TEACHING ASSISTANT’S Guide to How to get Students Actively Engaged in the Classroom

The list represents what a group of experienced TAs at UVic have identified as important aspects of how TAs’ can get students actively engaged in the classroom. Not all suggestions below may be applicable in all departments on campus. Please use the list as a guide only.

Try to integrate into your classroom, whether a lab or tutorial, the following strategies:

- Generate questions that you know students would want to ask
- Start the class with a question
- Have students get involved with peer marking
- Have students participate in topic development
- Ask students to present on some of the topics
- Ask open ended questions
- Small break out groups to talk about a topic and then they can share with the whole group
- Or Think Pair Share – have students think about the question, then talk with their neighbour, then share with the larger group
- Engage in pre-class chatting socially that leads to a topic discussion
- Have individuals sum up learning in a few sentences
- Shocks! Jokes! And general wackiness can wake up a group
- Role playing...what would you do if?
- Facilitate debate – choosing argument sides or not, could also be between teacher and student and class
- Clickers – high or low tech – students can also hold up numbers/letters
- Have students engage in short writing activities to reinforce what they are learning

The following list was developed during the Teaching Assistant Consultants’ (TACs) seminars for the academic year, 2009-2010.