

Resource Guide

Supporting International Students Through Lecture – Encouraging Interactions

Many faculty members use lectures to deliver content to students in classes large and small. However, in many cases we are seeing more and more international students in our classes. Many of these students may not speak English as their first language and would benefit from strategies to make the lecture more accessible. There are several ways to do this, but I will focus on how we can support our international students during lectures by encouraging interactions. This interactivity will allow native and non-native speakers to practice effective communication. If we can provide opportunities for our international and domestic students to interact with one another, we promote both language development and content learning.

- By structuring lectures in 15–20-minute chunks we can provide meaningful interactions among students between the chunks. The following suggestions are some ways to provide these interactions.
 - **Provide review questions of the content just delivered.** Students can work collaboratively to answer the questions. After a sufficient, but not extended amount of time, call on students randomly to share answers.
 - A Think-Pair-Share activity is a way to review as the suggestion above, but you give the students a little time to think silently and prepare an answer before sharing it with another student. Once they have discussed the question in pairs, have groups report out with another group or to the whole class.
 - **Develop an activity or scenario to apply concepts and problem-solving skills.** The students must apply theory or content to enable them to solve the problem or answer the question you've devised. Once students have had time to develop answers, ask them to share findings within small groups or to the class.
 - **Create peer-to-Peer Instruction allowing students to compare notes, or complete organizers.** Noticing differences in note taking strategies or how a problem is solved provides students with excellent practice in questioning and articulating their thoughts.

Each of these strategies allows for students to interact with peers and express themselves to communicate ideas and to listen to others as they do the same. This kind of practice can be valuable in developing stronger language skills in addition to making meaning of the content.

Resources:

Adapted from: Shapiro, Farrelly and Tomas (2023). *Fostering International Student Success in Higher Education*. TESOL International Association and NAFSA. Alexandria, VA

For more information or to discuss how you might incorporate these ideas into your courses, contact the Reinert Center by email.