Strategies from 2019-2020 Cohort

Successful strategies:

- Ask questions!
- Small group discussions
- Hands-on learning/new resources
- Introductions (get to know students)
- Icebreakers

Challenges:

- Time management
- Energy level of the students
- Unresponsive students
- Lack of communication from the students
- Unmotivated students
- Diversity issues
- Criticism
- Students being overwhelmed

Strategies for each skit

1. Unresponsive students

- Call on students by name, but give them a heads up early on in the term that you will be using this strategy
- Grab their attention by reminding them that what you are teaching is "testable material"
- Use transitions to get them to focus on you (i.e., a sound or turning the lights off and on)
- Use multimedia (i.e., play a video)
- Remind students of the Community Guidelines

2. Chaos in group – uncontrolled discussions

- Acknowledge the limitations of science when presenting biological theories
- Agree on and remind students of Community Guidelines
- Debate ideas, not people
- Be respectful

3. The monopoliser and the unprepared student

- Offer participation marks to get everyone involved
- Start with a pre-reading assignment
- Remind students of Community Guidelines
- Ask to hear from different students
- Ask for <u>one</u> answer only
- Set expectations of student participation early
- Talk to the enthusiastic student after class

4. Unbalanced attention to groups

- Start by having students review the material
- Ask students to compare answers from the previous class before starting
- Write the instructions on the board
- Do a demo
- Acknowledge raised hands, make a plan for the order you will visit groups in, follow through
- Have a sign-up sheet on the board where students can put their name if they have a question
- Use the 3 and then me rule
- Answer common questions via an announcement
- Ask previous TAs about common issues – come prepared
- Offer resources for students to read before coming back to you with questions
- Check-in with <u>all</u> students at least once