



ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT IN THE LARGE CLASSROOM

Here at UT and across the nation, many of our courses have large enrollments. Such structures offer their own set of opportunities for creating effective learning. Below, you will find several tips for facilitating high quality, active student engagement in large classrooms.

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT: THE FIRST DAY

Be the first person they meet. Arrive early to the class and greet each student as they enter. Let your passion and enthusiasm be on full display. This has a profound influence on students' perceptions and expectations related to the course. Additionally, if you have graduate or undergraduate assistants, have them come to class and introduce them as well.

Actively engage the syllabus. Instead of simply reviewing the syllabus, have students participate in a scavenger hunt. Get students into groups and have them find key pieces of information that are located in your syllabus. Information they might search can include: value of course, prerequisite, supplemental resources, location of your office, etc.

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT DURING THE CLASS

Provide Learning Objectives/Outcomes. For every class, post and/or share the learning outcomes for the day. Explicitly communicating the learning outcomes helps students focus and stay more engaged during the class. As you proceed, highlight or emphasize where you are or connect how an activity is supporting the students in meeting the learning outcomes.

Create opportunities for students to think together. After lecturing for 10-15 minutes, have students pair or group up to answer a series of questions to test their understanding of the material. You might use clickers or polling apps to get their responses. Another variation on this is to have students initially give their responses as individuals. If less than 75% of the students answer correctly, have them pair or group up to talk and then have the class respond to the question again.

Create multiple and fun means for students to contribute. When having students answer questions, in addition to cold or **warm calling**, have as options that students can send questions via email or through online mechanisms like **Mentimeter** or **Padlet**. A fun way to get students asking and answering questions is make use of a tennis ball. You can toss a ball to a student who has a question or wishes to answer it. Students can toss the ball to someone else who can help them answer the question or wishes to add to what has been said.

Develop ways for students to physically engage the content. Where appropriate, create experiments, demonstrations, role play, or co-teaching.

ACTIVE ENGAGEMENT AFTER CLASS

Develop a peer-led discussion/help board. To encourage students to continue to think together and support each other after class, create a space on Canvas or elsewhere where students can continue to discuss what they are learning and to ask and answer questions about the material.

NEED MORE INFORMATION?

For more resources on engaging students in large classroom or other active learning strategies, please refer to the teaching resources section of our page. If you are in need of more one-on-one support, please schedule a consultation with a member of our staff via our website.

teaching.utk.edu



THE UNIVERSITY OF
TENNESSEE
KNOXVILLE

TEACHING & LEARNING
INNOVATION