Scaling Up – Meeting the Challenges of Teaching a Large Online Class

For OLC Innovate 2016 Conversations that Work

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# Considerations for Scaling Up

## Course Design

* Assessment

What can I do about cheating?

* + Assume open-book and limit time and available dates
  + Large pools of questions and have it randomly drawn (with randomized questions and randomized answer orders)
  + Lower stake testing by having multiple small ones
  + Redesign exams as assignments or projects
  + Proctoring?

How can I design an effective assessment without having too much to grade?

* + Multiple choice exams – have students write exam questions
  + Assignments – when redesigning assignments, always think about how you grade and what feedback you’re planning to give (e.g. checklist vs. rubric, feedback template). When you do this, possibly create a grading timeline so you have a reasonable grading load each week.
  + Write a very clear assignment instruction and if possible, provide examples for complicated assignment.
  + Review learning objectives and consider to modify, cut down, or even cut out completely some assignments.
* Learning Activities

How can I reduce the feeling of student anonymity and encourage a positive climate in learning environment?

* Teacher immediacy
* Social Presence
  + Have students post profile pictures so their pictures will show up on discussions and messages
  + Have an introductory assignment and discussion and have students introduce each other. This assignment/discussion would be best if one of the prompt is related to the class you’re teaching so that sets a great tone for class and minimize the feeling of busywork.
  + Group Discussion

1. Have a student post an original to your question and reply one or two
2. Assign roles for each student in groups or have one to facilitate the discussion

* How can I design an effective learning activities without having too much to grade?
* Self-check quiz
* Have a weekly routine so that there is less grading to do as students get used to the type of activities.
* Write a very clear discussion prompt and use it as a checklist when grading
* Word count or no word count?

## Facilitation

* How can I avoid getting too many e-mails from the students?
  + Clear organization
  + Clear instruction
  + General Course Question Discussion Thread
* How can I work effectively with teaching assistant
  + TA orientation – Topics include LMS training, course site walk-through, grading processes, responding to student complaints, and general duties and expectations
  + Communication –Clearly communicate tasks and expectations weekly.
  + Assessment – Evaluate the ongoing work of TA. Additionally, set up an “inter-rater” working session before a big assignment.
  + Mentoring & Development – Treat them as a future colleague and get feedback from them.
  + Two Cs of Effective TA Management – Collaboration and Communication
* How can I manage grading load without a teaching assistant?
  + Grade faster & smarter (<https://www.insidehighered.com/blogs/gradhacker/grading-faster-and-smarter>)
    - Rubrics and checklist
    - A list of common feedback to cut & paste to paper
    - Skim the paper before grading
    - Avoid over-marking

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