

Best Practice Ideas for Student Engagement and Success

Faculty engagement with students is pivotal to PSU's Student Success efforts, and there are many practices that have been shown to impact student engagement and success. The Office of Student Success and Office of Academic Innovation have gathered some of PSU faculty's best practices to share with you, along with some resources for faculty and students.

COURSE DESIGN

- Build transparent expectations into assignments and activities to help encourage students to be more metacognitive in their approach to learning. Why is the assignment important? What should students expect to learn? What are strategies for success in the assignment? For more information on transparent assignments: <https://www.aacu.org/problemcenteredlearning>.
- Establish an inclusive classroom online and in person. The PSU Library hosts a resource page on culturally responsive and inclusive curriculum: <https://guides.library.pdx.edu/culturallyresponsivecurriculum>.
- Adopt, adapt or create a low-cost / no cost textbook to reduce the cost of course materials, increase student access to course content, and increase instructor and student agency over content. Contact OAI or the Library to participate in the Open Educational Resources initiative. Examples at PDXOpen: <https://pdxscholar.library.pdx.edu/pdxopen>.

FACILITATION

- Ask some questions on the first day that tell you about student academic workload and obligations outside of class - communicate your understanding of their need to prioritize.
- Try to learn students' names - at least those that ask questions or come to office hours.
- Communicate clearly with students about course expectations and performance levels for success: <https://tilthighered.com>.
- Check in with students who aren't in class, or who haven't logged into D2L, to ask how they are.
- Help students understand and develop the study skills that lead to higher achievement.
- Have students take a learning style quiz (<http://www.educationplanner.org/students/self-assessments/learning-styles.shtml>) and then talk about how to effectively take notes depending on if they are a visual or verbal learner.
- Use the D2L's Intelligent Agent to automatically send an email to students that perform poorly on an assignment/assessment or a student that has not logged in within a certain time period.
- Encourage students to download the D2L app called Pulse. This sends students an IM with D2L notifications through the Announcement, Calendar, Discussion Board, and Grade tools.

FEEDBACK AND ASSESSMENT

- Use student assessment (formative and informative) to guide student learning throughout the term instead of just at the end. OAI Plus provides information and resources on assessment methods: <https://oaiplus.pdx.edu/portfolio/assessment-methods/>.
- Provide a grade or in-depth feedback on at least one assignment prior to the add/drop date (such as the end of the 2nd week of classes). Encourage students who don't do well to see their advisor, an academic coach, or to meet with you during office hours.
- Periodically compare grade achievement data in your course to identify any trends, gaps.

PSU has many resources for faculty to support student success.

- If you see a student in distress, refer them to PSU's C.A.R.E. team.
<https://www.pdx.edu/dos/care-team-coordination-assessment-response-education>.
- If a student seeks help with study skills, time management, balancing studies with work/life, refer students to the Learning Center's Academic Coaches.
<https://www.pdx.edu/tutoring/academic-coaching>.
- When students request disability-related accommodations, refer them to the Disability Resource Center so that the DRC can identify reasonable accommodations.
<https://www.pdx.edu/drc/faculty-and-staff>.
- If you would like a consultation to discuss any facet of your teaching, reach out to the Office of Academic Innovation. From personal consultations to community events and workshops, OAI is here to help you prepare and deliver your best work. OAI offers teaching, learning and assessment support for all types of course environments (both on campus and online). They provide the resources, research, and active community that will holistically inform and develop your teaching practices.
<https://www.pdx.edu/oai> and <http://oaiplus.pdx.edu>.