

PIE Coffee Hour & Teaching Workshop Series

Promoting Active Learning in Large Classrooms

Dr. Lisa Liseno, PIE Program Director, Assistant Dean of the Graduate School

Zhaihuan Dai, PIE Graduate Assistant, Educational Psychology & Learning Systems

Overview

- Discussion: Concerns about teaching a large class
- Active learning with technology
- Active learning without technology
- Practice: Let's make a plan!

Objectives

By the end of this workshop, you will be able to:

- List 1-3 strategies that promote active learning in large classrooms
- Make a plan for using at least one strategy to promote active learning in your classroom



What are your concerns?

Barriers to Teach in Large Classes

Carbone & Greenberg (1998)

- A. Conflict between large class format and learning goals
- B. Perceived lack of accessibility to students and personal contact
- C. Lack of student motivation and preparation for large class format
- D. Lack of reward structure for successful large class teaching
- E. Lack of accountability in student classroom performance

Instructor perspective

Barriers to Teach in Large Classes

Carbone & Greenberg (1998)

- A. Lack of interaction with faculty (in and out of class)
- B. Lack of structure in lecture
- C. Lack of/poor discussion sections
- D. Inadequacy of classroom facilities and environment
- E. Lack of frequent testing/graded assignments

Student perspective

Active Learning **without** Technology

Minute Assessment

- Ask students to give a brief summary or answer 1-2 questions
- Give students a few minutes to reflect/write down their responses
- Measure participation and/or learning
- Examples: One-minute paper, Exit ticket



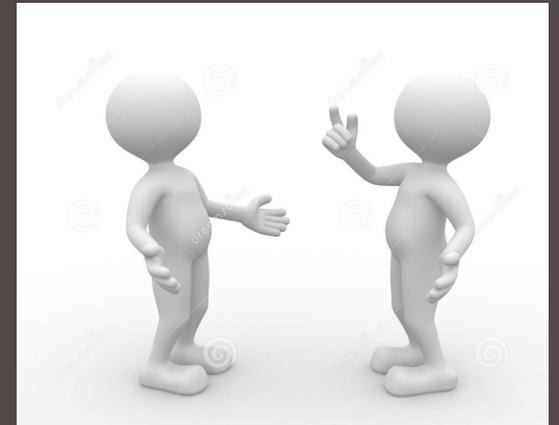
Simple Quiz

- Pose one or more yes/no (or agree/disagree) questions
- Ask students to respond with simple thumbs up/thumbs down (or stand up/sit down)



Think-Pair-Share

- Provide students with a prompt, a problem, a case, etc.
- Give students time to think/reflect on it individually and write down a response
- Ask students to turn to a neighbor to discuss and share their responses



Role Play

- Prepare a scenario (with script) on a course concept or objective
- Have students volunteer to act out the script
- Discuss or debrief with the whole class



Practice: Role play

- Volunteers
- Get script and prepare
- Act it out
- Debriefing/Discussion

Take a Break!!



Active Learning with Technology

Online Classes

Canvas synchronous meeting options:

- Conferences
- Bb Collaborate Ultra (External app)

Real-time Interactive Technologies

- iClicker & REEF
- Turning Technology
- Poll Everywhere (free for 40 responses, multiple platforms)
- Poll Junkie (free, web)
- Kahoot! (free, web)

Teaching Methodology

Question



Aims at common misconception or higher level of Cognition (Bloom's taxonomy)

Think



Students individually

Poll



Students individually – **commit** to an answer

Discuss



Find classmate with different answer-try to convince them you are right-he/she is wrong!

Repoll



Student individually – can keep or change answer

Explain



Instructor or students

Example: How to decide what the right action is using utilitarianism?

Utilitarianism: The morally right act = that which produces the greatest amount of happiness for the greatest number of people....

Factors involved in calculating the greatest amount of happiness:

1. Count every person equally
2. Calculate the net (overall) amount of pleasure/happiness
3. Intensity of happiness
4. Duration of happiness
5. Fruitfulness (long-term results/effects)
6. Likelihood (what are the chances of an act's consequences successfully occurring)
7. Quality of happiness

Test your knowledge about utilitarianism:

Consider the following two cases:

1. While lying by a lake, Lance sees a child drowning in the water. Normally, Lance would be too preoccupied with getting a tan to care about rescuing the child. In this case, however, he notices that an attractive woman, apparently unable to swim herself, is shouting for someone to help the child. Hoping to impress the woman, Lance jumps into the water and saves the drowning child.

2. While lying by a lake, John sees a child drowning in the water. Although he is a poor swimmer, John is terrified by the prospect of the child drowning. With the welfare of the child being his top concern, John jumps into the water and saves the child.

Question: According to Utilitarianism, which ONE of the following is true:

- A. Lance does the morally right thing
- B. John does the morally right thing
- C. Both do the morally right thing
- D. Neither do the morally right thing

Things to Consider

- Time available
 - In class
 - Grading
- Class size
- Accessibility to students
- Expectations you created in your syllabus
- Support for instructor

Practice: Let's make a plan!

- 5-10 minutes
- Individually or in a group
- Make a plan for incorporating at least one active learning strategy for your class
- Make sure you cover points from “things to consider”
- Share the plan with the whole audience

References & Resources

- “Activities for Large Classes” <https://uwaterloo.ca/centre-for-teaching-excellence/teaching-resources/teaching-tips/educational-technologies/all/activities-large-classes>
- “Active Learning Strategies” <https://www.purdue.edu/activelearning/Need%20Help/alstrategies.php>
- “Encouraging Active Learning in Large Classes” <https://distance.fsu.edu/instructors/encouraging-active-learning-large-classes>
- <https://www.fctl.ucf.edu/TeachingAndLearningResources/LearningEnvironments/largeclass.php>
- Carbone, E., & Greenberg, J. (1998). Teaching large classes: Unpacking the problem and responding creatively. *To improve the academy*, 17(1), 311-326.