

AUTOMATING MEDICAL SCHOOL ADMISSIONS COMMITTEE RANKINGS: INTEGRATION OF AN AUDIENCE RESPONSE SYSTEM WITH AUTOIT

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Introduction: Admissions committees have long struggled with displaying graphical real time data of committee rankings for applicants and the subsequent export of that data to an admissions database. In the past, at Mayo Medical School, this data was all collected and entered manually and no instantaneous feedback regarding the final committee score for an applicant was available.

Details: Using AutoIt v3 (www.autoscript.com), a freeware BASIC-like scripting language designed for automating the Windows GUI and general scripting, we created an automated workflow for the committee. The software first imports applicants that need to be ranked at a committee meeting. The data is stored in an online system connected to the school's feed of data from the American Medical College Application Service. The relevant data to be used are the applicants that have yet to be ranked by the committee. This information is used to automatically generate PowerPoint slides with applicant information, and is set up using the TurningPoint (www.turningtechnologies.com) PowerPoint plug-in.

At the committee meeting, 21 admissions committee members use the TurningPoint audience response system to rank applicants using a response card encoded with a unique RFID. The ranking data are then displayed instantaneously in graphical form showing the distribution of scores along with the average committee ranking score. At the end of the meeting, the committee ranking data is automatically exported to a text file which is then sent as a feed to the admissions committee database for storage and sorting of applicant rankings.

Using this implementation, our process has greatly reduced the committee meeting preparation time and allows for faster processing of applicants. A process which used to take several days and many person hours of data entry has been reduced to a process that takes just minutes to run.

This project can be useful for educators that need to show real time data regarding students' performance on questions answered in class and then subsequently exporting that data to a database.

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