MOOCs (Massive Open Online Courses) are designed to serve large groups of students, but SPOCs (Small Private Online Courses) are intended for smaller class sizes. As a result, SPOCs are better suited for user interaction in the form of comments associated with fine-grained lecture content.

Features

• Fine-grained lecture comments in addition to lecture-based comments
• Instructor configurable gamification achievements to encourage participation and early completion
• Anonymous comments
• Integration with YouTube for lectures and LDAP for authentication and course identification

Achievements

• Commenting
• Replying
• Providing comment feedback (Helpful/Flag)
• Receiving “Helpful” feedback
• Starting a lecture “early”
• Finishing a lecture “early”
• Receiving “x” instances of these achievements

What’s Next?

• Finish implementation
• Alpha and beta testing
• Empirical evaluation to answer the following research questions:

1. Does gamification increase the amount of student interaction in an online lecture tool?
2. Does an anonymous comment system increase participation in an online lecture tool?
3. Do students prefer the gamification-based interaction system?

Students value interaction with other students in SPOCs. Systems that provide a means for interaction suffer from a seeding issue where early lecture viewers lack interaction with others. SPOCK’s gamification system aims to address this.

We would like to thank the Office of Research and Sponsored Programs for making this project possible.