



LARGE LECTURE COURSES | Strategies for Management & Engaging Students

FACULTY DRIVEN

Vary the style of lectures you deliver. Choose formats that suit the content:

- **Short lectures framing discussion periods encouraging interaction** may allow an instructor to shift the energy to students. A twenty-minute lecture could set the stage for some issues/concepts, then open a fifteen-minute discussion to have students reflect on material, and close with another short lecture that pulls together the major themes or ideas. The discussion section can be students working in trios or small groups and/or collaborating w/ online tools.
- Integrate a **case study** activity to illustrate a general principle or problem-solving strategy. Either the instructor takes the lead or the students themselves generate the questions and principles. Students could work on different cases or create cases themselves. The cases could be developed as homework and posted on Blackboard or Wiki/Blogs and function as knowledge pool for the class.
- **Utilize a variety of media:** photos, videos, audio tracks (interviews, explanations, etc), and slides on Blackboard or other tools to engage students with course material.
<http://teaching.berkeley.edu/bgd/largelecture.html>

Stagger due dates for essay or research papers. If all three hundred students are required to write one paper during the semester, you could have students write on different topics and the papers are due on different dates. At the beginning of the term, randomly divide the class into, say, ten groups of thirty students each. Announce the dates when the various groups are to turn in their papers. All students receive their paper topics two weeks before their due date. Using this approach, you may be able to read and respond to all three hundred papers but never read more than thirty or so in any given week. Using Blackboard groups would help manage

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

Do **Impact Assessments** to measure understanding and the “foggy” points. These informal surveys administered through Blackboard may be an easy way to inform instruction and Blackboard allows you to share the results with students.

Teams of six students are mixed randomly to discuss lecture materials in class and learn to be responsible for each other and complete online Blackboard quizzes together. Individual quiz scores reflect the average performance of team members.
http://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching/instructors_share.html

Use Blackboard to spark debate. Ask students to post comments and replies to a web-based discussion board; make specific reference to those exchanges in lecture.
http://web.princeton.edu/sites/mcgraw/mcgraw_minigraphs_06.html

The pause procedure may alleviate some common failings of lectures. The lecture approach assumes students learn auditory, and research shows even the most motivated student's concentration declines after 10-15 minutes. One example could be that the instructor initiates a pause by asking students to turn to their neighbor and summarize the main ideas the instructor has just presented.
<http://www.wcer.wisc.edu/archive/cl1/CL/doingcl/pause.htm>

Student Presentations are an effective way of engaging students in course material and encourage group collaboration. Put students in charge of grading by providing a simple scoring rubric or enable the Blackboard “peer review” feature.

Pick seven or eight students as student panel to sit in the front and ask questions, because it's difficult to have a discussion with hundreds students at once. "They sort of act as proxies for the rest of the class," one faculty member says.
<http://chronicle.com/free/v49/i35/35a01201.htm>



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FACULTY DRIVEN continued

the organization of student groups and submission deadlines. <http://teaching.berkeley.edu/bqd/largelecture.html>

Facilitation may help to move the responsibility for learning from the instructor to the student. A list of learning objectives establishes a framework into which the students fit bits of knowledge as they encounter them. A Wiki/Blog or Blackboard Assignment feature could facilitate the process and increase collaboration/communication among students.

http://www.schreyerinstitutione.psu.edu/pdf/alex/teacher_facilitator.pdf

STUDENT ACTIVITIES continued

Assign **Peer Learning Groups**. This idea may help to foster collaboration and communication and increase the overall performance of students. Students could be grouped in teams of five students and required to discuss concepts either through Blackboard, Instant Messaging or other tools.

Stand-up Presentations may be helpful to have students come prepared to class and stay alert. Ask multiple students throughout the lecture to give a brief (less than a minute) summary of previously discussed content/transfer/or new problem solving ideas. Because students are picked randomly the attention may increase.

Task students to **submit possible exam questions**, award points for questions used as part of an exam and organize questions into different themes: terms and examples, framework and synthesis, and going beyond, for example. Students could submit them via a course Wiki.

http://www.socialtext.net/cim/index.cgi?exam_questions

The **Jigsaw Strategy** is an efficient way to learn the course material in a cooperative learning style. Group members must work together as a team to accomplish a common goal; each person depends on all the others and Wikis or Blackboard could be used to facilitate the process.

<http://www.schreyerinstitutione.psu.edu/pdf/alex/jigsaw.pdf>