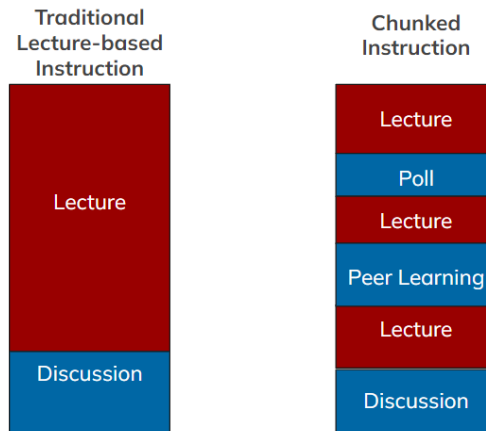# Synchronous Class Sessions: Planning Template

How can I promote effective learning and keep students engaged during my live class sessions?

Chunked Instruction

Chunking is a powerful way to provide effective and engaging instruction. As illustrated in the graphic to the right, chunked instruction is significantly more interactive than traditional lecture-based instruction. Read on for a sample template to transform your synchronous lectures into chunked instruction.

Face-to-Face Setting

The following table provides an example of how you might structure a one-hour class session using chunked instruction. We encourage you to use this template as a starting point, tailoring it to fit your teaching style, course, and students.

Time (Minutes)	Activity	Purpose
:00-:05	Greet students to class	Create community and facilitate instructor-student and student-student engagement.
:06-:15	Lecture	Provide an agenda and set the tone for the class session. Reinforce key topics from pre-work such as assigned readings and instructional videos.
:16-:20	Poll	Assess student knowledge. Do they understand the material you just covered? You can ask for a show of hands or anonymously using a polling app such as Poll Everywhere (free for classes of up to 40 students).

:21-:29	Lecture	Highlight real-world applications of the concepts.
:30-:39	Peer learning	Small groups of 2-4 students work on a case study or problem that you provide. Encourage students to connect what they are learning to their lived (or future) experiences.
:40-:45	Lecture	As the class progresses, attention begins to wane and, accordingly, the lecture sessions shorten.
:46-:55	Discussion (whole class)	Promote synthesis of prior knowledge with topics you've covered during class. What new insights have students developed?
:55-:00	Questions, closing remarks	Respond to student questions and provide guidance on next steps, such as upcoming assignments.

Online Synchronous Setting

If your live course settings are online synchronous, such as over Zoom, you can follow the template provided above with minor adjustments. As alternatives to using Poll Everywhere for the poll (noted above), you could use the polling feature in Zoom or Microsoft Teams. For the peer learning segment, use breakout rooms in Zoom or Teams. The remaining activities translate well to an online synchronous course setting.