



Active Engagement & Learner Support - F2F (Social Distancing) or Hybrid Teaching

Opportunities for active engagement enhance student learning. Activities can also help students manage expectations, reflect on learning, encourage success strategies, and put what they are learning into practice. This guide describes ways to engage students while providing specific types of support for student learning in a face-to-face class practicing social distance or in a hybrid class where students are both face-to-face and online.

Managing Expectations

Prior Knowledge Check: Students take a quiz on concepts they learned in previous courses they will need to apply in the current course. The activity helps them know how well prepared they are for the course and what topics they need to review. Addressing prior knowledge gaps early can enhance student success. The quiz can be given to the entire class one question at a time using polling technology or taken using the learning management system (LMS – eCampus or Canvas) with results reviewed during synchronous class session.

First Day Final: Students take a mock final on the first day of class using polling technology or the learning management system. Responses are marked for correctness but the activity can be a participation grade rather than an assessment grade. Students use their performance to guide them in reflecting on the questions they found easiest and most difficult. The activity helps with aligning student expectations for the class with the instructor's plans which is a key factor in motivating learners. A discussion can be opened in Google Docs, a polling technology platform, or the LMS (eCampus or Canvas) to debrief student questions and concerns.

Learning Goal Listing: Ask students to create and prioritize a list of their learning goals for a particular semester, unit, etc. Facilitate a conversation with students about the connection between course learning outcomes and their personal learning goals. Be specific about linking the course goals, student goals, and real-life applications of what is learned in the course. If there is time, ask the students to estimate the level of challenge they anticipate to achieve each goal and discuss how the course activities, assignments, and assessments support student success. The exercise helps connect course expectations and student motivation. A virtual whiteboard platform (examples: [Padlet](#) or [Miro](#)) or Google Docs would work for facilitating this activity.

Go for the Goal: Have students create a prioritized list of their learning goals at the beginning of either the term, a specific unit of study, or designated activity. Doing so gets them focused on their learning before engaging in specific activities or assignments. Goals can be shared through a virtual whiteboard platform (examples: [Padlet](#) or [Miro](#)) or Google Docs.





Reflecting on Learning

Productive Study-Time Logs: Request that students keep brief records on how much time they spend studying for a particular class, when they study and where, and how productively they study at various times of the day or night and in various places. This helps students identify practices that work well for them. Logs can be submitted in the LMS (eCampus or Canvas) via discussion forum for peer and instructor feedback periodically during the course. Examples of questions to motivate reflection and feedback include students ask a question about a practice posted by a peer, commit to trying an idea posted by a peer, talk about how an idea they tried worked.

Process Analysis: Students focus on how they carry out academic work. They keep records of the actual steps they take in carrying out a representative assignment and then draw conclusions about the strategies they used in completing the assignment. Students provide a written summary of their records and conclusions. If possible, have a couple of students who did well on an assignment share their processes in LMS (eCampus or Canvas) or Google Docs discussion. This encourages students to reflect on their approaches and recognize those that help them learn. Methods can also be posted/sorted in a virtual whiteboard platform such as [Padlet](#) or [Miro](#).

Exam or Assignment Wrappers: Ask students to answer a series of questions about how they prepared for an exam or completed an assignment before they see their grade and feedback. Examples include: Did you do the required readings? Did you take notes? Did you participate in study sessions? Did you study a little every day? Reflecting on their preparation helps students connect effort to success. If they are not satisfied with their performance, the process helps them recognize how they can improve. This activity can be done as an in-class quiz using a polling platform.

Minute Paper: During the last 5 minutes of class, instructor asks students to answer one or two questions in a discussion forum designated for this purpose. Questions can include: "What was the most important thing you learned during the class?" "What important questions remain unanswered?" Instructor can review responses and use the information to prepare for the next session. An LMS (eCampus or Canvas) discussion forum, Google Forms, Google Doc, or virtual whiteboard ([Padlet](#) or [Miro](#)) can be used to share progress on questions during the course.

Critical Incident Questionnaire (CIQ): Students are given the same five questions at different points throughout the course. They write their reflections to each question and see how their knowledge as grown as the course progresses. A discussion forum, Google Doc, or virtual whiteboard ([Padlet](#) or [Miro](#)) can be used to share progress on questions during the course.





Encouraging Success Strategies

Guided Reading Notes: Students are given a set of partial notes or an outline for an assigned reading. They fill in the blanks as they read. The activity helps motivate pre-class preparation for in-class participation. Notes can be made available through the LMS (eCampus or Canvas) or Google Docs. An open-note quiz can be given at the beginning of class using the learning management system or a polling platform to help students know how well they prepared for the session.

Guided Class Notes: Students are given a set of incomplete notes or an outline to complete during a class session. Blanks may involve key terms, definitions, details, example problems, etc. The activity helps students pay attention during the session and focus on capturing key information. An open-note quiz can be given at the end of the class meeting in the LMS (eCampus or Canvas) or using a polling platform to see how well they captured information and serve as session review.

Insights-Resources-Application (IRA): This method encourages students to complete reading assignments by helping them identify relevance. This assignment includes their perceptions of the reading (insights), resources they have found that support the reading (resources), and an example of their own that relates to the reading (application). This can be completed outside of class to support an in-class discussion or worked on and shared in class using discussion features in an LMS (eCampus or Canvas) or Google Docs. The approach could also be applied using [Perusall](#).

Putting Learning into Practice

Consider This: Students must figure out a way to apply a theory or concept that they have been taught to a new context. After completing lecture or discussion on a theory or concept, the instructor can ask students to take a few minutes to come up with an example before communication with peers. Students can also be paired in Google Docs to work on a peer review of their example before sharing with more peers in a larger Google Docs or in Zoom break out rooms.

Triple Jump: Students think through a real-world challenge or problem by: 1. Articulating a plan for solving it, 2. Identifying specific resources, and 3. Attempting to provide a solution. Depending on the complexity of the challenge or problem, the exercise can be done in or out of class using Google Docs with an in-class review of results.

Focused Listing: Directs students to focus on a single important term, name, or concept and to list several ideas that are closely related to this focus point. The activity helps instructors and students determine what students recall as the most important points related to a particular topic. Instructor can summarize responses during an in-class discussion on a blackboard, whiteboard, virtual whiteboard, or invite students to contribute to a virtual whiteboard ([Padlet](#) or [Miro](#)) displayed in the classroom.





Defining Features Matrix: Students are asked to categorize concepts according to the presence (+) or absence (-) of important defining features. Best used when concepts are similar; e.g., to distinguish between different conceptions of "democracy." The instructor prepares a grid showing the concepts and defining features for display in a virtual whiteboard ([Padlet](#) or [Miro](#)) or Google Doc.

References:

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