Current Trends in Teaching and Learning

Increasingly, we are seeing the following trends, directions and movements:

• “research” and “teaching” are perceived as mutually enhancing rather than antithetical;
• course time is devoted to discovery-based (aka inquiry-based, resource-based, project-based, and active) learning over traditional lecture modes of transmitting knowledge;
• teaching emphasis has moved away from memorizing facts towards finding, evaluating and using information;
• instructors are realizing what they teach isn’t the same as what students learn and re-scoping the curriculum accordingly (“teach less, learn more”);
• new teaching and learning styles incorporate collaborative work in diverse teams or groups;
• course content is interdisciplinary, interdepartmental, and team taught;
• course content is publicly accessible and shared beyond the members of an individual course;
• teaching and learning extend beyond the classroom and into the campus and community;
• the instructor is perceived as a partner in a learning community (with GSIs, with librarians, with other academic support partners, and with undergraduates themselves) rather than as a sole entrepreneur;
• the audience for student work is expanding from the individual instructor to communities of discourse that include peer feedback and exchange;
• assessment is multi-level and complex incorporating both formative and summative types and involving reciprocal evaluation of how well teachers teach and how well students learn;
• today’s students have grown up with technology as the air they breathe, are used to being wired 24/7, are comfortable multi-tasking in multi-media, and bring very different expectations to the classroom as a result;
• today’s employers prize transferable skills (e.g. problem solving, creativity, interdisciplinary teamwork) over encyclopedic knowledge.

Sources:
*Frontiers of Education Symposium, Inauguration of Robert J. Birgeneau as the Ninth Chancellor of UC Berkeley (April 2005)