

# Large Lecture Classes: Tackling Distraction



## Tips for Students from Students

- **Sit toward the front of the classroom**  
You're less likely to be distracted the closer you are to the instructor.
- **Put away your electronic devices or only use them for note-taking and class activities**



70%  
of students reported  
other students' devices  
were distracting



49%  
of students reported  
that their own devices  
were a distraction

- **Print and review lecture materials beforehand**  
Use class time to actively listen to the lecture instead of scrambling to write everything down.
- **Take handwritten notes on paper**  
Actively writing notes by hand can help you stay focused.
- **Talk to your instructor or TA and ask questions about the course material**  
Connecting with your instructor and TAs can help keep you engaged during lecture and make your class time more productive.
- **Connect with other students in the class**  
Forming study groups is a great way to learn, prepare for exams, and meet new friends.
- **Stay hydrated and energized with healthy drinks and snacks**  
Doing so will help you to stay alert and focused on learning.

These tips were generated by CU Boulder students in a campus-wide survey. See <http://bit.ly/llwebsite> for additional information.



# Tips for Instructors

- **Ensure that students can hear and see lecture materials no matter where they're sitting in the classroom**

Use classroom mics to help students hear.

Create lecture slides with large, clear text and contrasting colors.

If writing on a board, verify that students can see. Provide verbal descriptions of what you write to make sure you are understood.

- **Engage students with a variety of approaches**

Using Clickers, group discussion, live demonstrations, visual or audio material can help keep students engaged.

Incorporating stories or case studies can connect course material to real-life experiences and help bring your content to life for your students.

- **Show students that you care by creating a classroom community**

Learn as many students' names as possible.

Encourage TAs to regularly check in with students before and after class.

Offer multiple avenues for students to get help, such as in-person and online office hours, TA office hours, online discussion forums, and facilitating study group formation.

- **Communicate a clear and transparent approach to electronic devices**

Although electronic device use can be distracting to students, devices can also provide benefits for learning.

Decide what approach to devices will work best for your classroom and be open with students: Can students take notes on devices? Should these students sit in "device zones"? Could you leverage device use to encourage student learning?

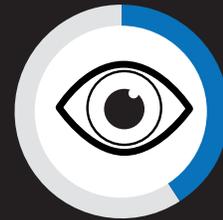
- **Manage the classroom environment**

Address disruptive students during class, or utilize TAs to manage these disruptions.

Close room doors if possible to limit distraction from outside noises.



51%  
of students reported  
difficulty in hearing  
their instructors



41%  
reported  
difficulty seeing  
course materials



74%  
of students are  
distracted by other  
students talking  
during class



34%  
are distracted by  
other noises