ENGAGING WITH STUDENTS ONLINE
Checklist for Instructors

BASELINE

EXEMPLARY

1
DESIGNING the Class

- ❑ Measurable learning outcomes
- ❑ Chronological modules
- ❑ Begin Here module
- ❑ Accessible course

- ❑ Module descriptions with narrative
- ❑ Assignments mapped to learning outcomes
- ❑ Instructor Introduction video
- ❑ Clear instructions on activities
- ❑ Rubrics for graded assignments
- ❑ Short lectures on content (<15 minutes)

2
STARTING the Class

- ❑ Send welcome email
- ❑ Indicate contact info, office hours and response time
- ❑ Encourage students to contact you
- ❑ Encourage student-student interaction
- ❑ Survey on technology capabilities and barriers

- ❑ Student and instructor introduction video
- ❑ Video overview of course
- ❑ Reply to student introductions with customized messages/questions
- ❑ Set-up study or working groups
- ❑ Icebreaker/introduction discussion

3
ENGAGING the Class

- ❑ Send weekly emails
- ❑ Hold weekly office hours
- ❑ Reach out to missing or struggling students.
- ❑ Reply to emails quickly (recommended 24 hours)
- ❑ Monitor Canvas discussions
- ❑ Provide customized feedback quickly and before next assignment

- ❑ Send video announcements
- ❑ Add videos to clarify difficult concepts
- ❑ Offer office hours based on student input
- ❑ Use the "message students who" feature to identify students with missing assignments
- ❑ Instructor personality is present in writing, audio or in videos
- ❑ Email students individually on progress
- ❑ Participate in Canvas discussions

Examples of welcome emails and introduction discussion prompts

Tips FOR ENGAGING STUDENTS ONLINE

Let students get to know you

Instructor-student connectedness is linked to academic behaviors, leading to student retention in the class and university. Instructor presence is even more important online than it is face-to-face, but instructors are less likely to share information about themselves in online courses. It can feel strange to talk to a computer or share a story about yourself without seeing how it is received, but the effort and learning curve are well worth it.

INSTRUCTOR PRESENCE

Establish teaching presence early and often
- Post announcements, videos and participate in discussions
- Show your personality, passion and expertise

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Be Purposeful
- Align course assignments to outcomes
- Remove content that doesn't directly support outcomes or make optional

Facilitate student-to-student interaction

A national survey from spring 2020 indicated that 64% of students missed interacting with other students when coursework went online. Online learning research consistently recommends student-student interaction as a key to success. Contact CITL if you'd like to brainstorm ideas for meaningfully implementing opportunities for student interaction.

ENGAGEMENT

Build rapport
- Provide opportunities for students to interact with peers (lab/working groups, discussions, presentations)

PROMPT FEEDBACK

Provide feedback for student improvement
- Provide automatic feedback for multiple choice quizzes or assignments
- Provide personalized feedback for long response, essay type assessments
- Provide timely feedback so students can apply during course

ENCOURAGE ONLINE SUCCESS

Orient students to the course
- Break learning into small chunks
- Establish a pattern of activities and due dates
- Describe expectations for participation, communication and netiquette
- Refer students to the TLC's technology tutors or Canvas Help for technical support

CLEAR EXPECTATIONS

Help students navigate course
- Provide a detailed syllabus
- Provide clear due dates and schedule
- Provide clear assignment directions

Ideas for Enhanced Student Engagement

If you are new to teaching online, don't get overwhelmed! Focus on the tips above and you will do great. However, if you are ready to further enhance your course contact CITL, citl@uwsp.edu for assistance with implementations or find tips, tutorials and examples at the Center for Inclusive Teaching and Learning.