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# Engaging the Masses: Library Instruction with Large Undergraduate Classes

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Vander Meer, Patricia Fravel; Perez-Stable, Maria A.; and Ring, Donna M., "Engaging the Masses: Library Instruction with Large Undergraduate Classes" (2007). *University Libraries Faculty & Staff Publications.* Paper 8.
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# Engaging the Masses:
# Library Instruction with Large Undergraduate Classes

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# Engaging the Masses: Library Instruction with Large Undergraduate Classes

## *1. INTRODUCTION*

Consider the following idyllic instructional scenario: It is mid-morning in the library's instructional laboratory, which is equipped with the latest technology. Nine out of twelve honors students' hands shoot into the air to respond to a question that the librarian has asked as part of an instruction session.

The more true-to-life scenario may be this: A new instructor teaching a non-Western world class calls and asks if you can help his first-year students learn how to find relevant resources. It is a lecture class of 150 students and is taught in an old building equipped with a standing whiteboard and a wooden lectern. Although some library instruction reflects the first scenario, the second is an all too common one, presenting multiple challenges to instructing students in classes of all sizes in a meaningful way.

There are many ways to accommodate students in small or moderate sized groups. Libraries often have a facility with computers where a class of students can participate in a hands-on instructional session. If computers are not available in the facility, librarians can still practice active learning strategies, such as small group work, to move beyond just the lecture approach. However, teaching large groups of students, while keeping it real and interesting, can be much more difficult. Libraries are often not equipped to teach classes of over 50 students, and if a librarian is willing to teach a large class in a location outside of the library, he or she may encounter less than ideal settings. These include

theater style seating in large lecture halls, poor acoustics, a lack of computer/projection equipment, and a general fear of the unknown. Basic online tutorials as a substitute for class instruction have been used with some large-scale numbers of undergraduate students and can provide introductory library research skills. However, it is impractical for librarians to create subject-specific online tutorials for numerous individual classes given limited time and resources.

Given these constraints, can techniques and activities be identified that can be used to enhance instruction regardless of class size or be adapted for use in large classes? Through several avenues, the authors considered this question, with special consideration given to active learning pedagogy. These included a search of the literature and a select number of instructional web pages. The authors also solicited feedback from instructional librarians who teach large classes.

## *2. RELATED LITERATURE AND SEARCH OF INSTRUCTIONAL WEB PAGES*

A search of the literature on library instruction and large classes yielded few results. A key article described several active learning techniques successfully used by Gedeon (1997) in a large lecture setting. The search was subsequently expanded to include the topic of teaching large classes in higher education in general. This literature also contained many references to the use of active learning. Educators widely accept that active learning is an excellent teaching model and that students learn well this way. Bonwell and Eison, in their

book *Active learning: Creating excitement in the classroom* (1991), proffer this succinct description of active learning:

> Though the term "active learning" has never been precisely defined in educational literature, some general characteristics are commonly associated with the use of strategies promoting active learning in the classroom:
>
> - Students are involved in more than listening.
> - Less emphasis is placed on transmitting information and more on developing students' skills.
> - Students are involved in higher-order thinking (analysis, synthesis, evaluation).
> - Students are engaged in activities (e.g., reading, discussing, and writing).
> - Greater emphasis is placed on students' exploration of their own attitudes and values. (2)

The authors also conducted an Internet search for library instruction and large classes, looking for college and university pages that mentioned large classes in their descriptions of library instruction services. This search yielded only a small number of web sites. These offered the following options for large class instruction:

- scheduling special rooms that could handle large groups
- dividing the class into multiple sections
- offering examples of special library assignments classroom instructors could use

- requiring additional lead time for scheduling large classes
- specifying that effort would be made to include interactivity if a lecture was the only option in large classes
- offering a large lecture session followed by small group breakout sessions.

## *3. INSTRUCTION LIBRARIANS' FEEDBACK*

The authors compiled a list of librarians to contact from several sources. First, instruction librarians were chosen from universities or colleges with web sites that referred to instruction with large classes, as described above. Instruction librarians were also chosen from the LOEX web site listing of libraries that are active in instruction, including online tutorials. Lastly, we selected institutions whose librarians presented instruction-related papers at the 2005 ACRL National Conference in Minneapolis. A total of 227 librarians were contacted, representing 199 institutions; more than one librarian was contacted at a few of the larger universities with multiple libraries or instruction contacts.

Librarians were asked via email to describe in as much detail as possible their teaching methods in offering user instruction to classes of over 50 students. The number 50 was arbitrarily chosen by the authors whose collective experience indicated that classes over that number presented difficulties not associated with smaller groups. Although participants were not asked to limit their responses in any way, a few suggestions such as using humor, interactive assignments, or technology, were given as examples to illustrate the kind of elements that instructors might describe, if applicable. In order to comply with

campus regulations regarding human research subjects, the librarians were asked to respond to the query by clicking on a web form that collected the information while keeping the respondents anonymous. For this reason, the authors asked the librarians to also indicate the size of their institution to provide some context to their comments.

Since the participant sample was not a research sampling equally representing institution size, this data could not be used to correlate size of institution to the responses in a statistically valid manner. However, the authors found it interesting, nonetheless, that the librarians' responses relating to whether or not they taught large classes did not seem to form a pattern based on any particular institution size.

Fifty-eight librarians provided feedback. Forty-eight out of 58 respondents (over 80%) indicated that they have taught large classes in one form or another. Thirty of these indicated that they actually left the comfort zone of the library and went to the students' classrooms to teach.

Of the librarians who indicated that they did not teach large classes, many received requests for this instruction, but did not comply for various reasons. For example, librarians reported being uncomfortable or intimidated with a teaching situation outside of the usual library instructional setting, especially in a large lecture hall. Others felt that instruction was not meaningful without a hands-on computer component. Additional librarians reported alternative ways of providing instruction to large classes such as the following:

- Create web-based class guides to specifically address students' assignments. Several respondents mentioned classroom faculty appear to be very satisfied with this approach.
- Five librarians suggested breaking the class into smaller sections and offering instruction twice. One librarian even successfully accomplished this in a 75-minute session; the librarian and faculty member determined that abridged instruction was better than none at all.
- A variation of the above was dividing a large class in two and teaching simultaneous sessions. This requires the library have at least two classrooms and assumes the librarian can find a colleague to teach the second group.
- One librarian reported an interesting tactic—breaking the large class into groups, setting up stations in the library, and having different librarians staff each station.
- Two librarians reported assigning an online library tutorial in lieu of teaching a large lecture class.
- Several librarians established "drop-in" library sessions *outside* of the regular classroom time for students. One librarian sent a warning—if a faculty member gives extra credit for attending a library session, one could end up with standing room only!
- A final scenario was offering one-on-one assistance through appointments; with a large-lecture class, however, this could (and did) cause an unmanageable workload for one librarian.

## *4. DISCUSSION ITEMS*

The authors divided feedback received from the 48 librarians who teach large classes and related suggestions found in the literature into the following categories for the purpose of discussion.

### *4.1 Setting the Stage*

Establishing the right environment is important to instruction. However, it can be even more critical when teaching a large group, which can easily dissolve into lethargy and indifference. Students who might otherwise be attentive may view themselves as exempt from the instructor's observation, and may feel that they are simply part of an anonymous mass.

Respondents offered several ways to "set the stage" before instruction with a large group. First, the librarian can enlist the help of the classroom instructor to emphasize the importance of the upcoming session and to ask that the students give the librarian the respect and attention they would give any visitor to their class.

Taking advantage of existing web-based tutorials prior to the instruction session can also be valuable as suggested by a number of librarians. This can save precious instructional time if students have already had a glimpse of the library research process and gained familiarity with the searching vocabulary. More time can then be devoted to interactive instruction that normally takes longer to implement in a large group. A tutorial can also help establish the librarian as a serious instructor in his or her own right. Many tutorials include

form-based exercises or quizzes that can be submitted electronically prior to the library meeting minimizing the inconvenience of collecting a lot of paperwork at the beginning of class.

Another technique described by Jacobson and Xu (2002) involves asking students to write down in advance what they know (or do not know) about library research, what might intimidate them about the library, and what they would like to learn in a library session. Some of these comments can later be incorporated into the discussion allowing the large group to seem “smaller.” To save time, the librarian could ask the classroom instructor for a class distribution list in order to solicit the information by e-mail.

When teaching in an unfamiliar classroom, the librarian should arrive early to set up equipment before the students report. This has the added advantage of allowing time to greet students in a friendly manner as they are entering the room. One respondent mentioned that he says a few personal words about himself—where he attended college and that he has a master’s degree in librarianship—to make him more “human” to the students in a large class. Another establishes a conversation with several students as a lead-in to a semi-Socratic back and forth interchange relating to their topics.

Icebreakers can get a library instructional session, regardless of size, off to a good start. Fulton (1985) begins her classes with a series of seven or eight quotes and then asks students to raise their hands if they have experienced this when it comes to library research. A few of the quotes are, “Hours can be centuries” or “Logic and practical information do not seem to apply here.” When

the instructor reveals that all of the quotations come from episodes of *Star Trek*, the students laugh. One respondent asks the class to do a show of hands along the lines of the *Three Little Bears*: "How many of you have come to the library and found too much, too little, or just the right amount of information?" Very few students find just the right amount and this is a great introduction to a discussion on database selection and search strategy.

### *4.2 Classroom Management*

Larger classes by definition can be predisposed to problem behaviors such as chitchat, late arrivals and early departures, reading the newspaper, or using laptops to check email. These problems possibly relate to student attitudes toward large lecture classes, including a lack of respect for the instructor, the perception that these types of classes are less valuable, and that a different code of behavior is acceptable (Carbone 1998). Various techniques can be used to address this behavior, including clearly communicating expectations at the beginning of the class, letting the students know that the information being taught is valuable and will save them time and possibly earn them a better grade, and suggesting that if a student has a question, he or she should raise their hand instead of conferring with a neighbor. One college instructor discourages students from reading the newspaper, combining humor and embarrassment, by saying to the offender: "You won't be able to find my lecture in the newspaper, no matter how hard you look." (83)

To combat the notion of the remote lecturer with an invisible audience, it is also imperative to not stand (or possibly hide) behind the podium like the great

and terrible Oz. It is necessary to move around in front of the class, going up and down aisles if possible. Just take extra caution not to trip over cords or backpacks, or fall down the steps when moving about in a large lecture hall—as this is an attention getter you do *not* want to employ. One librarian reported "gesticulating wildly" in order to keep the students' attention. Another mentioned the importance of making eye contact with *all* of the students, especially those in the back rows and on the sides.

### *4.3 Timing Can Be Everything*

It is important to keep time limitations in mind since any instruction other than a lecture may take longer in a large group setting. Material may need to be deleted in order to save time. Although this may seem painful, it is good to keep in mind this respondent's comment, "I am also very clear with the students that we *don't* stamp them on the forehead saying they've had a class so they can never get any more help again." Several respondents also suggested doing fewer demonstrations displaying the mechanics of searching in order to spend more time teaching research concepts.

Pacing is also critical. One librarian recommended the insertion of "some question or activity requiring student participation approximately every ten minutes." Many respondents reported using variety throughout their sessions, or, in the words of one librarian, "staying away from the lecture and demo of death that puts students to sleep faster than anything." For a detailed overview of a 60-minute instructional session with a big class, examine the article "Enhancing a large lecture with active learning" (Gedeon 1997). This librarian divided his

teaching into multiple segments. After presenting each segment in a carefully designed slide show, he inserted active learning activities—a "pause procedure" and a "think pair share" exercise. The class' responses were shared via an overhead projector, and students filled out an evaluation at the end of the session.

### *4.4 The Art of Questioning*

Always encourage students to ask questions throughout the course of your time together. One respondent tells the students, "The only stupid question is the one you *don't* ask." One should take extra time when replying to students' questions to show that their input is valuable. Carbone (1998, 60) discusses treating "even a dumb question" as utterly fascinating and worthy of reply, and that an interesting discussion can result from nearly any type of question. When attempting to engage students by asking *them* a question, for example, "Can anyone tell me what this truncation symbol does?", be sure and give them sufficient time to compose a reply. According to one respondent: "Sometimes we don' t give people enough time to think of an answer, which is akin to someone asking 'Can I help you?' when you walk in the door of a fast food restaurant and you haven't even looked at the menu yet."

A popular technique that librarians reported using with large groups requires that students raise their hands. While this might seem simplistic, it does require that all of the students take *some* action. When querying the class, it is wise to ask a specific rather than a broad question. For example, instead of asking students if they have questions, try asking them if there are points that

they would like repeated or clarified. This can also serve as a pause in the instruction and a way for students to catch up in their note taking (*Large classes: A teaching guide* 2005). Students might also be asked to write down a few answers to questions, thereby engaging even those in the back of the room who may feel that they are least likely to be expected to answer oral questions. The instructor could then, in turn, ask if any students in the last few rows would like to share their responses.

### *4.5 Use of Humor*

A number of respondents described their use of humor in teaching, a technique that can work regardless of class size. One librarian tells jokes and funny stories, even using different accents (depending on the subject matter), in order to put students at their ease. Another uses humor when talking about the idiosyncrasies of Library of Congress subject headings, for example, the heading "military miniatures" to describe what we usually refer to as "toy soldiers." Several librarians reported using the web in a humorous fashion, such as showing several bogus web sites to bring home the point that students need to critically evaluate web sources they use in their research. One librarian even uses music in a humorous manner by playing fast-paced music (perhaps Nikolai Rimsky-Korsakov's *The Flight of the Bumblebee* or the overture to Rossini's *The Barber of Seville*) while the students complete an in-class assignment in a short amount of time.

Trefts and Blakeslee's (2000) article provides a marvelous springboard for librarians who wish to consciously integrate comedy into their teaching. They enumerate the benefits of humor, including improving communication and motivating students. According to MacAdam, "Humor can be a natural icebreaker and stress reliever, breaking down the ingrained social barriers between teacher and student in the college classroom (1985, 329). Humor can be a double-edged sword, however, and as one respondent said, "I would warn against humor if you aren't naturally funny." Humor should reflect the speaker and one should guard against alienating people in the classroom.

### *4.6 Technology*

The explosion of instructional technology has resulted in diverse scenarios in college classrooms. While newer campus buildings are usually equipped with the latest technology, many classrooms in older buildings may be fortunate to simply have a computer with Internet access and a projection system.

Since options may vary in teaching large groups, librarians must be prepared for any setting and be ready to exercise creativity. At minimum, a library should consider purchasing a wireless laptop, a projector, and a portable clip-on microphone, which is handy for large rooms that have poor acoustics. Even if a lecture hall has an Internet connection and computer available, it still may be preferable to bring your own laptop. As one librarian responded, "It provides a greater sense of security." Students can also be encouraged to bring their wireless laptops in order to follow along with the librarian.

Librarians reported various uses of technology such as computer slide presentations backed up on a storage device such as a CD disc, flash drive, or library server. This gives the librarian the opportunity to provide handouts containing the slides so students can follow along and take notes during the presentation. If large scale copying is impractical, other options exist. One respondent emails the presentation to students in a large class. Librarians also reported placing class handouts on the library's web site, and a few used e-mail to send word-processed documents with interactive links to web sites needed for students' assignments.

Another instructor gave assignments that could be completed using audience response handheld devices. Students use these to punch numbers that are coded to represent answers to a question. This information gets fed into a computer system that instantly tabulates and displays the breakdown of the students' responses. The technology is designed to be fun for students, allows them to provide immediate feedback to the material being presented, and minimizes the anxiety associated with class participation in a large group setting. Librarians may be surprised to find that this technology is already available on their campuses.

Using a cordless keyboard was another suggestion offered by a librarian who asks the class to suggest search terms for a particular topic while a student volunteer inputs them using the keyboard at his or her seat. This technology serves two purposes —it provides portability, even to the back rows of an auditorium, and it catches the students' attention. An electronic whiteboard

system also fosters student participation by allowing an instructor to save notes from an in-class discussion to a computer file. Sharing these class notes with students electronically or in print after the session provides reinforcement of the learning that took place.

Internet-enabled technology was used by several respondents for pre- and post-instruction student involvement. One person reported helping a course instructor use the library-supported Docutek ERes software to create a web page for her class. The librarian also offered to create and include a research guide and handouts with links to relevant literature and the librarian's email address. This respondent indicated that the instructor felt less intimidated creating a web site with the librarian than doing it alone. Comprehensive web-based course management systems, such as WebCT and Blackboard, might also be considered for library instruction. These tools allow teachers to create web sites that enhance and deliver course instruction, are designed to accommodate very large groups of students, and could easily include a library component.

Listservs, discussion forums, and most recently blogs, are technologies with similar characteristics that can prove very useful for communicating with a large group. Using a discussion forum to pose to the group a question that would be of interest to students and would require them to engage in some preliminary research is one of several examples described by Iverson (2005). A blog, or weblog, is a tool an author can use to put forth news or information and invite comments from students while still maintaining good control over the discussion. Betts and Glogoff (2004) report the use of blogs in the course, "Decision Making

for Information Professionals," taught at the University of Arizona, where the majority of students in the class responded positively to the instructional use of blog technology. A librarian could use a blog to cover an important topic that might not be included in an instructional session with a large class due to time limitations. For example, one could invite students to access the librarian's blog to learn about plagiarism and to participate in a contest whereby each student submits a best practice for avoiding plagiarism.

### *4.7 Class Activities*

Active learning exercises may not spring to mind when considering large group teaching because of the planning and execution involved. However, many respondents enthusiastically described using them to encourage learning, serving as an antidote to tedium or as a means of avoiding what Ragains terms "oral bibliographies" (1995, 41). A basic activity is to provide a worksheet, related to the subject matter, that contains blank spaces where students have to periodically fill in content (see Appendix A). Francis and Kelly (1997, 30) report the use of a "structured note taking process" where copies of a trainer's instructional slides, with a few keywords missing per page, were distributed to the class.

Sometimes a simple object can be used to engage any size group. One respondent reported bringing a pop can to class and asking students to brainstorm different keywords that could be associated with it. A class could easily come up with quite a few descriptors, such as pop, soda, beverage, soft drink, carbonated drink, etc. This librarian also takes sample popular, scholarly,

and trade periodicals that students can examine to determine the differences between these types of materials. Multiple samples can be used as needed for large classes.

In a slightly humorous vein, one instructor described a human Boolean demonstration employing students and the colors they were wearing. Snavely (1998) suggests an activity in which each student receives a playing card from a standard deck and is instructed to hold up their hand or stand if the card fits a certain criterion, such as color, suit, or number. The repeated show of hands throughout the exercise illustrates Boolean strategy and how it can be used to broaden or narrow results. Jacobson and Mark (1995) outline a similar exercise that two of the authors of this article recently adapted in a large undergraduate sociology class. Because of the group's size, the session was held in the students' lecture hall. At the beginning all students were asked to stand and imagine that they represented the content of different articles. Students were then asked to sit down if the first given descriptor, brown eyes, did not apply to them. Students who remained standing sat down in turn according to the rest of the "descriptors": wearing blue jeans, having eyeglasses or contact lenses, and finally, having over ten dollars in pocket money, a rare occurrence among college students. The class appreciated this and several other interactive exercises that were used in the session. They demonstrated their enthusiasm by giving the presenters a round of applause at the end of the class.

An example of an exercise typically associated with smaller groups, which can be adapted for use in large classes, is the think-pair-share exercise,

described by Green (2000). This involves asking the class a question, allowing students to individually consider it, having them discuss it in pairs (or in groups of three or four in a large group setting), and then inviting them to share their thoughts with the entire class. One respondent assigns small groups to discuss popular versus scholarly articles and their characteristics. In addition, students describe the worst and best case scenarios they have experienced when looking for articles. A similar activity, outlined by Iverson (2005), utilizes the mind mapping technique. Students work in small teams to explore a topic by creating a graphic representing its various aspects, with each member contributing their ideas. Because these activities can be time-consuming with large classes, they require that the instructor keep a close watch on the clock and be clear with students as to how much time will be spent on each element.

A useful twist on this kind of instruction, which may be the best choice for large groups, is an adaptation of Aronson's "jigsaw method" described by Ragains (42). This involved an instructor asking small groups to each study a different part of an information question or strategy. Students then report their work to the entire group. A benefit of the jigsaw approach is that multiple parts of a process can be studied by different groups simultaneously and then shared with the whole class, thereby using time efficiently. In other words, this would allow more "bang for the buck" in a single large group session.

A good technique for countering the effects of large lecture lethargy involves having students get up and move around the room. At least four respondents reported asking student volunteers to use the keyboard at the front

of the room to input search strategies or to write keywords on the board. One librarian asked representatives from small groups to record their comments on the board for discussion. Two others employed poster tours whereby paper or giant post-it notes containing research questions were fastened to the wall. Students recorded their group's work and then moved around the room adding to and commenting on the solutions proposed by other groups. Although this technique would prove unmanageable for very large classes, it could be employed with some groups, perhaps 50 to 80 students, in a room that afforded safe movement (adequately sized aisles, easily identified steps, etc.).

### *4.8 Rewarding Class Participation*

Providing "carrots" or incentives for participation is a useful technique that several respondents and the authors have used to increase the attention of students in large classes. Undergraduate classes are largely composed of the two generations known as Gen-Xers, born between 1965 and 1981, and NetGens born in 1982 or later. Both groups have grown up with a myriad of competitive electronic games used for both recreation and education. These students respond very well to rewards for guessing the right answer or gaining points for games such as trivia quizzes or *Jeopardy!*, a game one of the respondents uses.

Candy and pens are especially appreciated as tokens awarded for class participation. The authors routinely use a small handful of bright, metallic pens per class for this purpose and have found that prizes truly help to wake up and engage the students in large groups. The pens, printed with the library's logo

and URL, are purchased in bulk from the Library's marketing fund or from funds raised by the Library's annual book sale. Other items that could be used for this purpose include highlighters, post-it notes, key chains, and chip clips.

### *4.9 Assessment*

Assessment is important in any instruction program but may be even more so when working with larger classes. It is difficult to determine if learning is taking place when the instructor is fairly removed from facial expressions and cannot walk around the room and make contact as easily as in smaller classes; in short, the larger the group, the lower the degree of connectedness. In addition, if a librarian takes extra time to plan and implement large group instruction, feedback is necessary to determine if this effort is justified.

Several respondents use a time-honored tradition of assigning an exercise to be completed after the instruction; this can be as simple as asking each student to identify one monograph and one scholarly journal article on their topic. Students submit their work to the librarian who returns it with constructive comments. Another popular strategy that could be used to assess students' grasp of the material is the "minute paper," described in the results of a study conducted by Wilson (1986). This involves asking students to record the most significant thing they learned in a class along with a question that they still had related to the material presented. These comments are then edited for accuracy, if needed, compiled into an anonymous file and sent via email to the class participants. To save the librarian's time, student library assistants could be asked to help input the data from the large group. Besides providing the librarian

with valuable feedback, the compiled comments give the students useful study notes.

Iverson (2005) describes exercises based on the idea of David Letterman's well-known " Top Ten List." In one exercise, students are asked to send their top ten (or favorite) practices related to the content that was included in their class. These are then tallied, a combined new top ten list is posted, and students can see where their choices fell in the overall class rankings. To keep this manageable with large classes, have the students email just the top five (rather than ten) practices that relate to finding information that were covered in class.

### *4.10 Risk*

Moving beyond anything but the pure lecture mode in teaching larger classes unfortunately involves a certain amount of unavoidable risk. Related to this, the majority of today's librarians have not been formally trained as teachers. As one respondent expressed it, "If I had wanted to teach, I would have become a teacher, not a librarian." One librarian admits going the extra mile to avoid teaching large classes because large lecture halls can be intimidating and it is unsettling to lose the technological control and support one has in the library classroom. Another respondent indicated that while he was in favor of having students create live demonstration searches during his sessions, he found that the disadvantage was, "you lose control as opposed to a lecture."

Risk-taking and a loss of control are scary for most people, but everyone's threshold is different. Some of the respondents disliked anything that could not

be predicted in advance while others enthusiastically described practices involving spontaneous interaction. The good news when considering risk is that there are many ways one can minimize it. For example, consider team teaching. Given instructors' differences, co-teaching can play to more than one set of strengths. Even having a colleague assist in the session, travel around the room acting as a resource person, and be there for moral support can go a long way to boost one's confidence.

Talk with peers to see if they have already developed materials to use or adapt. The authors were surprised to find out how many other librarians in their institution have already developed exercises for use in large classes. When undertaking something new, try out the new approach on your colleagues or student employees, and use the feedback to improve the presentation.

Start small—incorporate just one new teaching technique at a time, evaluate the results, and expect there will be elements needing future revisions. Anticipate making incremental gains as opposed to a revolutionary success all at once. Consider the entire process a learning experience as an instructor.

## *5. CONCLUSION*

Multiple challenges exist in teaching library instruction to large undergraduate classes. Techniques and activities that can be used to enhance instruction with these classes came to light as a result of the authors' literature search, examination of instructional web pages, and the solicitation of feedback from teaching librarians. Active learning is a key component in the discussion of these enhancements, which include setting the stage or establishing the right

environment in the classroom, resisting an over-reliance on the lecture method, varying instructional components within a session, using interactive exercises, and using appropriate technologies.

Risk is an inescapable factor when expanding one's teaching methods. However, the authors discovered that even making small changes to enhance a large group session can have positive results. Their advice to instructors is to challenge themselves by incorporating just *one* new active learning element into their next instructional session. The minute paper would be a good choice to administer at the end of class to assess if the new activity made a difference for the librarian and students. The expectation is that instructors who enhance their teaching in this way will find the experience very rewarding. Try it, we predict you will like it!

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Appendix A

**Library Research Notes Sheet**
HIST 316 – Women in U.S. History
Created by Maria Perez-Stable, Donna Ring, and Patricia Vander Meer

The following content will be covered as part of the demonstration portion of your library instruction. Please fill in the missing information below during the session to complete the notes sheet.

1. You would find the _____ to resources in American History under "Start Your Research" on the Libraries' home page.

2. You would use _____ to search for books in the WMU Libraries.

3. When searching for topics in the online catalog, the best keyword mode to start with

is _____.

4. You need the book's _____in order to find it on the shelf in the library stacks.

5. When looking for articles in American history, you should search the

_____ core database.

6. The essential pieces of information you <u>must</u> have to locate an article in the WMU Libraries include:

_____ _____ _____

_____ _____ _____

7. When viewing a citation in a journal article database you would click on the

_____ button to view options for obtaining the full text of

the journal that contains the article .

8. Three criteria that you can use to judge the value of a Web source are:

_____ _____ _____