

Tips for Teaching with Lectures

Preparing

- Create a comfortable, non-threatening environment.
- Include opportunities for active learning.
- Organize the lecture like a good speech.
- Prepare notes that will serve as a “road map” rather than a script to be read verbatim.
- If you are team-teaching, talk with co-instructors or TAs often to ensure coherence among lectures, discussions sessions, and office hours.
- Review and practice the lecture before class begins.
- If you plan to use audiovisual aids or instructional technology, do so with care and preparation.

During the Lecture

- Interact with your students.
- Provide students a clear sense of the day’s topics and their relation to the course as a whole.
- Show passion for the subject.
- Focus on communicating with your audience: speak clearly; move around the room, and use gestures to engage student attention.
- When asking questions, do not be afraid of silence.
- Demonstrate respect for, and interest in, student ideas and questions.

After the Lecture

- Rethink, retool, revise.

10 Common Mistakes to Avoid

- Trying to cover too much material in one class session.
- Not including opportunities for questions or active learning.
- Waiting until the last two minutes of class to ask and answer questions.
- Not asking a mix of questions, i.e. questions that test comprehension and questions that require more complex levels of thinking or that have more than one correct answer.
- Answering your own questions or asking more than one question at once.
- Assuming students are learning the material if they are not asking questions.
- Assuming that students will identify and understand the important points of each lecture.
- Reading your notes or the content of your slides when using slide-ware such as PowerPoint.
- Not looking at the students when you are lecturing; looking only at your notes or the chalkboard.
- Filling the chalkboard or slides with too much information.

For a more detailed discussion of this topic, see Teaching with Lectures.