

Title: Manually classify 10,000 forum posts from online classes

You will read 10,000 forum posts from students in online classes, and will evaluate each along six categories. You will enter your results in a spreadsheet.

Background:

We are building computer support to help instructors of very large online courses (MOOCs) respond quickly to student concerns or frustrations. The courses include tens of thousands of students. Their difficulties manifest in the online forum facilities associated with the courses. Since instructors cannot read all forum posts, we try to build computer software for automatically selecting posts that require instructor attention. Each post is one or two short paragraphs. Participants of the courses respond to each other's posts, fostering discussion.

'Teaching' a computer to pick the important posts requires a large 'gold set' of forum posts that are hand classified by reliable human evaluators. This job will create such a gold set.

Each post needs to be tagged along six categories:

- Is the post a question?
- Is it an answer?
- Is it an opinion?
- What is the emotional tone of the post? Does the tone mostly convey a negative emotion, such as sadness, anger, or frustration? Or is the post's tone more positive, such as expressing happiness, delight, relief, etc.?
- To what extent does the post express confusion, such as an inability to understand some concept that is taught in the class?
- How urgent is it that the instructor get involved in response to the post?

Additionally we ask that you flag any posts that reveal the identity of the poster. We try to remove such entries from the set.

The posts and a template for the above per-post evaluations are contained in an Excel spreadsheet that is to be filled in.

The main prerequisite for this job is that you have enough time to do a reliable job. All our subsequent work will depend on your information being correct.

A second requirement is that you are willing to sign a statement promising to keep any personally identifiable information you find in

the posts confidential. We have tried to remove all names, email addresses, and phone numbers, but we need to be sure that if something slipped through, you don't tell.

Instructions:

Open your spreadsheet. You care only about the left most seven columns. The left-most cell in each row contains one forum posts. Next is a cell with column header 'Opinion(1/0)'. Put a 1 into that cell if the post expresses an opinion, else put a 0. The 'Question(1/0)' column similarly gets a 1 if the post contains a question, else, please enter a 0. The 'Answer(1/0)' should receive a 1 if the post contains an answer to what appears to have been a question in a prior post. Note that a single post might include both an opinion and an answer, or some other mix of question, answer, or opinion. Just place 1's in all columns that apply.

The next three columns need ratings from 1 to 7. Here are some details:

Sentiment indicates the emotional tone of the post -- whether the post conveys a negative emotion (sadness, anger, or frustration) or a positive one (happiness, delight, relief, etc.). Sentiments are mapped to scores as follows:

Sentiment:

Extremely negative → 1
Very negative → 2
Somewhat negative → 3
Neutral → 4
Somewhat positive → 5
Very positive → 6
Extremely positive → 7

Confusion indicates the extent to which the post's author is expressing an inability to understand some concept that is taught in the class. Different degrees of confusion are mapped to scores as follows:

Confusion:

Extremely knowledgeable → 1
Very knowledgeable → 2

Somewhat knowledgeable → 3
Neutral → 4
Somewhat confused → 5
Very confused → 6
Extremely confused → 7

Urgency indicates the degree to which the instructor(s) should be concerned with the content of the post. If a post is very urgent, then the instructor should respond to the post as soon as possible. If a post is not urgent, then the instructor might not have to respond to the post at all. Different degrees of urgency *to the instructor* are mapped to scores as follows:

Urgency:

No reason to read the post → 1
Not actionable; read if time → 2
Not actionable; maybe interesting → 3
Neutral: respond if spare time → 4
Somewhat urgent: good idea to reply → 5
teaching assistant might
suffice.
Very urgent: good idea for instructor → 6
to reply.
Extremely urgent: instructor definitely
needs to reply → 7

Poster Identifiable

Please place a 1 in this cell if you see personally identifiable information in the row's post. First names are not a problem. Full names, email addresses, or phone numbers to warrant a 1.

Examples

Ex. 1: Yay - done! Passed by the skin of my teeth. And thanks everyone! Many thanks to the Networking course team, as well as fellow learners whose informed posts provided the needed help on some problems! Thanks also to Stanford and the OpenEdx team for another amazing learning experience through this platform. Take care all, bye! Mike

Sentiment: 7

Confusion: 1

Urgency: 4

Ex. 2: I would like to thank you for the class. I learned a lot even though I didn't complete the programming assignment and the final exam.

Sentiment: 6

Confusion: 4

Urgency: 3

Ex. 3: When will the next quiz be released? I'd like to get a head start on it, since I've got some extra time these days.

Sentiment: 4

Confusion: 4

Urgency: 5

Ex. 4: Thank you Phil, Nick, Robert, Akshay, Suresh, Vimal, and Antonin, and everyone who has been of great help, and making this so freely available. Would it be possible to have more programming assignments in the next run? It has been greatly beneficial, and looking forward to have tcp/ip, nat or application exercises, or even a separate course such as unix/linux network programming would be great!

Sentiment: 7

Confusion: 4

Urgency: 4

Ex. 5: Although I didn't pass the course, it was very satisfying for me to learn all the things I did. I'm thinking of taking the course again if I have the chance, the situation in my country (Venezuela) wasn't favorable for me but I did my best. Congratulations to Nick and Phil and the TA's for giving us this opportunity of learning. Keep it up.

Sentiment: 5

Confusion: 5

Urgency: 3

Ex. 6: Double colons "::" expand to longest possible 0's
If the longest is 0, will the address be considered valid ? (even if it doesn't make sense and there is no room for adding 0's)
Can someone please answer ?
Thanks in advance

Sentiment: 4

Confusion: 6

Urgency: 5

Ex. 7: The website is down at the moment

<https://class.stanford.edu/courses/Engineering/Networking/Winter2014/courseware>

seems down and I'm not able to submit the Midterm. Still have

the "Final Submit" button on the page, but it doesn't work. Are the servers congested?
thanks anyway

Sentiment: 3

Confusion: 4

Urgency: 7

Ex. 8: Please vote to request the teachers to kindly extend quiz dates. For an online self-study class, it makes sense to have an extra week or two to complete each quiz.

one week extra to complete quizzes for credit

two weeks extra to complete quizzes for credit

all quizzes can be completed for credit any time before end date of course

Sentiment: 3

Confusion: 4

Urgency: 6