

BEST PRACTICES FOR TEACHING LARGE CLASSES

Taking care of the Details

Attendance

- Before writing an attendance policy, review what is expected at StFX, possibly including similar phrasing in your course outlines
- Consider using active learning which also keeps track of attendance
 - in F2F classes, use clickers, smart phones, and other in-class responders
 - in online classes, review the participant list and/or ask students to respond to a question in the chat box
- Create clear policies regarding in-class assignments, quizzes, exams, etc. including options for alternative assessments (if possible) should students have unavoidable absences
 - the responsibility should be the students for make up

Student Email

- Clearly outline expected response time for addressing students' emails and if there are restrictions
 - i.e., I will do my best to respond to emails ASAP Monday to Friday between 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. (including the days before tests, exams or when assignments are due)
- Remind students to use proper grammar, spelling, punctuation, and preferred salutation, as well as to indicate in the message line what the email is about
 - ask students to only use 'high priority' when needed
- Remind students of the topics/questions more easily addressed by email vs. those better discussed in person
 - consider creating a FAQ document that is shared electronically with your students and is posted on your website or course management system (i.e., Moodle)

Student Hours

(i.e., times available to meet with students, often called Office Hours)

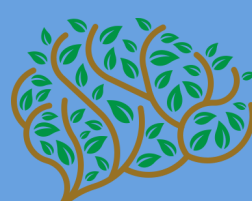
- Create a method for signing up for student hours - either on paper or virtually
 - Consider also creating in-person and virtual student hours - each at different times of the day to accommodate a range of students' needs
- Encourage students to come with their classmates, particularly when they have similar concerns
 - suggest students write their questions down so they do not forget them
- Be clear on the amount of time available to each student/group of students
- Consider offering both in-person and online office hours to accommodate more people

Assessments

- Provide the students with frequent feedback - this feedback does not have to be formal or graded. Feedback can also be shared after an active learning task - and delivered to the class as a whole highlighting major points and common weaknesses (and strengths)
- As much as possible, share potential exam questions prior to the exam - perhaps even using them in active learning exercises
- Provide students with a guide as to when they can expect the return of their marked assignments, quizzes, and exams, complete with feedback

Resources

Teaching LARGE Classes. (2018, January 25). Retrieved July 21, 2020, from <https://facultyinnovate.utexas.edu/teaching-large>
Teaching Large Classes. (n.d.). Retrieved July 21, 2020, from <https://teaching.uwo.ca/teaching/engaging/large-class-teaching.html>



**TEACHING
& LEARNING
CENTRE**
St. Francis Xavier University