

We have culled the web to find classroom activities.
These are not exhaustive. Please contact OTL for more ideas

Teaching Large Classes: Icebreakers

Subject Matter Icebreakers: Getting to know the course

Number of Students	Description & Source
Whole class/ divide into groups of 3-5	<p>Average Student: This activity is suggested by Therese Huston (2009); her goal is to determine situational factors. Compile a fact sheet about the student population at UVU and present the statistics to students (the facts might include NSSE results for time spent on study, work, study abroad, writing experience, etc.). Data can be found here: http://nsse.iub.edu/. Then on an index card, ask students to respond to the following questions: <i>“Is this you? In what ways is this like you? And in what ways are you completely different?”</i> To make this activity longer you can give two more prompts: <i>“Tell me something about yourself not captured on the list; explain your story behind one of those facts”</i> that make up the typical UVU student.</p>
Whole class/ divide into groups of 3-5	<p>Background Knowledge Probes: Provide students with a short list of relevant terms or concepts from your course and ask them to indicate if they: “have never heard of this; have heard of it but never really knew what it meant; have heard of it and could have explained it once, but cannot recall now; can recall what it means and can explain it in general terms, but cannot explain how it applies to the . ; can recall what it means and can explain how it applies to ...” (Huston, p. 180)</p>
Whole class/ divide into groups of 3-5	<p>Tip from the Pro: Invite students who have already taken your class to attend the first day of class. Tell them that they will form a panel and that they can answer students' questions honestly. encourage them to describe their feelings of anxiety, confusion, or confidence. ask them also to share what worked for them to successfully complete the class. you don't have to be in the class when the Q&A is taking place.</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Other Variation</p> <p>Collect feedback from students at the end of the semester. You can use a prompt like: “If I knew what I know now, I would..) or “to do well in this course I suggest you..” or “to get an A in this course you need to..”</p>
Whole class/ divide into groups of 3-5	<p>Syllabus Icebreaker: Before distributing syllabi, have students get into small groups (3-5 students depending on the size of your class) and introduce themselves to one another. In their groups, students write a list of questions they have about the class. After their questions are written down, hand out the syllabus and have the students find answers to their questions using the syllabus. This is not only an icebreaker, but can also show students that many of their questions can be answered by reading the syllabus. Afterward, the class "debriefs" as a large group and discusses any questions that were not answered in the syllabus.</p>

	<p>https://ucat.osu.edu/bookshelf/teaching-topics/shaping-a-positive-learning-environment/12-icebreakers-college-classroom/</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Other Variation</p> <p>Hand out a syllabus worksheet accompanying the syllabi to groups and have them study the syllabus to find varying answers. First group to finish "wins".</p>
Whole class/ divide into small groups	<p>Syllabus Jigsaw: Divide your syllabus into a few major sections. Have your students get into groups and distribute one major section to each group (for example, Group A gets "homework assignments"). Each group studies the section of the syllabus until they are confident about the information in it. Groups then present that section of the syllabus to the rest of the class.</p>
Whole class/ divide into small groups	<p>Sharing Course Trepidations: Some students have high anxiety about beginning a new course, especially in some courses, such as math or writing, which may be associated with high student anxiety and expectations. Have your students pair up or work in groups to share some of their fears and concerns about starting your course. Groups can share with the larger class if they feel comfortable. This provides validation for the students and an opportunity for the instructor to address student concerns.</p>
Whole class/ divide into small groups	<p>Best and Worst Classes: Divide the chalkboard/whiteboard into 2 sections/ or use Padlet. On one side, write "the best class I have ever had" and on the other side write "the worst class I have ever had". Under each of these headings, write "what the teacher did" and "what the students did". As a group, have your students share what they liked and disliked about past courses, being careful not to mention any course, department, or instructor by name. At the end, point out to students what you would like to achieve as an instructor but emphasize that you can't do it alone.</p>
Whole class/ divide into small groups	<p>Syllabus Jigsaw: Divide your syllabus into a few major sections. Have your students get into groups and distribute one major section to each group (for example, Group A gets "homework assignments"). Each group studies the section of the syllabus until they are confident about the information in it. Groups then present that section of the syllabus to the rest of the class.</p>
	<p>Syllabus Review Activity: This activity will help ensure students read your syllabus? Therese Huston (2009) outlines her process:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Divide students into groups. • Distribute the syllabi with a sheet of questions for each group; require one member of the group to write responses on the question sheet. (Alternatively, have the students read the syllabus on their own, then form groups to answer the questions.) • Have students answer the questions in the small group as they read the syllabus. • Allow them to do this work for "fifteen to twenty-five minutes [including reading time] - depending on the length of your syllabus". • Discuss as a whole class the most essential questions. • Collect their group responses to determine if you need to address unanswered questions or concerns. <p>The questions Huston poses:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. "Looking at the course objectives, what other classes have you had that will be helpful?"

2. Looking at the course calendar, which topics interest you most? The least?
 3. What do you want or expect from the professor?
 4. Identify two or three things in the syllabus that concern you.
 5. What strategies could you use to address these concerns?
 6. Identify two or three things in the syllabus that you're glad to see.
 7. When do you plan to submit your first project for a grade? What do you think it will cover?
 8. List three questions you have about the course that aren't answered in the syllabus?"
- Retrieved from: <http://www.apscuf.org/universities/bloomsburg/>

Social Icebreakers: Getting to know you

Number of Students	Description & Source
Whole class	<p>Heads or Tails: Compile a list of quirky facts that could be true or false. Ask everyone to stand, read out the fact, and say hands on heads for true, hands on bottoms for false. Read out the answer, everyone who got it wrong has to sit, everyone who got it right gets to keep playing. Include a couple of statements with surprising answers.</p>
Groups of no more than 10	<p>2 Truths, 1 Lie: Demonstrate by writing two truths and one lie about yourself on the board. Allow the class to guess what your lie is. Once they grasp the concept, Students are split into groups of 6-10. Give students 5 to 10 minutes to write their own list of 2 true statements to share and 1 lie. Ask students to share and the group members attempt to guess which statement was the lie. Students take turns presenting their list to the class for participation points. The class guesses what the lie is. Nottingham Trent University: Icebreakers Guide. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www4.ntu.ac.uk/adq/document uploads/running a course/187450.pdf</p>
Groups of no more than 10	<p>Three of a Kind: Students need a pen and paper. Explain to the class that they have to find three different people with whom they share something in common. Divide the class in groups. Ask students to discuss their interests/important events/ with their groups in order to identify common points. First person to have all three things written wins. Exceptions: nothing visible (both men, both have heads), nothing connected to course/major, and nothing connected to where the school is currently located. https://www4.ntu.ac.uk/adq/document uploads/running a course/187450.pdf</p>

	Other Variation
	Faculty can use this as a way to identify three muddiest points in past content as a review.
Online Icebreaker	What do you do? Students are asked to post 3 different hyperlinks that will be clues in explaining what their profession or what their interests are. Students can pose questions to each other to try to figure out what the profession or interests are. https://www.learntechlib.org/p/42943/ .
20-150 students	Human Bingo: Hand out to the class a "Human Bingo Grid"- essentially a grid with 20 boxes. Each box has a different description (Travelled outside of the country, broken a bone...etc.). Some boxes may have an asterisk which means the person must demonstrate the action- ex: can roll their tongue. The first person to fill out their grid is the winner. Nottingham Trent University: Icebreakers Guide. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www4.ntu.ac.uk/adq/document/uploads/running_a_course/187450.pdf
Groups of 6-15	Genie: The students are broken into groups and then told the following scenario by the instructor and given several minutes to think about it before discussing with their groups: "You are walking along a beach and come across an old lamp washed up on the shore. You pick it up, give it a rub and out pops a genie, offering you three (conditional) wishes. The wishes are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will live for another 10 years, but one random person in the world will lose 10 years from their life. Do you take it? • You have the power to change one thing about the (sic.) world - what would that be? • You develop super hero powers; (flight speed, firing webs from your fingers etc.) what would that be?" • Students report to the whole class. Trent University: Icebreakers Guide. (n.d.). Retrieved from https://www4.ntu.ac.uk/adq/document/uploads/running_a_course/187450.pdf
Small Groups	Dinner Plans: In small groups have anyone answer the prompt, "If I could have dinner with any person, living or dead, it would be _____ because _____." http://www.resultsthroughtraining.com
Groups of 5-7	Marooned: In small groups tell the students that they are stranded on an island and can only have five items collectively as a group. Give the students time to decide what the five items they would choose would be and at the end have all groups present to the class. http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/icebreak.html
	Other Variation
	Have each person in the group choose 3 things they individually would want on an island.
Small Groups	My Slogan: Break the students into smaller groups. Then have each one student choose a slogan of a company that they feel is applicable to themselves. Ex: Nike "Just do it." Or they can make up a slogan for themselves. Share with the groups after sufficient time is given for thinking of slogans. Good for a design class http://www.rttworks.com/images/downloads/Icebreakers.HTML
Small Groups	I Have Never: Each person in the group starts out with 5 fingers. Everyone takes turns going around saying "I have never..." saying something they have never done. Anyone that has done that thing puts down one finger. The last person with fingers left wins the game. https://sixth.ucsd.edu/files/home/student-life/icebreakers-teambuilding-activities-energizers.pdf
	Other Variation
	Me too: everyone has 10 pieces of scrap paper. The first person says something they have done. Anyone that has done it as well puts a piece of paper in the middle. Continue around. Ends when someone runs out of papers.

Small Groups	<p>Who am I? Each group is given a paper and has an appointed “leader” who prepares the paper with names of famous people or TV characters. The papers are put into a hat and each person will pick out a paper. Other members then ask yes/no questions trying to figure out who each character is. https://www.icebreakers.ws/medium-group/who-am-i.html</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Other Variation</p> <p>The paper is taped onto the person's forehead or on their back. The person with the paper taped onto them has to ask yes/no questions to guess who they are.</p>
Whole Class	<p>I am: Each student gets an index card. On the board the instructor writes “I am...” and then the students write three phrases that apply to them. The cards are all collected then and the student's responses are written all on the board. The teacher can then read many of the responses out loud and then ask the students to stand up if the response applies to them.</p> <p>https://web.uri.edu/newstudent/uri-101-icebreakers/</p>
Small Groups	<p>Tattoo: Each student is given a small index card. Every student will need a writing utensil as well. Each student is told to make a tattoo that represents them well. (Words, pictures, etc...) Split the students into small groups and have them share with their group the significance of their “tattoo”.</p> <p>https://web.uri.edu/newstudent/uri-101-icebreakers/</p>
Divide into small groups	<p>M&M Icebreaker: As every student comes into class they are given an M&M or any other multi-colored candy. Have several get to know you questions for the students to respond to depending on the color of candy they were given. https://ucat.osu.edu/bookshelf/teaching-topics/shaping-a-positive-learning-environment/12-icebreakers-college-classroom/</p> <p style="text-align: center;">Other Variation</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Split students into smaller groups according to candy color to answer the set of questions. • Allow students to take several candies but they have to answer for every color taken.