

# 03 Various Class Formats

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# 1. Class Formats That Facilitate Student Learning

Nowadays, university education involves a variety of class styles. Introduced here are some traditional class formats of large-hall lectures and seminars, as well as some new ones.

## Large-hall lectures

Traditionally, universities employed the method of one professor lecturing in front of a large number of students. Such large-hall lectures can be deemed a highly efficient class style, since a small number of faculty can educate many students.

However, keeping students interested throughout the 90-minute class time requires some sort of technique. Faculty must always keep an eye on the faces of the students to measure their level of understanding, and if their faces show puzzlement, the professor must be flexible and repeat the content, to emphasize the point. Lectures are, by nature, one-directional, but one good way to maintain student concentration is to speak out to the students, and when necessary, ask direct questions for an individual to answer on the spot.

The structure of lecture classes vary, but generally, the first ten minutes are spent on reviewing the previous class, today's class in relation to the syllabus, and some of the latest topics to interest the students. After this comes the main part of the lecture; the last 10 minutes are spent on summarizing the previous portion and preparations for the following class.

It has become common to use PowerPoint presentations in large-hall lectures. This saves the time required to write on the board, and also enables the teacher to provide visual information such as graphs, figures and photos. Distributing lesson outlines and other materials is also useful in enhancing the level of student understanding. However, this can sometimes lead to students gaining false satisfaction from copying down information provided by the PowerPoint presentation and obtaining handouts. It is important to give students opportunities to actively listen to and take notes of the lecture content as spoken by the professor.

Other methods include lectures by guest speakers involved in the course field and providing Q&A time with students, or planning a relay lecture course to approach the subject from various perspectives.

Student-teacher relationships in large-hall lectures tend to be weak. It is therefore necessary to sincerely meet with students who come after class or during office hours with questions, or to answer questions students send via email in order to respond to the enthusiasm of eager students. Another good method is to take questionnaire surveys during class, in order to reflect the honest opinions of the students onto the class.

Please keep in mind that the e-classes prepared by the university are also a very useful tool in developing communication between teachers and students in large-hall lectures.



### Reference URL

- e-class

<http://eclass.doshisha.ac.jp/index.html>

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### Seminars

Compared to large-hall lectures, small classes can make use of many different methods and devices. Orientation and introduction may require the conventional lecture style, but other than that there are many things one can try in a small classroom.

For example, it is very effective to divide the class into several groups and give them group work assignments. This provides the opportunity for serious group discussions, improving the communication abilities of students and enabling them to state their opinions in a clear manner. Being exposed to the opinions and ideas of other members also helps broaden the minds of students. Group work requires the members to come up with a certain conclusion, and therefore fosters autonomy. The process of aggregating various opinions and drawing one conclusion from them affords an opportunity to acquire an important skill that cannot be gained from large-hall lectures.

Successful group work requires some facilitation from the teacher, such as providing assignments in a clear manner, specifically indicating methods of obtaining necessary information, and checking up on whether the discussion has gone astray or become stagnant. It may be a good idea to refer to some published how-to books on workshops, to effectively conduct group works.

Seminars are also useful for giving individual assignments and having each student give presentations. Depending on the size of the seminar, it may even be possible to give every student in the class an opportunity for presentation. This is a chance for presenters to acquire the skills for making their presentations more intriguing and understandable. Obligating presenters to create and use PowerPoint presentation, as well as to distribute presentation outline and other materials, yields high educational benefits.

Some care is also required in keeping the non-presenting students focused. The teacher should create a class atmosphere in which asking questions and confirming doubts is easy; handing out comment sheets so that the presenter can receive feedback from other students is also beneficial. Active exchanges of opinions in seminars can foster the logicity and demonstrative abilities required in research.

### Service learning

The premise of large-hall lectures and seminars is that their venue is within the university, whereas service learning takes students out of the campus where they experience various issues in the local community, enabling them to gain extensive knowledge through involvement in the actual problem-solving process.

For example, participation in river beautification campaigns makes students aware of the importance of environmental issues, leading to their deliberating specific ways to reduce unauthorized dumping. Helping to support the elderly who are living alone causes them to realize the issues that pertain in elderly welfare, encouraging them to refine designs of community support networks for the elderly. Service learning requires advance study by students regarding theories and legal systems surrounding the issue at hand; after community involvement, students must be given time to bring back to class what they experienced and to ponder its significance. Traversing between theory and practice is said to be the key to success



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in service learning.

The successful experience of contributing to problem-solving in the community deepens students' confidence, cultivating in them a proactive attitude toward involvement in local community issues.

### PBL (Project Based Learning)

PBL stands for both Problem-Based Learning and Project-Based Learning; the two are often confused. Here, we introduce the latter. Project-Based Learning is, generally speaking, an education style in which project planning and execution is the assignment, and students are expected to think independently and take action. Doshisha University has "Project Subject" as part of its general and liberal education; many of these classes follow this style.

The important point is that the students are informed as to the aim of the projects, but teachers give no specific hints on how to move the project forward. Students are expected to discover the know-how on this through trial and error. Teachers, while providing necessary information, must prepare environment and conditions that facilitate the success of the student projects, and at the end must evaluate the results.

PBL requires thorough preparation that is much different from that of large-hall lectures; the cooperation of many people and organizations outside of the school is essential for success. For this reason, it is said that the educational effect on the students is significant.



### Internship

Internship is currently one of the most important education formats in the curriculum of universities throughout Japan. Students enter the worksites of private companies, governmental agencies, NPOs etc., for a certain period and work together with the employees, in order to experience the world of employment from the inside.

Classes must take student motivation that has been heightened through internships and use it to ensure better learning by linking practice with study.

In addition to the formal internship courses offered by our Career Center and the Consortium of Universities in Kyoto, there are currently many other external internship opportunities available.



# TOPIC

## Learn about other faculty members' classes

### University Admission Preparation Course

As part of our university-high school collaboration project, Doshisha University offers the “University Admission Preparation Course” to familiarize high school students with the level of academic ability needed at university. In this course, faculty members of Doshisha University choose a topic that may interest high school students from their specialized field and give lectures in the same format as in actual university classes. Videos of the lectures in previous years are also available online. They are valuable resources giving faculty a rare opportunity to see what their colleagues teach in class, so please feel free to watch the past videos for improvement of your class or for class management hints.

- Website of the Center for Learning Support and Faculty Development [University Admission Preparation Course]

[http://clf.doshisha.ac.jp/preparation\\_course/course.html](http://clf.doshisha.ac.jp/preparation_course/course.html)

\* A login ID and password are required to watch the videos. Please contact the Center for Learning Support and Faculty Development Office for details.

### Invitation to Learning

The “Invitation to Learning” section is a collection of videos of popular lectures and lectures that give hints for education improvement, effectively edited for viewers within and outside of the university. Covering a variety of topics and cutting into actual contemporary issues, the lecture videos will surely be of use for you to develop new class styles or education methods and learn about effective use of learning environment.

- Website of the Center for Learning Support and Faculty Development [Invitation to Learning]

<http://clf.doshisha.ac.jp/manabi/manabi.html>

### OpenCourseWare

Doshisha University makes available teaching materials used in actual classes of the university online as part of its OpenCourse project. Faculty members who have their teaching materials available online can review, improve and enhance their education content based on the feedback on the materials from within and outside of the university. The content is also useful for those who do not have their teaching materials online, as they can refer to the materials used by their colleagues in class and gain various hints for improving their classes.

- Website of the Center for Learning Support and Faculty Development [OpenCourseWare]

<http://opencourse.doshisha.ac.jp/>

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## Class Design Seminar

Since AY 2014, the Center for Learning Support and Faculty Development has been holding the Class Design Seminar for Doshisha faculty members to casually share information and exchange opinions on effective teaching methods, management of large-size class, how to facilitate use of English in class and other topics. It gives a rare opportunity where faculty members can share each other's trial and error experiences and benefit from mutual learning and communication with faculty of other academic disciplines beyond organizational borders; the seminar is expected to promote classes that involve active learning of students.

\* Videos and materials of the Class Design Seminar are available on the "Faculty Training Programs" section of the webpage for faculty and employees (access limited to Doshisha faculty and employees).

## Opening of Community Site

A community site "Class Design Seminar" has opened on the university's Portfolio system as a space for exchanging opinions and sharing information on tips and ideas for class and education improvement.

Functions available to site members include participation in discussion on the message board and uploading materials.

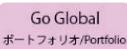


Videos and materials of past meetings of Class Design Seminar are also available on the site.

### How to access

- Log in via Web Single Sign-On using the account issued by the university

<https://sso.doshisha.ac.jp/>

- Access the Go Global Portfolio 

\* If you are interested, please contact the Center for Learning Support and Faculty Development Office to register on the system as a member.

★Please feel free to contact us for any questions.



## 2. Originality and Ingenuity in Classes

Conducting a class requires original and creative ideas. Introduced here are some examples of unique classes in various formats.

### Case 1

#### Facilitating use of English in class

William R. Stevenson III, Department of Education and Culture Faculty of Social Studies

Below is an example of using English in various ways in small-sized and large-sized classes respectively.

#### Educational Mission

1. To teach through **play**, not compulsion
2. To teach **how to think**, not what to think
3. To promote **English as a means**, not an end
4. To promote **community** and **interdependence**, not competition and independence
5. To connect ethical ideas to **moral action**

#### Teaching method

##### [1] Small-sized class

I invite students to participate in parties and meals together even before the classes commence so as to create a relaxed atmosphere for Japanese students to engage in conversations, discussions and debates using English in a natural manner. I also actively use facebook and other SNS to develop a community, opening the exclusive community page for seminar members on which both faculty and students can communicate freely in English.

Flipped teaching is employed in the actual class. Students are required to watch or listen to specific online contents before each class to prepare for the mainly debate-based class. Other tasks of students include writing papers, in English and Japanese, on a specialized topic in the seminar that interested them and on the results of the survey they conducted in town. I upload these papers on the facebook community page (open to public) to disseminate their research results to the world.

##### [2] Large-sized class

The class uses English and self interpreting concurrently to cater for both students who are good at English and students who are not. Since I mainly teach first and second year students, I carefully choose the kind of content that entertains and intrigues the students so as to draw their attention to the topic that I wish to address in class. To that end, I avoid the one-way instruction of specialized content in a lecture format as much as possible and instead move the class forward by first showing content related to the theme of each class and posing a question that can generate a discussion among students. When the first question is answered, I repeat the process of posing one question after another, through which students are expected to deepen their understanding of the course content. Also, as a future new attempt, I am considering making use of Twitter in a large-sized class. In addition to using Twitter in grasping

the result of discussion in each group, I am planning to develop a framework that enables students to review the material and content used in class via Twitter.



## Case 2

### Mutual learning between Japanese students and international students

Aya Okada, Faculty of Policy Studies

Below is an example of an attempt to create an opportunity for Japanese students and international students to study together towards their respective goals.

#### Course description

The course was conducted from the spring semester of AY 2013 to the fall semester of AY 2015 as a joint project of “Academic Skills 1” and “Academic Skills 2” (both taught in English) offered by the Faculty of Policy Studies and the Japanese language class offered at the Kyoto Consortium for Japanese Studies (hereinafter KCJS).

#### Background

The project began with my personal acquaintance with the Japanese instructor at KCJS. We agreed on the need to respond to the demands of the students of the Faculty of Policy Studies who want to gain international experience and of the international students who seek more opportunities to communicate with Japanese university students, and decided to start by doing what we could within the framework of our respective classes.

### Points of emphasis in course management

Three methods are put into practice to facilitate effective mutual learning; “collaborative work toward shared goals,” “helping each other for accomplishing individual goals” and “informal learning.”

#### [1] Collaborative work toward shared goals

Japanese students and international students work together for shared short-term goals, in activities such as the interview project for learning the work attitude of Kyoto-based artisans and the joint class for translating professionally-written policy notes into English.

#### [2] Helping each other for accomplishing individual goals

We conduct “peer editing” in which students help each other with their individual in-class assignments including papers, essays and presentations. Mutual learning is facilitated by pairing one Japanese student and one international student to review each other’s writing and learning content.

#### [3] Informal learning

For smooth collaborative learning in class, we hold student-organized exchange events with games to help them get to know each other and deepen their bond outside of class.

### Conclusion

The presence of international students greatly helps Japanese students foster an international mindset while on campus. However, just being in the same space together does not facilitate mutual learning. It is very important for both involved teachers to share the objectives of our respective classes and fully understand the needs of Japanese and international students in order to think of ways to maximize the learning effect on both sides.



## Case 3

### Facilitating group work in class

Hiroshi Yadohisa, Faculty of Culture and Information Science

Below is an example of transforming a large-hall lecture into an active learning environment for students.

#### Course description

I teach introductory level data science to first year students in both lecture and seminar formats.

#### Background

Back in 2010, there were so many students in my class who fall asleep or chat during lecture or who came in late that it was called “a zoo” by other faculty. I myself was getting tired of having to give warning to students in every class, when I came up with the idea “how about making it a task for students to talk and think together as part of group work?” It was the beginning of my attempt of turning the classroom into an active learning environment.

#### Points of emphasis in course management

I am being conscious of “reducing the amount of knowledge to teach in class as much as possible” from the course preparation stage. Even after the classes begin, the important role of the faculty teaching a class involving group work is not to take initiative in moving the class along as the main speaker, but to speak as few as possible and to observe the progress of students’ group work as much as possible.

#### Ideas to facilitate group work

##### [1] Icebreakers

Time for students’ self introduction in a game style is taken before group work. It takes about 10 to 15 minutes, but it is well worthwhile considering how it uplifts the class atmosphere afterwards.

##### [2] Course material made by students during group work

With group work, students can get involved in making course material by themselves. Paper helicopters and paper dice made by students are used in class for collecting data.

##### [3] Having students write group goals and reflections

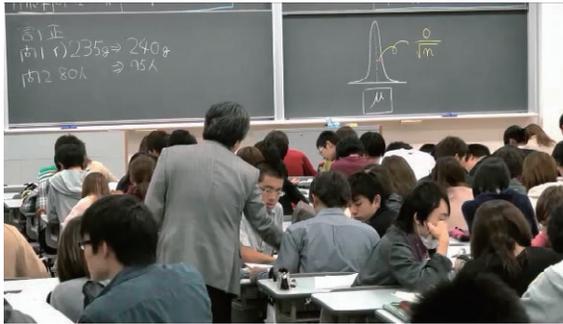
Assigning students to write their group’s goals and points of reflection enables them to learn about the status of other groups, and the faculty on the other hand can gain more trust of the students by giving feedback to them on the points of reflection during class.

##### [4] Avoiding using mathematical formula in questions for students as much as possible

As the Faculty of Culture and Information Science is an integrated humanities-science program, a question containing a mathematical formula may be comprehensible only to students with knowledge in science. For smooth operation of group work, the faculty should avoid using mathematical formula in questions as much as possible.

### Result of introducing group work

It is not only the faculty that teaches students during a class. Adopting group work has revealed that helping each other and thinking together have a significant influence on the level of understanding of the students as a result. Nowadays the class has turned into an active learning environment, both in and outside of class, with students gathering outside the class time for discussion.



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## Education activity support systems

The Center for Learning Support and Faculty Development aims to further fuel active education activities by faculty; to that end, the Center provides the following support systems.

### Subsidy for developing education methods and materials

To further promote class improvement at the university, this subsidy targets full-time faculty with support for general expenses in developing new education methods and/or materials.

Applications for the following academic year are accepted every fall semester. Information is provided to the mail boxes of each faculty as soon as the application procedures etc., have been determined.

- Website of the Center for Learning Support and Faculty Development [Subsidy for development of education methods and materials]  
<http://clf.doshisha.ac.jp/support/development/materials.html>

### Subsidy for FD Investigation Activities

In supporting active investigations aimed at improving the quality of education at Doshisha University, this subsidy provides support for the expenses of participating in various out-of-school events relating to FD.

#### Participation in FD-related out-of-school events announced by the Center for Learning Support and Faculty Development

Subsidy-target events are posted sequentially on the "Seminar/workshop information" page of the Center for Learning Support and Faculty Development website. Those who wish to participate in a particular event should contact the Center for Learning Support and Faculty Development Office.

- Website of the Center for Learning Support and Faculty Development [Seminar/workshop information]  
<http://clf.doshisha.ac.jp/research/research.html>

Information is also available through a mailing list. To join the mailing list, notify the Center for Learning Support and Faculty Development Office of the email address you wish to register.

#### Participation in FD-related out-of-school events not listed above

Even though an event is not listed in the website of the Center for Learning Support and Faculty Development, it may qualify for the subsidy if the cost of participation is within a certain limit. If you wish to participate in an FD-related out-of-school event, submit the "Application Form for Subsidy for FD Investigation Activities" to the Center for Learning Support and Faculty Development Office prior to the event.

The "Application Form for the Subsidy for FD Investigation Activities" may be downloaded from the website of the Center for Learning Support and Faculty Development.

- Website of the Center for Learning Support and Faculty Development [Subsidy for FD Investigation Activities]  
<http://clf.doshisha.ac.jp/support/action.html>

Applications for subsidy will be screened for approval at the Center for Learning Support and Faculty Development operational meeting. You cannot apply for subsidy for an event hosted by an academic society or association that you belong to.

\* Subsidy maximum is 150,000 yen per year per person.

### Subsidy for Creating Multimedia Teaching Materials

In supporting smooth operation of remote lectures etc. at Doshisha University, this subsidy provides support for the expenses for creating multimedia teaching materials.

Those who wish to receive the subsidy should first submit the "Questionnaire on Plans to Conduct Remote Lectures etc." provided by the Department of Registrar, Imadegawa Campus, receive approval and then submit the "Application Form for Subsidy for Creating Multimedia Teaching Materials for Remote Lectures etc." to the Center for Learning Support and Faculty Development Office at least two weeks prior to use.

Applications for subsidy will be screened for approval at the Center for Learning Support and Faculty Development operational meeting, where the amount of subsidy will also be decided.

\* The maximum amount of subsidy is 50,000 yen per semester per subject. However, in the case where several subjects are held jointly in the same time slot, they are collectively considered as one subject.

### Subsidy for FD Activities at faculties, schools, graduate schools and centers

Under this system, the Center for Learning Support and Faculty Development provides 300,000 yen annually to each faculty, school, graduate school and center for their respective organizational FD activities. The allocated subsidy for FD activities is generally spent for the following purposes:

1. Expenses for conducting surveys for graduating students and newly enrolled students
2. Expenses involved in FD retreat program
3. Expenses for organizing FD lectures and seminars
4. Costs for purchasing books on FD
5. Expenses regarding provision of specialist knowledge in course evaluation (remuneration for instruction)