

Teaching in Studio Classrooms

This active learning classroom uses square tables and chairs. Each table seats 8 students. The design facilitates student eye contact and collaboration. Instructors can easily access individual students and groups.

Faculty members who have taught in studio classrooms report that they enjoy a closer level of interaction with students, and are better able to gauge student understanding of course concepts. Students also appreciate the ability to interact more closely with instructors and peers.

The Center for Faculty Excellence is always available to discuss ideas for active learning techniques for your course that can help you make the most of this classroom.

Guidelines for Success

You will want to interact directly with students when they are working in small groups. Keeping classroom floor space clear will help you avoid trip hazards while navigating the room.

- Have students keep book bags and personal items stored underneath the tables.
- Depending on the weight of book bags, hanging them on the back of a seat may also be an option.

Administering exams in a classroom designed to facilitate cooperative learning can be a challenge. In addition to closely monitoring student behavior during an exam,

- Some instructors have avoided giving exams in these rooms (by scheduling exams in alternative classrooms).
- Others distribute multiple versions of an exam to reduce the possibility of cheating.
- If enrollment for your course is less than the classroom's capacity, you may also be able to simply spread student seats out a little more at each table.

On the first day of class, introduce students to the classroom and how it will support your learning goals for the course. If appropriate, encourage student buy-in by letting them help you craft the policies that will govern use of the classroom. Making your expectations clear on day one and taking the time to enforce them the first week will help make class norms stick.

We welcome your own suggestions for teaching in this classroom as you gain experience.

Questions?

Bob Henshaw, ITS Liaison to the Center for Faculty Excellence

bob_henshaw@unc.edu

919 962-9969