flash-cards is that the lecturer and/or other students can see my response.





Q13. When I voted using the flash cards, I usually:

1. Thought about the answer and then voted accordingly.	60%
2. Didn't try to work out the answer for myself, but waited to see how everyone else voted and then voted the same way.	0
3. Thought about the answer myself, but then waited to see if most people agreed with me before voting.	10%
4. Just guessed the answer.	0
5. Sometimes one of the above, sometimes another:	30%
1 and 3	10%
1 and 4	10%
1, 3 and 4	0
1, 2 and 3	0
1, 2, 3 and 4	10%
6. Other. Please specify:	0
Not answered	0

Student comments

- Might be self conscious if I didn't know the answer.

Benefits

Q10. What were the benefits (for you) of the multiple-choice questions and flash-cards (if any)?

Number of students who answered: **16** (of 20)

Interaction and engagement	6 comments
Improved attention	4 comments
Useful feedback	3 comments
Improved understanding	3 comments

Comments

Improved understanding

Broke up the lecture and gave us a chance to properly understand the material in the lecture.

Ability to engage with the material, particularly as a multiple choice question usually identifies common misconceptions.

Re-enforcement of points in lecture. Opportunity to formulate own ideas on topic before given the answer by lecturer.

Improved attention

It made the lectures more interesting and it helped break up lectures into reasonable sections.

Breaks up monotony of class

Added some variety to the lectures.

They made the lecture more interesting. It kept me focused and helped me to think about the lecture material instead of just letting it wash over me.

Useful feedback

Able to gauge for myself how much I understood content and whether there was anything I was lacking.

Feedbacks ie made ideas clear

Get to see if others are as clueless as me, there's a certain amount of comfort in that.

Interaction and engagement

Engaging with material.

Multiple interpretations helped me to think about questions from different viewpoints, and so I thought about subsequent questions more openly and critically.

They were interactive and encouraged me to actively engage with the course material.

Active involvement in material rather than just sitting and listening.

In that, aside from having to absorb the information, it meant we also had to think the information through and organise it in such a way where we could construct reasons for voting for or against a certain answer.

Gave opportunity to think about question instead of passively receiving "right" answer.

Disadvantages

Q11. What were the disadvantages (for you) of the multiple-choice questions and flash-cards (if any)?

Number of students who answered: **14** (of 20)

No disadvantages	3 comments
Not enough time given to think	2 comments
Questions too long or too hard	3 comments
Discussions with peers not useful	1 comments
Embarrassed when answered incorrectly	1 comments
Takes up time	2 comments
Other	1 comments

Comments

Not enough time given to think

Lack of time to think about the questions properly sometimes.

Only think I needed more time to think about the options.

Questions too long or too hard

Some were too hard..... [Might be self conscious if I didn't know the answer]

Questions sometimes take a greater amount of time to understand.

Sometimes the questions were long, making it a bit hard to grasp quickly.

Takes up time

Too little time, felt rushed and it took time away from lecture.

Took some time to get info to sink in so I could answer the question.

Discussions with peers not useful

I didn't like the discussion that much. I found most students, myself included, didn't know the material well enough to properly justify our answers.

Embarrassed when answered incorrectly

.... Might be self conscious if I didn't know the answer.

Other

In a 1-hour lecture, they seemed to go by too quickly at times.

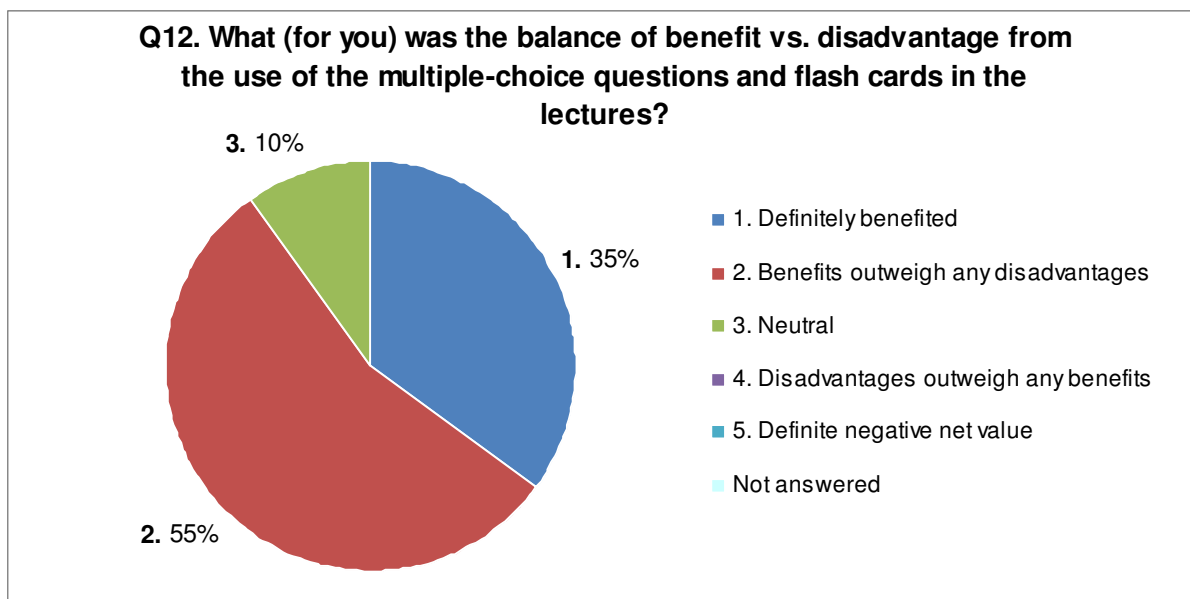
No disadvantages

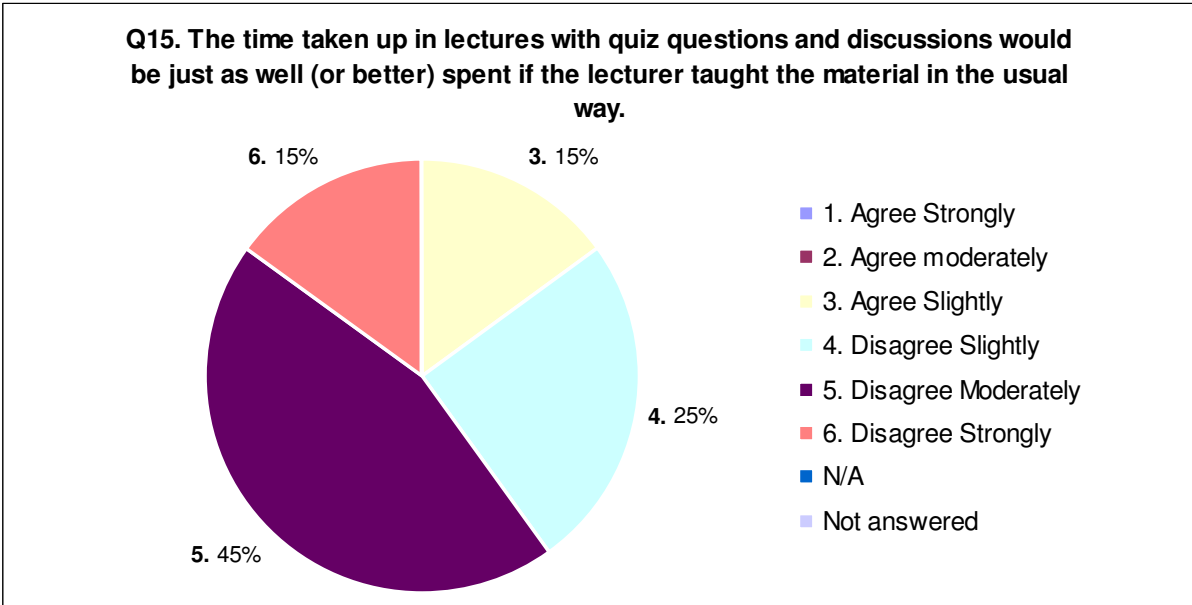
None.

None.

None, good idea.

Overall benefit





Other comments

Q16. Any other comments on the use of the multiple-choice questions, flash-cards and discussions:

Number of students who answered: (7 of 20)

Positive	3
Neutral	3
Negative	1

Comments

Positive

Very suitable teaching method for philosophy.

Useful b/c it made me tune in, broke monotony of lecture.

I think they help keep interest during the lecture. And for me they woke me up during sometimes boring lectures.

Neutral

With longer lectures, it would allow for more thinking time.

They go ok.

Being given a copy of the questions and answers would have been helpful. Perhaps on a separate sheet at the end of the lecture.

Negative

Most questions were good but some I thought was unnecessary (when most people got the answers right)
