



Tips For Engaging Large Classes Online

Ask for help: Can you get assistance (e.g. a student to help monitor the chat, facilitate small groups, etc.?)

For all online modalities (asynchronous, synchronous and mixed)

- **Consider your time in planning for the course**
 - Space out larger assignments to allow time for grading and timely feedback.
 - Communicate with students about expected grading timelines
 - Use rubrics or other grading criteria checklists to ensure consistent student evaluation.
- **Define roles and responsibilities for TAs and Facilitators**
 - Consider best use of TAs and Facilitators in classroom management and grading
 - Breakout rooms
 - Chat monitoring
 - Defined groups for grading/engagement
 - Have specific graders for each large assignment for consistency and/provide model grading
 - Communicate with students the defined roles and responsibilities of the TAs so that they know whom to contact for what
 - Meet regularly with your TAs and facilitators to check in about any challenges or difficulties.
- **Provide a clear and consistent course platform (e.g. Blackboard)** so that students know where and how to find the information that they need (see Document on Tips and Suggestions for Blackboard Organization).
- **Send reminders of what's coming up, due dates etc.**
- **Break large class into groups to complete activities and discussions.**
 - Groups may all be working on the same problem/topic, or you may have them tackle different issues
 - Have small groups report out to the larger group
 - Ensure that misunderstandings are addressed
- **Manage Email**
 - Provide clear expectations on what email should be used for, response time, etc.
 - Send group/topic-based emails
 - Consider referring students to a FAQ or Question and Answer discussion board.
- **Manage Office Hours**
 - Consider “targeted” office hours (topics-based) and invite groups of interested students to join
 - Record session and make available for those who cannot attend
 - Inform students that they will be recorded. Give them the option to turn off their camera.
 - Offer individual meeting time for students who do not feel comfortable coming to the open office hours

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- **Early Evaluations (anonymous)**
 - What is working well?
 - Provide 2-3 suggestions on how I can further facilitate your learning
 - Reflect back/discuss with them their responses
 - Consider asking for feedback at various time throughout the course.

Specific tips for Online Modalities - The following tips are in addition to those listed above

If using a mix of virtual synchronous and asynchronous approaches.

- Consider “Flipping the Classroom”: course content is presented asynchronously; synchronous time is used for critical thinking activities. See the presentation and materials on [Flipping the Classroom](#) for more details, or
- Use synchronous time to meet with smaller groups instead of the whole class.

If your class must be presented in one consistent mode:

For fully asynchronous online courses

- Help students connect to the course, to the faculty and to each other (please see [Effective Asynchronous Online Teaching](#) and its materials)
- Students access written material, podcasts, short recorded lectures, etc., asynchronously. Have quiz or guided questions and/or reflections associated with material
- Provide opportunities to break large class into smaller teams; use discussion boards, voicethread, shared documents, etc., for students to work on higher order thinking problems together
- Make use of online synchronous office hours. Record sessions for students unable to attend.

For fully synchronous online courses:

- Consider presenting the majority of content outside classroom time. Use your time together for higher-order thinking
- Begin with a short icebreaker (use the chat feature)
- Hook the class at the beginning (expect a “product” from them)
- Use breakout rooms for discussions/problem-solving but only if they can be there for 15 minutes or so. Assign and rotate roles (time-keeper, note-taker, summarizer, devil’s advocate, reporter)
- Consider Whiteboard/Google doc/ for synchronous teamwork activities
- You may pop in and out of different groups
- Bring everyone back together for report outs/wrap-up, reflections, etc.

If giving synchronous lecture (i.e. Live Content Delivery),

- Intersperse formative assessments (Top Hat/Poll Everywhere/Kahoot, etc) throughout the lecture
- Consider whether breakout rooms would be useful (see above)
- Assign a post-lecture reflection/follow-up activity
- Consider “weekly” review/tutorial sessions
- Record lecture sessions so that students can go back and review the material
 - Inform students they will be recorded.

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