Solving Games Together: Teaching Game Theory with Mentimeter

Overview

Mentimeter can be a powerful tool for promoting participation and engagement within your teaching. Professor Stephane Wolton, based in the Department of Government at LSE, shares how Mentimeter can be highly effective when used with clear pedagogical purpose, helping to create inclusive and engaging learning experiences at LSE.

Key People & Partners

- Professor Stephane Wolton
- GV101 UG Students

Technologies Used

- Mentimeter – Live Polling Tool (see Mentimeter: Live Polling at LSE for further guidance)

Background

Live polling has a wide range of pedagogical benefits for both traditional and blended modes of teaching and learning. It facilitates real-time communication between teachers and students, enhances engagement, and supports inclusive participation.

There are now several digital education tools on the market to support the use of live polling in teaching and learning. At LSE, the centrally supported system is Mentimeter, which is available to both staff and students through an Enterprise licence. It was introduced at the start of the 2024/25 academic year as part of the Digital Education Futures programme. Since its launch, there has been a considerable increase in the use of live polling for teaching, learning, and other activities across the School, with 200,000+ participant responses collected through Mentimeter at LSE to date.

A leading user of Mentimeter at LSE is Professor Stephane Wolton from the Department of Government. With 150+ presentations created in the LSE Mentimeter Workspace, he is currently the most active user of the live polling tool across the School.

In Conversation with Professor Stephane Wolton

We spoke with Professor Stephane Wolton about his use of Mentimeter. Here's what he shared:

How do you use Mentimeter, and how often?

How I use Mentimeter in my teaching really depends on the course. In small and medium-sized groups (10–40 students), I use it only occasionally and only when it serves a clear pedagogical purpose. In large cohorts of up to 350 students, however, I integrate Mentimeter into every lecture. I rely on it for anonymous Q&A, which enables inclusive participation by giving all students a comfortable way to

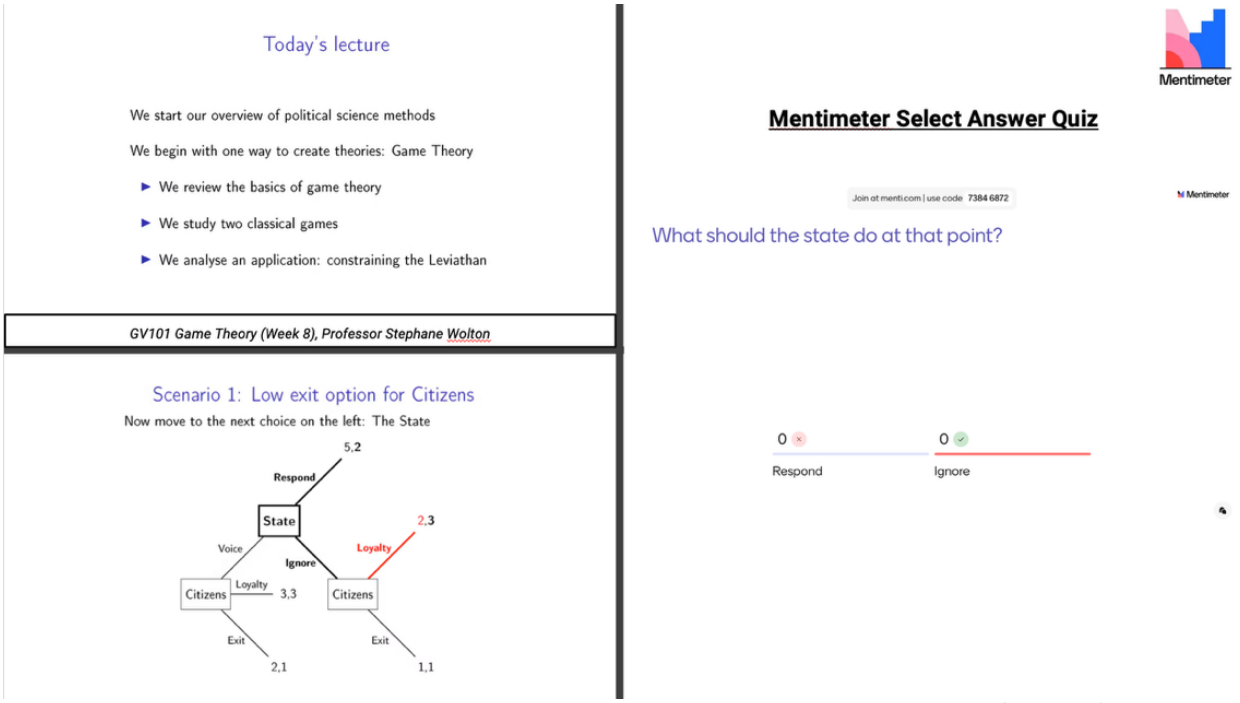
ask questions, and for active learning activities designed to maintain focus and engagement while ensuring each interaction supports the learning objectives of the session.

What question types do you find most useful?

I tend to use the simplest Mentimeter question types, as they're easiest to integrate into a lecture. I regularly use Multiple Choice, Scales and 2×2 Grids to illustrate concepts, and the 100 Points slide for allocation problems such as budget exercises. I also strongly recommend Quizzes – they're low-pressure, engaging, and pedagogically effective. I've had less success with Word Clouds and Open-Ended questions, which take too much time in a large lecture, and Pin on Image is useful for introductions, but not precise enough for more substantive activities.

Can you share an example of a successful Mentimeter activity and why it worked well?

In a recent introductory political science lecture, I used Mentimeter quizzes to teach the basics of game theory. Students solved simple games such as the prisoner's dilemma and a coordination game in real time in a large cohort of around 350 students. A small prize for the top score added some motivation, but this activity showed how Mentimeter can help improve engagement in a lecture. Even though you are in front of a large audience, even though you are teaching a somewhat technical topic, you are able to make students participate as if they were in a seminar.



Using Mentimeter to study a classical game in GV101 Game Theory (Week 8)

Also, I ask teaching fellows to use Mentimeter as tool to gauge students' understanding and satisfaction in the seminar activities, essentially it can be used as a short version of a TQARO survey.

Any tips or lessons learned for colleagues new to Mentimeter?

I've actually been using Mentimeter since the first COVID lockdown, and the addition of new question types over time has made it even easier to design activities that are genuinely useful for students. My main advice is to keep things simple and purposeful. Mentimeter is extremely easy to use, and students very much like it, but you must ensure an activity has a clear pedagogical purpose. Unless you're teaching a very large course where it's one of the few ways to generate engagement, avoid over-using it, as students can tire of it quickly. Finding the right balance can be tricky, but even a small, well-designed activity can make a lecture feel much more interactive. It is always nice to involve students in your lecture, if only for a little bit.

Key Takeaways

- Use with a clear pedagogical purpose. → Mentimeter is most effective when each activity is tied to a specific learning objective, whether checking understanding, illustrating concepts, or enabling inclusive Q&A.
- Simple question types work best. → Multiple Choice, Scales, 2×2 Grids, 100-Point slides and Quizzes integrate smoothly into lectures and support meaningful engagement across different class sizes.
- Find the right balance. → While students enjoy interacting through Mentimeter, it's important not to over-rely on it; purposeful, well-timed activities have far greater impact than frequent ones.
- Highly effective in large lectures. → Mentimeter helps create seminar-like interaction—even for 300+ students—by enabling anonymous Q&A and active learning activities that make technical content more accessible.

Further Support & Resources

For guidance on using Mentimeter in your teaching, you can contact the Digital Education Team (Eden Centre for Education Enhancement) at eden.digital@lse.ac.uk.

You may also connect directly with your Departmental Learning Technology Adviser - see the Departmental Advising page for the most up-to-date list of advisers.

Additional Mentimeter support and learning materials:

- Mentimeter: Live Polling at LSE – Local guidance, policies, and best-practice examples
- Mentimeter Academy – Free online courses to help you design effective interactive activities
- Mentimeter Help Center – Step-by-step instructions, troubleshooting, and feature tutorials