The Student Experience in Large Lectures at CU Boulder

Class size at CU

Average = 97

Large lectures per course load

53% 5th Year
54% 4th Year
38% 3rd Year
28% 2nd Year
24% 1st Year

Contributors to student distraction

Like
Dislike
Neutral

I don’t like how nonpersonal large lectures are, I learn much better when the professor knows me and sees me every class.

Student satisfaction with recent large lectures

18% Neutral
34% Like
48% Dislike

Frequency of distraction

4% Never
9% Always
17% Most of the time
39% Sometimes
31% Half the time

17% Most of the time
31% Half the time
39% Sometimes
4% Never
9% Always

Student suggestions to reduce distractions

Ban/limit devices
Remove disruptive students
Effective clicker use
Interesting/engaging lectures
Interact with students
Clear audio
Improve technology use

Office hours attendance

35% Once a semester
7% 4-6 times a semester
9% Weekly
18% 2-3 times a semester
26% Never
5% Other

How good a large lecture class is really depends on the ability of the instructor to be engaging.

What keeps students focused

93% Interesting instructor
65% Course subject/material
59% Demonstrations/simulations
55% Clickers
33% Guest speakers
31% PowerPoint presentations
30% Videos
23% Whole class discussion
14% Group work

The data was collected during 2016-17 from Institutional Research in CU’s Office of Data Analytics, two campus-wide surveys (n=120, n=80), canvassing students on campus, and a focus group.