

SIX PROPERTIES OF CLASSROOMS

What goes on in university classrooms? Classrooms have six distinct properties that impact what happens. Consider these properties--which seem to impact what goes on in university classrooms the most?

1. **MULTIDIMENSIONALITY:** A large quantity of events and tasks occur in classrooms. Classrooms are crowded places in which many people with different preferences and abilities use a restricted supply of resources to accomplish a broad range of social and personal objectives.
2. **SIMULTANEITY:** Many things happen at once in classrooms.
3. **IMMEDIACY:** Classroom events occur at a rapid pace. An average teacher has over 500 exchanges with individual students in a single day. Teachers have little time to reflect before acting.
4. **UNPREDICTABILITY:** Classroom events often take unexpected turns.
5. **PUBLICNESS:** Classrooms are public places and events are witnessed by a large number of students. Instructors act in fishbowls; all of their actions are visible.
6. **HISTORY:** Classes meet for one or more days per week for several months and thus accumulate a common set of experiences, routines, and norms which provide a foundation for conducting activities.