# Prepare Now for Growth Later: Design Strategies for High Enrollment Courses

**Category Key:**

BP = General best practice for all courses

HE = Proactive strategy for high enrollment courses and growth; Best to incorporate early in course design to prevent rework later

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| **Principles** | **Practical Applications** | **Category** | **Additional Resources** |
| Assessment Management | 1. Design assignments with workload and time requirements in mind. 2. Integrate real-world scenarios in your multiple-choice or essay questions to make content relevant. 3. Make sure there is consistency across all types of assessments regarding the format, deadlines, and evaluation criteria. 4. Break students into small groups (each with a leader or facilitator) to improve peer-to-peer interaction in online discussions. 5. Use peer evaluation to provide feedback early and often. For example:    * Require students to provide peer feedback on lower stakes individual and group assessments or components of a project as they work towards a larger project. 6. Create auto-graded quizzes.    * For example:      + Randomly draw questions from a large question bank.      + Build in feedback for all questions for right and wrong answers.      + Use proctored exams to reduce the likelihood of cheating.    * Take care to only use proctored exams for high stakes exams to maintain course costs.    * Employ test design strategies to help promote academic integrity, such as using large question banks and randomizing questions and answers.    * Consider the cognitive level of the content you are assessing and tailor the multiple-choice questions to best fit the cognitive level. For example, if the content is more complex, try scenario-based questions. For more lower-level knowledge, consider multiple-choice questions that test basic understanding. 7. Set up specific parameters for participation. For example:    * Require original posts due on Thu/Fri and replies due on Sat/Sun.    * Require minimum length or number of posts/replies per week. 8. Incorporate visual assessments and group assignments.    * These assignment types reduce time-to-grade against given outcomes but still preserve assessment sophistication and learner engagement.    * Visual assessments allow faster evaluation of learner thinking about relationships/classifications. | BP  BP  BP  HE  BP, HE  BP, HE  BP  HE | [Best Practices for Large-Enrollment Online Courses Part I](https://teachonline.asu.edu/2018/09/best-practices-for-large-enrollment-courses-in-canvas/) (Arizona State University)  [Tips for Designing and Moderating Large-Enrollment Online Courses](https://edservices.wiley.com/tips-designing-moderating-large-online-courses/) (Wiley Education Services) |
| Grading Management | 1. Provide specific evaluation criteria for each type of assessment (e.g., rubric, checklist, guidance). 2. Utilize the built-in rubric feature of the LMS and work as a program or department to create standard rubrics for use that can be tweaked for specific assessments. Some LMSs enable sharing of rubrics across courses. 3. Use different grading scales for different assignments (e.g., not every piece of student work may need your full attention and you could use simplified scale for preparatory work). 4. Share exemplary student examples to supplement the evaluation criteria (e.g., provide examples that represent excellent and unacceptable work). 5. Train your TAs on the use of your evaluation criteria and maintain grading consistency and reliability across all the graders.    * Be sure to continue to leverage the rubric feature within the LMS and not re-create rubrics in Word. Keeping rubrics in one place will help with consistency. 6. Simplify your grading process and leverage the power of student feedback. For example:    * Require peer review before final submissions.    * Encourage your TAs to moderate the discussion forums.    * Encourage students to sign up as online discussion facilitators with extra credit. | BP  BP, HE  BP, HE  BP  BP, HE  BP, HE | [Grading Student Work](https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/guides-sub-pages/grading-student-work/) (Vanderbilt University)  [How to Provide Meaningful Feedback Online](https://www.insidehighered.com/digital-learning/views/2017/09/06/how-provide-meaningful-feedback-online-course) (Inside Higher Ed) |
| Communication Management | 1. Post announcements in the LMS on a regular basis to remind students of important deadlines and clarify some common questions. 2. Create due date reminders a few days before assignments are due that give students an extra push by using the LMS calendar. 3. Post hidden “coaches notes” at the beginning of each module. For example:    * Create a hidden page or downloadable document to walk through the module, provides exemplars, and points out places students typically struggle. 4. Clarify in your course policies about how to communicate with the instructor/TAs. For example:    * Specify the best ways to reach out.    * Describe how to write an email with proper titles and when to send a follow-up message. 5. Commit to using discussion boards on a regular, consistent basis. For example:    * Actively respond to student questions and encourage students to use the forum for Q&A.    * Set up optional discussion boards after lectures or readings to allow students to pose questions about the content to each other.    * While the course runs, keep a log of student questions that can be turned into a FAQ document for future iterations of the course. 6. Provide detailed guidance on how and when to reach out to the instructor and/or TAs with questions to avoid getting inundated with the same questions via email.    * Encourage students to consult the Q&A board before emailing instructor or TAs with questions.    * Consider including a syllabus quiz at the beginning of the course to ensure students are reading the syllabus. | BP  BP  BP, HE  BP, HE  BP, HE  BP, HE | [Survivor Strategies: Teaching Large Enrollment Classes](https://www.colorado.edu/assett/faculty-resources/resources/survivor-strategies-teaching-large-enrollment-classes#managing_communication-285) (University of Colorado Boulder) |
| Community Building | 1. Set aside specific hours to be available to students online (email, chat, or phone). 2. Set up regular office hours by using video conference tools (e.g. Zoom, Skype, or Google Hangout). 3. Utilize a variety of online discussion tools to encourage peer interaction. For example:    * Use a video discussion tool (Flipgrid) for self-introduction activity.    * Use advanced features of a discussion tool (VoiceThread) for annotation, video, or audio response. 4. Build “outside class” spaces. For example:    * Make “café” discussion boards where the class can talk about current events and common interests.    * Create a social media page for the class where ideas can be shared.    * Watch a virtual event together and discuss it afterwards. 5. Open a dialogue between inside and outside perspective. For example:    * Invite guest speakers to share their experience and insights via a synchronous session.    * Record your conversations with a guest speaker via Zoom and post the video to the LMS later.    * Share useful webinars or events in your field and encourage students to take part in professional events or activities. | BP  BP  BP  BP, HE  BP, HE | [Five Ways to Build Community in Online Classrooms](https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/online-education/five-ways-to-build-community-in-online-classrooms/) |