



CENTER FOR INNOVATIVE TEACHING AND LEARNING

“How Former Students As Undergraduate Teaching Assistants (UTA’s) Can Empower Active Learning”

Theme: Student Engagement & Active Learning

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I. Abstract:

As an instructor in higher education, have you ever asked yourself any of these questions when reflecting on your teaching:

- ❑ “Why aren’t my students participating more in the classroom?”
- ❑ “Am I lecturing too much and for too long?”
- ❑ “Can I quantify student learning?”

What is the research saying about active learning and student engagement in higher education classrooms? And how can I positively and proactively influence change in my courses?

II. Research / Opportunity:

- Brophy argued that **active and purposeful student engagement** must “focus on encouraging students to engage in activities with motivation to learn”.¹
- **The Self Determination Theory** has evolved to now embrace this as “a more general theory of human motivation, personality development, and wellness”.²

Inspired by this research, I applied for and was awarded a 2023 Grant through C.I.T.L. (*Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning*) with a focus on active learning. I implemented an UTA application process with current students, via an optional bonus assignment, who were passionate to collaborate with me. Within BUS T-275/T-276: **Strategic Recruiting Preparedness**, we created a vision to achieve a 50% lecture to 50% student engagement ratio (*historically/anecdotally, I experienced 75%/25%*).

Undergraduate Teaching Assistant Supported Sections / # of Students¹ 3 (out of 10 sections)
128 (out of 434 students)

Ishan Malani
UTA
Fall 2023 / Spring 2024

Paige Osbourne
UTA
Spring 2024

Joe Packowski
Lecturer
Fall 2023 / Spring 2024

“I felt my voice and participation were heard in many different ways which was beneficial.”

“I tried to participate every class and always felt encouraged to share.”

“Learning was fun in this class!”

III. Partnership ↑ Assessment ↓:

1. Quantified Observation Tool	Adapted a Protocol from Advancing Inclusive Teaching Efforts (PAITE) assessment tool for capturing lecture/student participation data (below chart).	3. Classroom Assessment Techniques (CAT's)	Through research and UTA partnerships, diversified classroom CAT offerings: <i>polls, movement, think-pair-share, reflections, dry-erase boards/tents, surveys, class bookend reflections, word clouds, and group think.</i>
2. Qualified Observation Processes	Complementary to PAITE, captured thematic observations including attentiveness, willingness, purposeful engagement, and/or distractions.	4. Check-In Cadence	In addition to instructor/UTA shared file system, met frequently to assess, discuss, and/or enhance our course design to impact within the current semester.

Date	6/21/2023	Class	BUS T-276	Instructor	Joe Packowski	Number of Students	45															
1	LEN = Listening/Taking Notes, ITPS = Individual Thinking/Problem Solving, TPS = Think, Pair, Share, GW = Group Work, SEI = Student Engagement, SEM = Student SEA = Student Engagement All, SQ = Student Questions, SP = Student Presentations, QG = Quiz or Survey, W = Waiting, O = Other.																					
2	LEC = Lecture Only, RTW = Real Time Work, FOTS = Feedback On The Spot, FTEC = Feedback with Technology, LA = Listening / Answering, MOV = Moving Around, 1st = One on One, 1stG = One on Groups, ADM = Administrative Work, WAIT = Waiting for response, O = Other.																					
For each 2 minute interval, check columns to show what's happening in each category (1, 2 and 3). It is OK to check multiple columns.																						
	1. Students are Doing				2. Instructor is Doing																	
Minutes	LEN	ITPS	TPS	GW	SEA	SQ	SP	QG	W	O	LEC	RTW	FOTS	FTEC	LA	MOV	1st	1stG	ADM	WAIT	O	
56-58	X																					
58-60		X			X	X																
60-62		X			X	X																
62-64		X			X	X																
64-66	X																					
66-68		X			X	X																
68-70		X			X	X																
70-72		X			X	X																
72-74		X			X	X																

IV. Outcomes:³

49.2% / 50.8%	Ratio achieved of instructor lecture to student engagement.
-81.5%	Reduction in number of quizzes / assignments I offer through personal course map design assessments.
92.1%	Students strongly agreeing (70.2%) or agreeing they felt empowered to learn (added question to end of semester student evaluation of teaching – OCQ).
+38.0%	Increase in student self-reported level of learning (through Pre/Post Quiz analysis - comparative to Active Learning Classroom)
+13.1%	Grades (satisfactory work) earned by students as part of my Evidence of Learning (EoL) analysis (leveraging Specifications Grading versus Traditional Grading)
0.36%	End of semester student grade disputes (n= 1,066 - leveraging Specifications Grading versus Traditional Grading)

V. Learnings:

- UTA’s (Ishan and Paige) and Joe Packowski:**
- Variations observed between class days and times.
 - High engagement classes leveraged dry erase boards.
 - UTA’s should host own student consultation time.
 - Implement UTA Individual Development Plans.
 - UTA opportunity to engage during participation time.

VI. Future Considerations:

- Recommend UTA’s for assessing active learning!
- Apply for a C.I.T.L. Active Learning Grant.
- Aligns to IU’s 2030 Strategic Plan: **Student Success**.
- Potential teaching theory and pedagogy alignment.
- Partnership proposed and accepted with C.I.T.L. on inaugural UTA Faculty Learning Community: **Engage, Track, Adapt – Fall 2024, IU Bloomington.**

¹Brophy, J. (2004, p.4). Motivating students to learn (2nd ed.). Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.
²R.M. Ryan, B. Soenens, M. Vansteenkiste. Reflections on self-determination theory as an organizing framework for personality psychology: Interfaces, integrations, issues, and unfinished business Journal of Personality, 87 (1) (2019), pp. 115-145.
³Data Sourcing: Joe Packowski, Fall 2023 to Spring 2024 Semesters, OCQ Data, TA Data, and Personal Self-Planners. Updated through 05/15/2024