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Exploring the potential for alternative assessments to promote meaningful learning in an undergraduate mathematics course.

This paper will discuss an alternative assessment strategy employed in two different undergraduate Combinatorics classes. The classes consisted of students from a range of programs, including Pure Mathematics, Elementary and Secondary Education, Engineering and Biology.

In addition to the homework, quizzes and examinations in this course, students were required to complete at least one extension activity. They were offered a choice from several options. These options involved either delving more deeply into a topic which was mentioned in class (or in the text), or identifying and discussing applications of the course content within the field of their major.

Findings from an analysis of the content of the resulting assignments revealed a level of learning that extends beyond what was otherwise assessed on the quizzes and exams. In addition, student feedback related to the extension activity indicated that they valued the opportunity to engage with the course content in a way that was personally meaningful. (Received September 08, 2015)