

Promoting Active Learning in Classes of All Sizes

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Think. Learn. Succeed.



Classes of All Sizes

- Important to tailor promotion of active learning to...
 - Content
 - Class size and format
 - Student experience and knowledge
- Important to “play to your strengths”
 - Know your own personal strengths and weaknesses, and use those accordingly

Learning Activities

- Class-Based
 - Lecture
 - Questions, Activities, Demonstrations, Discussions
 - Presentations
- Outside of Class
 - Readings
 - Activities
- Larger Assignments & Exams
 - Presentations, Papers, Projects
 - In class exams
 - Take-home exams

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Class-Based

- Lectures: interactive questions, examples, demos
 - Start early, do often
 - Fit to class format, current knowledge
 - Be sure they tie into material – not just “filler”
- Activities
- Discussions
 - Class-wide
 - Small groups with “reports” to the class
 - 2-person, with volunteer “reports”
 - Discussion postings

Outside of Class

- Making readings ‘active’ learning
 - Brief papers (summary, thought/reaction paper, questions)
 - In class: *foster* discussion, don’t just wait for it to happen
 - Questions that target desired outcomes
 - Students summarize and lead discussion
 - Online – thoughtful discussion posting prompts
- Practice assignments (problems, etc.)
 - Traditional assignments that are handed in
 - Assignments that are student-graded
 - Online quizzes (auto-grade, auto-feedback)

Larger Assignments & Exams

- Larger Assignments
 - Synthesis paper
 - Presentations
 - Problem solution (or generation)
- Craft exams to assess type of learning you want
 - Multiple choice can assess active learning
 - Apply concept to novel situation
 - Separate in-class and take-home
 - In-class: more straightforward material
 - Take-home: complex application of material