Promoting Active Learning
in Classes of All Sizes

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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
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