

Virtual Showcase of Teaching and Learning at Queen's University  
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# Student Engagement Strategies in a Virtual Classroom

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## 4 Strategies for Engaging Students Virtually



① →

### Synchronous and Asynchronous Learning

We set a weekly reading schedule and reinforced the material through pre-recorded lectures that students could watch at their convenience and dedicated video-based virtual classes where students could interact with each other and discuss the material with the professor.



② →

### Create Smaller Classes

Instead of the traditional format of a large 'in-person' classes offered once a week for 3 hours or twice a week for 1.5 hours, we divided our classes in 4 smaller classes, each 45 minutes in duration.



③ →

### Student-Led Discussions

We conducted virtual sessions which were student-led. Students determined the areas that they wished to focus on in the class discussion based on the week's topic. We would interject additional information or ask probing questions of the students to enhance the discussion.



④ →

### Participation Groups

Students were able to earn marks via additional 30 min participation groups. Students met and discussed what they had learned from the material assigned for the week. The TA guided the conversation based on the issues and ideas shared by the students. Students were then asked to post a brief summary of their learning from the session.



# Students' Perspectives

## Concerns

### Time management, stress

- Workload
- Multiple group projects
- Multiple time zones
  - GMT-7 to GMT+8

### Online delivery

- Zoom fatigue
- Passive learning
- Social isolation



## Needs

### Time management, stress

- Pedagogical choices
- Time for group work
- Flexibility
- Autonomy support

### Online delivery

- Alternatives tools
- Short live sessions
- Applied activities
- Personal exchanges



## Desired Outcomes

### Emotions

- Empowered
- Effective
- Confident
- Understood & supported

### Active learning

- Apply knowledge to actual situations

### Personal connections

- Students
- Teaching team



# Positive Outcomes



Increased opportunities for direct human interactions, and ways to provide support to students.



Students reported feeling motivated & empowered to take responsibility for their own learning.



Students chose the learning mode and approaches that worked best for them.



Voluntary attendance in discussions resulted in high student enjoyment and engagement. Some students reported these exchanges helped their morale.



Students reported high perceived fairness of participation evaluations and less stress related to uncertainty about this assessment.



Students demonstrated very good ability to apply the course material.

# Challenges



Repetition of instructions required



Logistics of setting up and organizing participation sessions



Voluntary attendance in discussions dropped significantly over time



Balancing consistency in delivery with variance in student needs between discussion sessions

# Thank you for attending

We look forward to your comments and questions

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