UNB

CETL
CENTRE FOR ENHANCED
TEACHING & LEARNING
www.unb.ca/cetl

go.unb.ca/teaching-tips

Variety in Content Presentation

It is a good idea to have variety in lecture content presentation:

Variety accommodates diversity. Today's university classroom typically has a very broad mix of students with different interests, abilities, cultural backgrounds, learning styles, and disability needs. By using a variety of presentation and teaching methods, you will reach more students.

Variety makes things more engaging. Using a variety of presentation and teaching methods makes the learning experience more dynamic and memorable, and helps students engage meaningfully with the content.

The use of a variety of presentation, student engagement, and **assessment methods** *[links to http://unbtls.ca/teachingtips/varietyinassessmentmethods.html]* follows the principles of **universal design for learning**, *[links to http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j7eUf_7dZVMt]* the goal for which is to benefit everyone by designing learning experiences to accommodate diversity so that students with specific needs do not require special accommodation.

#	Idea	Rationale	Tips
1.	Have handouts and teaching materials available well in advance of lecture and related class activities.	• Having these materials available, especially online, lets students prepare, review, and access the items when they need them instead of at pre-set times, and to easily get materials they have lost or misplaced. • Having reading lists online well in advance gives students with disabilities time to get them in the format they need.	• Provide digital equivalents of all printed handouts. • Ensure electronic materials will display in widely available software. • Index online materials for intuitively easy access.
2.	Post lecture outlines (not necessarily complete notes) prior to class, which students can use as a framework for note taking.	This reduces the volume of note taking required, allowing time for students to think about what they see and hear without scrambling to write down basic information.	Provide in electronic file and print format, so students can use the former for note taking on laptops or the latter to print and bring to class for handwritten note taking.
3.	Create a glossary of terms for your course in	Students can use mobile devices during class to find proper definitions as they need them, thus enhancing	Once they find your Desire2Learn course, the fewer clicks to the glossary the better.

#	Idea	Rationale	Tips
	Desire2Learn.	learning.	
4.	Develop a list of frequently asked questions for students.	This will reduce the amount of time you spend answering the same questions.	If a student asks a question that has been previously answered, ask them to find the FAQ first then ask again if the FAQ answer does not clear it up.
5.	Represent key concepts graphically as well as in text and words. Illustrate using multimedia.	Accommodates visual learners as well as increases the amount of information that can be processed in students' working memory because it involves both the verbal and visual sensory registers. This both guides and supports information processing.	Slides can show basic concept relationships with previously learned material while visual summary handouts use an effective mix of graphics and text to draw students in and hold their attention.
6.	Provide structure to the material: highlight key concepts and explain how they relate to course outcomes.	This helps students create or refine their mental model of the topic, providing them with an accurate conceptual framework that they can then apply.	• Highlight patterns, critical features, big ideas, and relationships. • Slides could present mini-cases or real-world examples with visual details.
7.	Consider video recording lectures and having them available online.	• This makes the lecture always available to students for review, reference for projects, and study for exams. • You could even reduce the amount of classroom time and use it for question and answer, problem solving, and other application activities that enable deep learning.	Offer alternatives for auditory and visual information, to accommodate diversity.
8.	Create some "energy" during lecture (e.g., humor, anticipation, suspense) to increase attention and recall.	• The more senses involved, the more likely students will be able to recall and use concepts later. • Students need to ask questions, not just provide canned answers to questions raised by instructors, to master concepts.	• Effective slides will motivate student questions, which will start the knowledge construction process. • Students could be asked to create visual slides to share. • Students should help provide alternative points of view that can then be compared analytically.
9.	Use technology to increase and enhance learning opportunities (Desire2Learn discussion and quiz tools,	Educational technology is a set of tools you can use to apply learning in realistic and relevant contexts. This sets students up to follow the practices of your discipline and to develop practical skills they will use in later life.	• Student response system ("clickers") can draw students in and help them evaluate their level of knowledge before they discover it on a test that counts. • Provocative questions can evaluate higher levels of learning.

#	Idea	Rationale	Tips
	clickers, interactive white boards, etc.).		• Slides could be projected onto an interactive white board and annotated together until the screen expressed the direction of the discussion.
10.	Consider adopting a "learner-centred" approach to teaching.	Learning is more than a passive "spectator sport." Making it active and participatory provides opportunities for the deep learning that enables students to recall and use concepts in later courses and when employed.	Structure classes so that students take on multiple roles: facilitator, recorder, presenter, etc.
11.	Illustrate abstract concepts with concrete examples and nonexamples.	Real-life examples and those from your own experience make learning relevant to students, which is motivating and engaging.	• Show your enthusiasm for your subject area by sharing personal experiences, research results, related news, etc. • Point to real-life examples from your own experiences and those of the students.
12.	Invite guest speakers to share their perspectives on a topic.	Having different people with different personalities sharing topically relevant experience from different contexts enriches the learning experience and reaches more students.	Using technology to connect them with students via Webcast and online discussion can make it possible to connect with a pool of experts from around the world.

References:

Adams, C. (2006). PowerPoint, Habits of Mind, and Classroom Culture in *Journal of Curriculum Studies*, 38*(4).*

CAST (2018). Universal Design for Learning Guidelines version 2.2. Retrieved from http://udlguidelines.cast.org

Clark, J. (2008). PowerPoint and Pedagogy: Maintaining Student Interest in University Lectures in *College Teaching,* 56*(1).*

Colorado State University. (2011). *Best Practices through Universal Design for Learning:* http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=j7eUf_7dZVM

Colorado State University. (Undated). *Universal Design for Learning Quick Tips*: http://accessproject.colostate.edu/udl/documents/udl_quick_tips.pdf

Strauss, J.; Corrigan, H.; & Hofacker, C. F. (2011). Optimizing Student Learning: Examining the Use of Presentation Slides, in *Marketing Education Review*, vol. 21*(2).*

Sutherland, P. & Badger, R. (2004). Lecturers' Perceptions of Lectures, in *Journal of Further and Higher Education,* 28*(3)*. Retrieved from http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/0309877042000241751#.UdLpA5yDk8s

University of New Brunswick. (2012). *How do YOU Teach? Checklist*. http://www.unb.ca/fredericton/cetl/_resources/tls_files/accessibility/pdfs/ald_checklist_final.pdf