

New research shows students' knowledge and perceptions of active learning declined during pandemic-era teaching

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Students' knowledge and perceptions of active learning declined significantly during COVID-induced remote teaching and have not

recovered to pre-pandemic levels, according to [new research](#) from Chapman University Assistant Professor Jeremy Hsu. The research was published in *Active Learning in Higher Education*.

Hsu says the benefits of active learning—exercises like group projects, problem-solving and class discussions—are well documented, but he emphasizes that [students'](#) understanding and perceptions of the practice can affect their level of engagement and investment. If students have limited exposure or are hesitant to participate in active learning practices, resistance could affect overall learning outcomes.

Hsu, who regularly surveys his undergraduate biology classes, was able to examine changes over nearly 10 semesters. His research suggests the challenges posed by the pandemic limited teachers' opportunities to incorporate active learning in their courses, decreasing students' exposure to and familiarity with active learning.

Based on this [research](#), Hsu recommends that teachers highlight the benefits of active learning at the start of their classes. He says doing so can help familiarize students, reduce resistance and improve educational outcomes.

"This data gives us a rare opportunity to see how the [disruptions](#) caused by the pandemic have real consequences for future learning," said Hsu. "As an advocate for engaged education, I hope my findings illustrate the need for teachers to share the benefits of active learning and further incorporate these activities into their classes."

More information: Briana Craig et al, A multi-year longitudinal study exploring the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on students' familiarity and perceptions of active learning, *Active Learning in Higher Education* (2024). [DOI: 10.1177/14697874241230992](https://doi.org/10.1177/14697874241230992)

Provided by Chapman University

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