Student Motivation: Keeping Motivated in Large Lecture Halls

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Student Response Systems (SRS)

SRS Systems, such as iClickers, can keep students engaged in large classes. At the University of North Carolina, professors used a system similar to iClickers. They found that more students were engaged with the lecture and that there was more interaction between the class instructor and the students.

![Graph showing student responses to SRS effectiveness]

Students responses when asked if they felt the SRS made the lecture more challenging, engaging, beneficial for learning, motivational, or applicable to the real world.

Inverted Classroom

Miami University “inverted” 5 of the 40 microeconomics classes, meaning students viewed lecture videos, read the material, and did other traditional classroom activities outside of class. In class, the instructor would answer any questions and explain any concept the students didn’t understand. The rest of the class would be used for demonstrations and problem solving.

Student Feedback
A majority of students reported that they
- Learned concepts better
- Preferred the class style
- Liked the group work
- Learned from group interaction

Instructor Feedback
Instructor noticed
- Increased student motivation
- Students more comfortable asking questions.
- Class was more interesting to teach because each day was different.

Students felt the class was not any easier.

The Lecture “Change-Up”

In order to retain student engagement and activity in large lecture halls, Middendorf and Kalish of Indiana University proposed the idea of “change-ups” in lecture. These activities provide students with a way to remain focused and engaged in the concepts at hand and keep their attention. Ideally these practices occur at least once a lecture, for a fifty minute class, and twice a lecture for a seventy-five minute class.

![Graph showing student performance over time]

Figure 2. “Evidence about Lecturing”. This figure shows the degree to which student’s attention and performance lowers over time throughout the span of a lecture. Additionally, the performance is depicted after two “change-up” activities occur in lecture.

Break-out Activity Ideas

Kisses and Crackers: Although not ideal for lecture halls of hundreds of students, researchers found that passing out candy during lecture caught the student’s attention.

Buzz Groups: Presentation of questions to small groups in which they must discuss the topic and report back their ideas to the class.

Exam Questions: Have students write exam questions for a topic they were just taught.

Truth Statements: Project a few statements on the board, some of which are true and some that are false. Have the students discuss and attempt to explain why some are true and some are not.

Send a Problem: Have students create questions and pass them on to a neighbor to answer.

References

Figure1. http://aisel.aisnet.org/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1787&context=amcis2005
Figure2. https://epigeum.com/downloads/uct_accessible/uk/01_lecturing1/html/course_files/2_30.html