Design and Implementation of Cooperative Learning in Large Classes

Friday, March 4, 8:15am – 11:30am
MSU Union, Lake Huron Room
(Registration at 8:15am; program begins at 8:30am)

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An ongoing challenge of teaching large classes is engaging students with one another and with the instructor, and deeply engaging the students with the concepts, principles and heuristics of the field. Many faculty members are exploring cooperative learning or other forms of active engagement to encourage students to be active participants in their own learning as well as the learning of other students. But how do we structure these experiences to ensure that they lead to enhanced learning?

This workshop emphasizes the instructor’s role in designing and implementing individual and group strategies in connection with cooperative learning. Strategies include individual reflections follow by pair discussion, book ends on a class session, problem-based and case-based learning, and several classroom assessment techniques. Key elements of cooperative learning that are research-based are explained. These include positive interdependence, individual and group accountability, face-to-face interaction, teamwork skills, and group processing. Participants will learn about the instructor’s role in designing, structuring, and implementing cooperative learning in large classes. Specific learning outcomes include:
Develop/refine rationale for cooperative learning;
Describe key features of cooperative learning;
Apply cooperative learning to classroom practice; and
Make connections between cooperative learning and desired outcomes of courses and programs.

Challenges and barriers to implementing cooperative learning and how to overcome them will be addressed. Participants will experience hands-on activities, video examples, small and large group discussion, and have the opportunity to design and review activities for their own courses.

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