

WORKSHOP: ACTIVE LEARNING IN THE UNIVERSITY CLASSROOM

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ABSTRACT

The workshop is an experiential session in which participants learn and practice techniques which can be used to facilitate active student learning in a University classroom. Participants learn various techniques to incorporate collaborative learning strategies, listening and thinking strategies and individual student learning strategies into their courses.

The workshop format emphasizes learning about active learning by engaging in the techniques presented in the workshop. This “active learning” format works for faculty as well as students. Participant will learn to take existing PowerPoint presentations and make them more “active” by incorporating specific techniques into the presentations.

What is Active Learning?

Active Learning is not merely a set of activities, but rather an attitude on the part of both students and faculty that makes learning effective. The objective of Active Learning is to stimulate lifetime habits of thinking to stimulate students to think about HOW as well as WHAT they are learning and to increasingly take responsibility for their own education. (Hatfield, Brown and Ellison)

Active Learning, in short, is anything that students do in a classroom other than merely passively listening to an instructor’s lecture. (Paulson and Faust, 1998)

- Collaborative learning strategies
- Listening and thinking strategies
- Individual student learning strategies
- Applying course material to “real life” situations and/or new problems

Why Active Learning?

How often have you felt you were really on your game, delivering an amazing class presentation, only to find that when you asked students seemingly obvious questions about the topic presented, no one got it?

What does the Research Say?

A meta-analysis completed by Springer, Stanne and Donovan (1998) showed a 20% increase in knowledge acquisition and a 22% increase in student retention when small-group learning methods were incorporated into the University curriculum.

Techniques of active learning discussed/practiced in the workshop

- Pre-lecture “thinking” quiz

- Share/Pair
 - In class questions
 - Class notes
 - Peer writing activities
- Collaborative Learning
 - In class problems/challenges
 - Brainstorming Lists
 - Distilling Information
 - Pro/Con Lists
 - Jigsaw Group Projects
 - Role Playing
 - Panel Discussions
 - Debates
 - Games
- Listening and Thinking Strategies
 - Wait Time
 - Student rephrase and summary of other students answers
 - Fish Bowl
 - Walking Stories
- Two Minute Paper
- Reading Quiz
- Muddiest/Clearest Point of the Day
- Daily or Weekly Journals

The Planned Learning Environment

- Students **write** their own thoughts on a subject
- Students engage in **small group discussions** of the subject
- Students **observe** a phenomena related to the subject
- Students engage in the **action** itself
- Students **process** the experience