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Addressing the Challenges of Higher Education through Innovative Teaching Approaches



Source: <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/25/world/asia/25iht-phils.html>

This policy brief explores ways in which issues such as large classes in higher education can be addressed. Proposed solutions are presented and policy recommendations in order to realize these are provided.

One of the common challenges faced by both instructors and students in college is the large classes. Research shows that students and teachers alike perceive it as possibly detrimental to learning, especially in certain courses like methods and pedagogy (Hermosisima, 2013). There are studies that looked at approaches that can be used in order to address limitations like large classes. One such study examined the effective teaching strategies that can be applied in large classes such as peer/team teaching, *lakbay-diwa*, the use of video clips, energizers, and debates (Reyes & Dumanhug, 2015). Another study looked at an innovative approach that can integrate technology in teaching—blended learning. However, results showed that while students welcome this approach, more preparation need to be done in order to get them ready for it (Mancao et al., 2015).

Here is a summary of policy recommendations for these issues:



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1. Given that large classes in HEIs are inevitable, support systems must be provided to equip faculty members in handling large classes. This can include training the faculty members and pre-service teachers and providing the necessary resources and facilities that can help in handling courses with large class sizes (Hermosisima, 2013).
2. Policies with regard to which courses can large classes be allowed (e.g., general education/content courses) and which cannot (e.g., method/pedagogy) must be clarified and properly enacted (Hermosisima, 2013).
3. Whereby large classes are inevitable, new, innovative, and effective pedagogies must be researched on. For instance, team teaching and the use of debates and energizers were found to be teaching strategies effective for large classes (Reyes & Dumanhug, 2015). Aside from developing these teaching strategies, policies that would ensure that faculty members are getting trained on these and that these are actually being implemented in the classes must be enacted.
4. Proper assistance must be given by universities in implementing new pedagogies. For instance, with blended learning, standard templates, class schedules, and online rules must be developed (Mancao et al., 2015). In any new or innovative strategy to be implemented, it must first be determined that there are enough resources, instructors must be properly trained, and students must be involved in ensuring that these pedagogies are properly applied.

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