Engaging Large Enrollment Classes in the Online Environment

Meg Flanigan, PhD

Associate Director, Center for Teaching and Learning

Mike Dombroski

Instructional Technologist, Office of Instructional Technology

OHIO UNIVERSITY | INSTRUCTIONAL INNOVATION
OFFICE OF THE EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT AND PROVOST

Today's Focus

1. The challenge of large enrollment classes

2. Options for online teaching modalities

3. Organizational/management strategies for:
    - all modalities

    - mixture of synchronous and asynchronous modalities

    - fully asynchronous courses

    - fully synchronous courses

4. Technology and tools for engagement and collaboration

Typical Challenges

- Often gateways to the Major/pre-reqs

- Content heavy

- Students from different backgrounds and preparation

- Fear factor

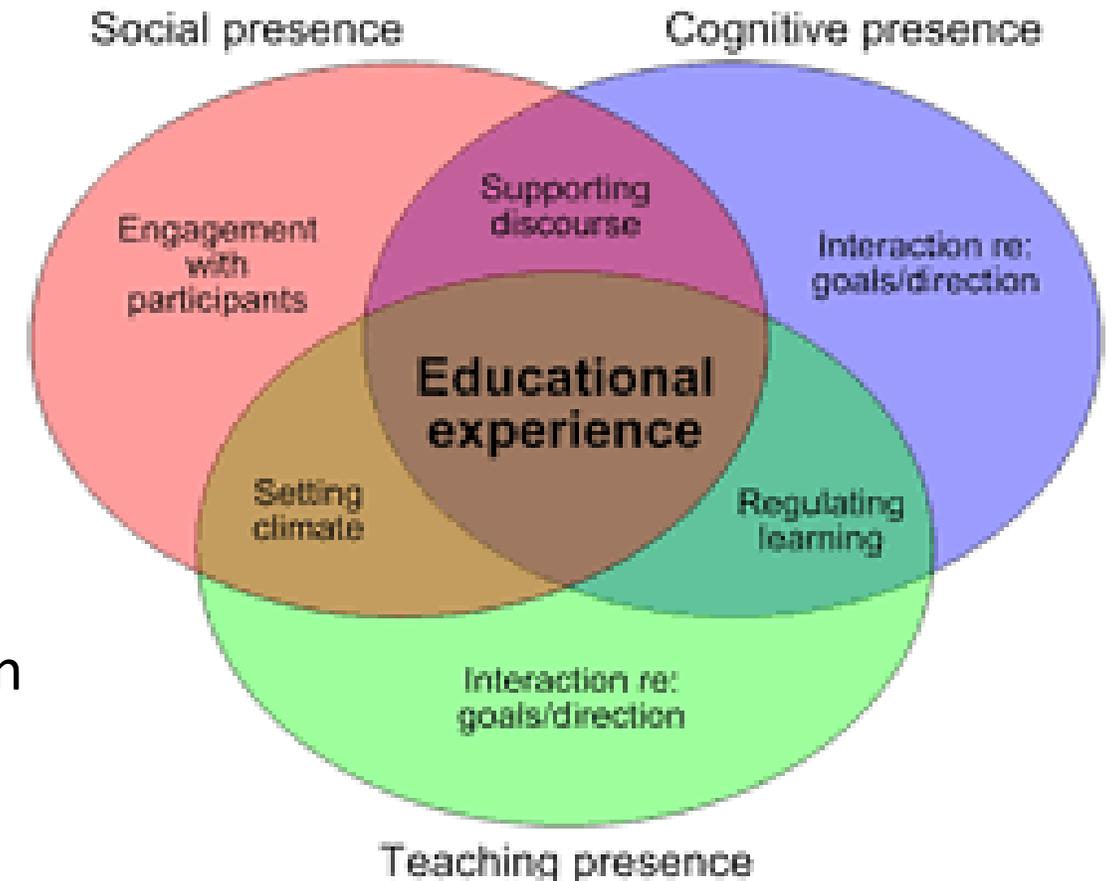- Difficult to engage all students in class

- Large time demand on faculty
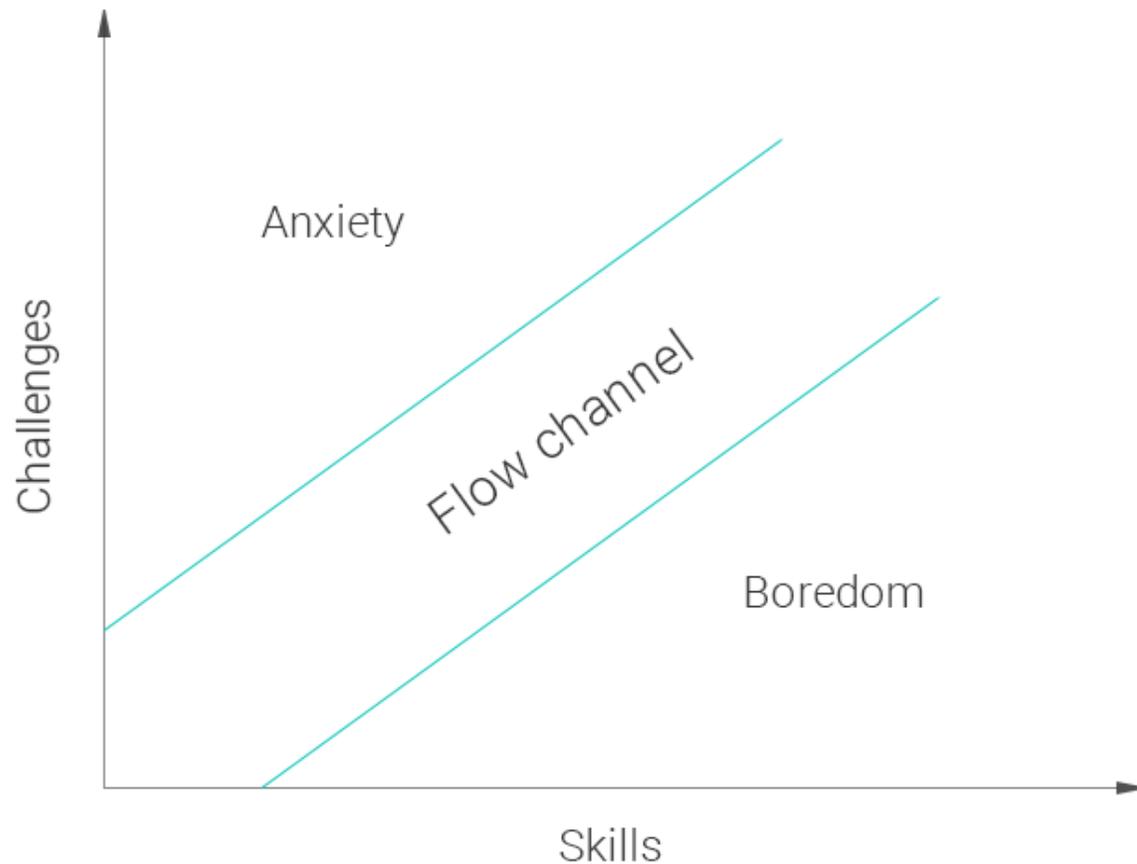
What does the research indicate?

Students learn best when they feel a connection to the

❖ Course content

❖ Faculty

❖ Each other

For suggestions on how to connect with students in the virtual environment, please see "[Creating Presence and Engagement](#)"

Maximizing learning

Aim: students develop knowledge and skill sets that can meet increasing challenges of the discipline

Challenge: motivate and inspire, without losing sight of those who need support

- Consider a course "pre-test" to alert students to expected prior knowledge.

Provide links to resources

Options for Teaching

- Use a mixture of asynchronous and synchronous modalities

- Present the course in a fully asynchronous mode

- Present the course fully synchronous mode

Plan
- Can you get assistance?
- Define the roles and responsibilities of TAs and facilitators in classroom management (chat function, breakout rooms, discussion boards, etc) & grading
- Consider YOUR time in planning and managing the course schedule

  - ➢ consider length/spacing of assignments; can any have automated grading?
  - ➢ meet regularly with TAs
  - ➢ provide model answers/rubrics for grading purposes;
  - ➢ allocate specific graders to particular questions/projects for consistency
  - ➢ consider whether peer-grading (using a rubric) might work

Organize Your Course

- Provide a clear and consistent course platform

(see handout on Organizing your Blackboard platform)

- Break large class into groups to complete activities and discussions.
- Manage email – expectations, bundle responses
- Provide clear & timely notifications/announcements, FAQs, etc.
- Consider a student Q/A board (TA can monitor it)
- Manage office hours – consider occasional topics-based/review sessions
- Ask for feedback – reflect back with the students

What modality should I use?

Consider the pros and cons – professional and personal
For the mixed/hybrid – using both synchronous and asynchronous modes
Pros: you decide what, when and how.

Consider " flipping" the learning – or a part of it

❖ For content provided **asynchronously** be mindful of time demands;
o include guides or questions to help alert the student to the important points (you can embed questions in PPs, use BB quizzes, etc.)
o try to present material in a number of formats; keep pre-records < 20 minutes
o If giving homework, make explicit connections to student learning outcomes

❖ For the **synchronous** portion, allow time at the beginning to address questions
❖ Aim for consistency

Fully Asynchronous

Pros: For **fully asynchronous** classes, we give ourselves and our students flexibility. But the biggest challenges are

- creating a sense of community

- keeping everyone on-track and involved

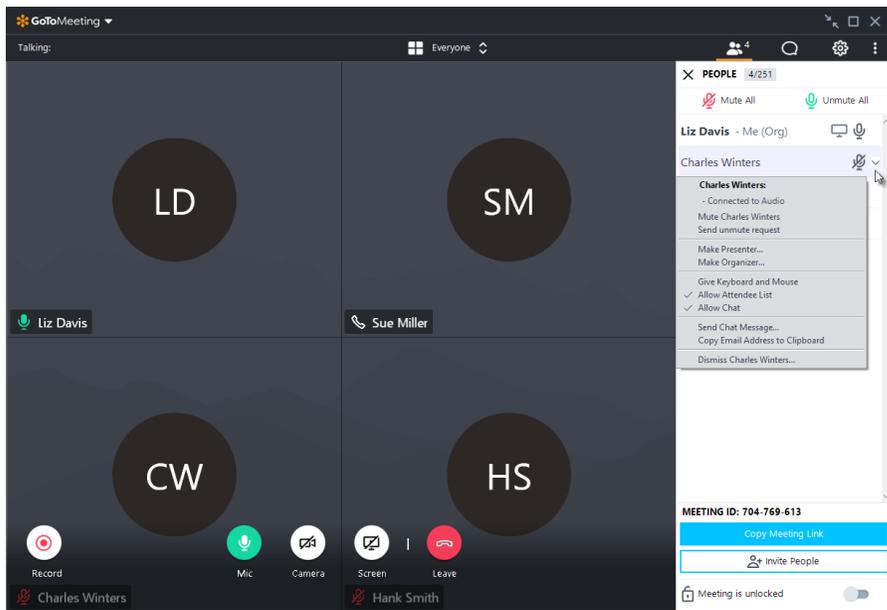For tips and suggestions, we have created a [20-minute presentation](#) and/or a [summary handout](#)

Fully synchronous classes

Pros: We hope to achieve

- dynamic, organic interaction
- active learning
- timely awareness of student progress

ZOOM Video SMART Meetings

Challenges are:

- *Is there anybody out there?*
- Balanced involvement

Resources

Tips for Designing Online Courses: https://edservices.wiley.com/tips-designing-moderating-large-online-courses/

Tips for Managing Large Classes Online: https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/online-education/tips-for-managing-large-online-classes/

Time Saving Tips for Large Enrollment Classes:
https://teachingcommons.lakeheadu.ca/time-saving-tips-large-online-classes