One of the most striking behavioral shifts we have observed in college classrooms over the last few years is the pervasive use of electronic devices by students during class. Whether using their cell phones, tablets, or laptops, more and more students appear wired to their devices. They check social media, read their email, play video games, do homework for other classes, and even—at least I have it on good authority—watch pornographic material while the professor keeps lecturing.

Many of us find these behaviors alarming not only because they distract the students who use their devices from the objectives of the classroom but also because they distract other students from their education. That is why there is an increasing movement among college professors to ban the use of cell phones in the classroom unless they are required by students for class-related purposes.

The study also showed that males are more negatively affected than females by the use of these devices in the classroom and that they affect people differently than females. The study published this month, was conducted among students attending the West Point military academy. The study showed that students who use their phones have less pressure to succeed and larger classes. They may also lower their test scores. The message seems clear: students perform worse when personal electronic-related technology is available in the classroom.

This advantage is true even when students are allowed to keep their tablets flat on the desk. What happens is that most tablet computers are being used as a mobile device operating system, which allows for closed access to web applications, the same restrictions as when using a mobile phone. Even professors are able to monitor usage, so students have a greater pressure to access distracting applications via the tablet computer than with a laptop computer.

The report says that while students may have used regular computers in secondary school, tablets are a relatively new technology for them, and they are more effective on a tab, and that the problem is more serious than it may seem. Not only is the presence of these devices hurting performances, but also affecting the technological environment provided by colleges. Many colleges rank their ability to effectively control this problem as very important. There is a heavy burden on these institutions to look good, to make sure their students perform well, and to protect their reputation.

On top of that, the increase in the number of online and/or hybrid (combination) courses with personal interaction with the instructor by college students promises to increase the use of electronic devices in the classroom unless that use is required for class activities. Such a burden for the tech industry: students must learn to use technology in a technology classroom.

In this day and age of increasing measurements, not only the accountability by colleges and universities but also the students themselves are pressuring and demanding students to demonstrate that they are doing their job of studying. On top of that, the increase in the number of online and/or hybrid courses with personal interaction with the instructor by college students promises to increase the use of electronic devices in the classroom unless that use is required for class activities. Such a burden for the tech industry: students must learn to use technology in a technology classroom.