

PowerPoint Slides

What Works and What Doesn't When Teaching Large Classes?

Presented by:

Ken Alford, Ph.D. and Tyler Griffin, Ph.D.





Presenter Bios:

Kenneth L. Alford, Ph.D., is an Associate Professor of Church History and Doctrine at Brigham Young University. After serving almost 30 years on active duty in the U.S. Army, he retired as a Colonel in 2008. While on active duty, Ken served in numerous personnel, automation, acquisition, and education assignments, including eight years teaching computer science and information technology at the United States Military Academy at West Point, New York and four years as Professor and Department Chair of the Strategic Leadership Department at the National Defense University in Washington, DC.



Tyler J. Griffin, Ph.D., is an assistant professor at Brigham Young University. With degrees in Electrical Engineering and Instructional Technology, combined with 18 years of professional teaching experience, Tyler has three major focal points in his work: (1) Best practices for teaching & learning (2) Best uses of technology to increase the scope and scale of learning, and (3) best practices for teacher development/in-service.



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Immediately Before Class

- Arrive early
- Recapture “dead time”
- Consider using music
- Delegate tasks to students
- Start on time
- Don’t give critical announcements too early



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During Class

- Make Lesson 1 “content memorable”
- Maintain “a pulse” on your class (and change pace dynamically)
- Create cognitive vacuums (“Keep them on their toes”)

Like it or not,
you’re an
entertainer

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Teacher as Entertainer

- “Mix it up”
 - Voice inflection
 - Physical movement
 - Facial expression
 - Proximity teaching
 - Speed of delivery
- Humor

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Story Telling

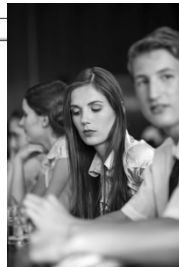
Everyone loves a good story...



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Reach Out to Introverts

- Introverts don't think out loud
- They like time "to process and prepare"
- They don't like being singled-out
- Keep your classroom "safe"
- Consider using writing exercises



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Why Have Students Write?

"The learning sciences have discovered that when learners **externalize** and **articulate** their **developing knowledge**, they learn more effectively. ..."



Benefits of Writing

"This is more complex than it might sound, because it's not the case that learners first learn something, and then express it. Instead, **the best learning takes place when learners articulate their unformed and still developing understanding**, and continue to articulate it throughout the process of learning."



R. Keith Sawyer,
Cambridge Handbook of The Learning Sciences, 12



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"Short Writes"

- 2-minute summary
- Bumper stickers
- Headlines
- Tweets



In-class writing assignments can be reflective, persuasive, or perspective focused.



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Individual Responses

- "Raise your hand"
- Anonymous response systems
- Head-down poll
- 1-to-10 "finger exercise"
- Roman gladiator ratings



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Small Group Work

- Use topics where students can share
- Don't pool ignorance
- Small group consensus polling
- Think-Pair-Share



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Whole Class Activities

- Persuasive debate
- Primed student co-conspirators
- Reader's theaters (humanities)
- Role playing
- Judge and jury
- Game show



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Class Discussion

- Importance of being heard
- Coach students
- Recognize the power of location teaching



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Question Mechanics

- Balance “shotgun” vs. “rifle” questions
- Vary question complexity
- Use “Goldilocks questions”
 - Not too hard
 - Not too easy
 - Just right



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Find the Sweet Spot

- Between stretching students & embarrassing them
- Between “teacher talk” & student response



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During Class

- Use the power of examples and non-examples
- Reach and teach the back row
- Share information multiple times and ways
- Learn as many names as you can
- Use proximity teaching



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In-Class Demos

- There's something about "doing it live"
- Magnify your object lessons



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Dealing with student challenges

Two words to change your career

"I've noticed..."

Give students an opportunity to "own it"



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Tell us what you think

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Thank you!



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