

Readiness Assessment Tests (RATs)

Leaders: William Harkness and Laura Simon, Penn State University

Have you found yourself wishing that students actually completed your reading assignments before coming to class (or at all)? Do you find yourself wishing you had more class time to work with students on interesting problems rather than using valuable class time teaching basic concepts? If your answer to either of these questions was "yes," then you might want to consider implementing Readiness Assessment Tests (RATs) in your classes.

Attendees of this breakout session will be introduced to the Readiness Assessment Test method that has been used successfully by introductory statistics courses at Penn State University over the past five years. Attendees will learn about RATs, and come to appreciate their value, by actually working through the process in the same way students in their classes would. The method involves four key-steps: 1) students first take an individual Readiness Assessment Test 2) then students take the same Readiness Assessment Test as a group, 3) students are given an opportunity to appeal their group results, and finally 4) students complete group activities that allow them to immediately apply their newfound knowledge. Attendees will not only be introduced to the method used in several disciplines across Penn State, but will also be given the opportunity to discuss their concerns about, and to formulate viable solutions for, implementing RATs in their own classes.

Note: Much of the information needed for this session will be given out during the session; in an effort not to “give away” the essence of the activities and discussion, that information is not included here. A separate handout will be prepared and will be available during and after their session, for you to include in your resource notebook.