Teaching Large Classes

Steve Eckels
Teaching Mechanics

• Promote active learning in the class room.
• Create opportunities for personal interactions with each student.
• Design class policies to decrease authoritarian interaction with students.
• Only allow exceptions you can manage for all students.
• Let the students see your personality despite size of class.
Active Learning

• Design short 2 min to 4 min examples for student to complete with neighbors.
• I try to pick topics that I know confuse them. Simple illustrations.
• Brings class back to a common point.
• Increases attention for the 10 minutes following example
• Example
  – Part of an example
  – Discussion points (I don’t do these)
  – Short derivations
Personal Interactions

• I circulate room during active learning speaking to different students.
• I attend random help sessions.
• Make a specific comment about good work
• Intentional personal interaction with each student.
Class Policies

• Exam grading appeal policy
• Clear cheating policy on homework and how you will enforce it.
• Clear curve policy. Students that don’t know where they stand get nervous.
• Clear method for administering exam. How you sit what you can have.
• Only allow exceptions you can manage for all students.
  – Late Exam policy
  – Late Homework policy

• Let the students see your personality despite size of class.
  – Large class requires some extra presentation (acting)
  – Show your passion for topic area