Large Class Teaching’s Needs

Quick Guide for Chairs and Faculty

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Getting Lost in a Large Class?
Shared Concerns in Large Class Teaching

- Course Preparation
- Course Administration
- Teaching Engagement
- Use of Technology
- Class Management
- Assessment

Research findings from a variety of subjects
Large Class Teaching

Questions and Needs

Faculty
• Incentives or support?
• Teaching assistance or teaming up?
• Will the classroom accommodate for exams, peer learning, etc.?
• Grading and commenting on assessments for 100 students!!
• But I teach a performance base course…
• Knowing my students personally and their needs will be difficult.
• How can I motivate a class of 100 to prepare for class when I can’t with a class of 25?

Concerns in Common
• Motivation
• Anonymity
• Engagement in class
• Timely assistance
• Class climate and environment
• Instructor-student relationship
• Access to materials before and after class

Students
• Are there labs, TAs, etc.?
• Will the classroom be comfortable for my stuff and group talk?
• I hope there is not a lot of distraction in the classroom.
• How will the instructor know me?
• How can I get help when I’m stuck?
• How do I ask a question in a big class? I don’t want to stand out…
• I hope the lectures aren’t long and boring. Sometimes I can’t hear clearly.
• Are the materials posted online?
• I am in wheelchair. I have Asperger, etc.

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Implications for Chairs and Faculty

- Consider optional team-teaching & providing systematic training for Instructional Student Assistants
- Secure appropriate venues for classroom and labs activities & equip them with appropriate instructional technologies
- Plan ways to meet students' diverse learning needs and levels of academic readiness
- Plan or participate in professional development programs to rethink & repurpose courses for large class size for new teaching paradigms

Administrative Means
Collegial Conversation and Professional Development

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Collegial Conversations and Professional Development Opportunities

The Center for Faculty Development could facilitate or customize the following professional development opportunities for your department. Contact information: cfd@sjsu.edu, (408)924-2303

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Training for Teaching Assistants (TA) or Instructional Student Assistants (ISA) for Supporting Large Classes

• Understanding their role as the bridge between the instructor and the students
• Acquiring the knowledge and skills to motivate active learning in large as well as small group meetings
• Learning how to support the instructor in assessment and course management
• Aligning with the University Policies as highlighted in the syllabus
High Impact Learning Opportunities in Large Classes:

• Designing student-centered active learning
  – Cooperative and collaborative learning activities, project-based learning, reflective learning exercises, etc.
  – Self-directed study attitude and skills using online, i.e. LMS (Canvas), online learning activities, web resources, etc.

• Appreciating the diversity of perspectives and cultures at SJSU
  – Debate, student panel, personal stories, peer review, threaded discussions, etc.
Rethinking Your Course Design for a Large Class

• Streamlining goals and connect them with attainable, observable and measurable learning outcomes.

• Designing engaging instructional strategies and innovative learning activities to have a cohesive learning community.

• Planning assessments for timely feedback on student learning progress and teaching effectiveness.
Benefits of Instructional Technology in Large Class

• Using the LMS features in Canvas to expend learning experience before and after class
• Using instantaneous polling tools and forming questions for polling
• Using mobile devices for communication
• Using interactive presentation apps to enhance clarity and impact of lectures
Turn Anonymity to Personalities

Ultimate goal of professional development in Large Class Teaching is to discover commonality of needs among the individual students.
Large Class Teaching

Resources

Web Sites

• **101 things you can do do in class in the first couple of weeks** [http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/teaching/first-3-weeks](http://www.unl.edu/gradstudies/current/teaching/first-3-weeks)

• **Six ways to make lectures in a large enrollment course more manageable and effective** [http://teaching.berkeley.edu/large-lecture-classes](http://teaching.berkeley.edu/large-lecture-classes)

• **Practical pointers on preparing and giving lectures** [http://cgi.stanford.edu/~dept-ctl/cgi-bin/tomprof/posting.php?ID=491&search=Practical%20pointers](http://cgi.stanford.edu/~dept-ctl/cgi-bin/tomprof/posting.php?ID=491&search=Practical%20pointers)

• **Case stories and student survey in Large Class Teaching** [http://celt.ust.hk/teaching-resources/large-class-teaching](http://celt.ust.hk/teaching-resources/large-class-teaching)

Books
