

What is a Seminar?

Initiated by the finding that the University of Lethbridge lacks good seminar space in the Broad Consultation Notes (RPG, July 2013) which stemmed from consultant meetings with faculty, the LEE Project interviewed faculty members across various disciplines about seminars and seminar space. Key findings are presented below (2013-2016).

A seminar class is not a homogenous concept. There are at least three distinctly identifiable modes of seminar teaching at the University of Lethbridge.

All Seminars

Senior undergraduate and/or graduate students

Discussion-intensive

Students must come prepared

Advanced level of material/content

High level of interaction

Egalitarian

Active Seminar

Class size is 10-30 students

Room facilitates dynamic and flexible change of teaching modes, furniture is reconfigurable, presentation capabilities, multiple screens ideal, multiple whiteboards necessary

Lecture or presentation component, small group work, full-class discussion

Socratic Seminar

Class size is 10-20 students

Room facilitates orientation towards one another, portrays equality, expedites participation and interaction, presentation technology is secondary, whiteboards are essential

Sitting around a table and discussing

Presentation Seminar

Class size is 10-40 students (no upper limit for audience)

Room facilitates presentation and discussion, presentation technology is key, can include videoconferencing

Student presentations and/or guest speakers