

The TLC Newsletter

Trends in education

Student Involvement in the Community College Setting

Adapted from: *ERIC Clearinghouse for Community Colleges*
<http://www.gseis.ucla.edu/ERIC/digests/digest0203.htm>

American community colleges, urban ones in particular, face unique challenges with their students. Many traditional and non-traditional students are inadequately prepared, academically and psychologically, for college-level work and learning. These challenges can be exacerbated by students' failure to connect and become involved in college at the level necessary for academic and workplace success.

This digest discusses three student involvement opportunities – freshmen orientation, learning resource centers, and community college learning communities – that can be critical for students' academic success.

Freshman Orientation Seminar

Freshman orientation programs are a proven method to assist in raising students' levels of academic performance, retention, and degree program completion. Major topics that should be included in an effective student-centered freshman seminar, including the college experience, academic skill development, academic and career planning, and life management.

Learning Assistance Centers (LAC)

Continued comprehensive learning assistance is necessary to help students manage the academic demands placed upon them. LACs create a "sense of place" for the non-traditional student and assist in boosting student retention.

Learning Communities

Learning communities can be any form of curricular design that links together existing courses to enable subgroups of students and their teachers to achieve a deeper understanding and integration of the course material. Common learning community models include freshmen interest groups, linked courses, learning clusters, and federated learning communities.

Academic-occupational integration (AOI) is another learning community model. There are five AOI models, including linked courses, known as paired or tandem courses; course clusters, also characterized as learning communities; infused occupational courses, which offer writing instruction within an occupational course; infused academic courses, which use occupational themes to teach academic courses; and hybrid courses, which are single courses that incorporate occupational and academic content.

One of the major benefits of AOI is said to be that it is a student-centered instructional method that emphasizes literacy skills for the workplace.

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Fall Hours

Monday - Thursday
8:30 – 5:00
Fridays - Sporadic

Fall TLC Workshops

Practical Teaching Tips

Sept. 16, 1:00 – 1:50

Teaching Analysis Poll

Sept. 23, 11:00 – 11:30

Contextual Learning

Oct. 2, 1:00 – 2:00

Effective PowerPoint

Oct. 9, 2:00 – 2:50

Group Work IV:

Evaluate Group Work

Oct. 14, 6:00 – 7:00

Dealing with Personality Differences

Nov. 3, 1:00 – 2:00

Tablet PC

Nov. 18, 3:00 – 3:30

Classroom Assessment Techniques

Nov. 20, 12:10 – 1:00

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(Student Involvement, continued)

Example AOI models include one located at a community college in an urban northeastern city with a large immigrant population that linked an intermediate course in ESL with Introduction to Computers for business students and another located at a urban Midwestern city that offered a course cluster for nursing students entitled, "Introduction to Healthcare: Nursing, Philosophy, and College Composition."

Conclusion

Community colleges will continue to educate a unique group of traditional and non-traditional students. Since an increasing number of community college students must work full-time or can only attend classes part-time, finding the opportunity to connect and become involved in the college environment is a continuing challenge.

If community colleges are to involve their students effectively, a focus on serving them through a variety of activities such as those discussed here can lead to the kind of critical engagement necessary for improved learning and retention.

Motivational Strategies

Some students seem naturally enthusiastic about learning, but many need their instructors to inspire, challenge, and stimulate them.

Capitalize on students' existing needs. Students learn best when incentives for learning in a classroom satisfy their own motives for enrolling in the course. Satisfying such needs is rewarding in itself, and such rewards sustain learning more effectively than do grades.

Make students active participants in learning. Students learn by doing, making, writing, designing, creating, solving. Passivity dampens students' motivation and curiosity.

Help students set achievable goals for themselves. Failure to attain unrealistic goals can disappoint and frustrate students. Encourage students to focus on their continued improvement, not just on their grade on any one test or assignment.

Tell students what they need to do to succeed in your course. Don't let your students struggle to figure out what is expected of them. Reassure students that they can do well in your course, and tell them exactly what they must do to succeed.

Strengthen students' self-motivation. Avoid messages that reinforce your power as an instructor or that emphasize extrinsic rewards. Instead of saying, "I require," "you must," or "you should," stress "I think you will find..." or "I will be interested in your reaction."

Be enthusiastic about your subject! An instructor's enthusiasm is a crucial factor in student motivation. If you become bored or apathetic, your students will, too.

*From **Tools for Teaching** by Barbara Gross Davis; Jossey-Bass Publishers: San Francisco, 1993.*

PowerPointers

Quick-Start Your PowerPoint Slide Show

Want a quick and easy way to launch a PowerPoint presentation?

Save it as a **slide show** file, and when you double-click it, it opens right up in slide show view.

So no need to fumble around inside PowerPoint when you want to give a presentation!

To save a slide show file:

1. Open the presentation you want to save as a slide show.
2. On the **File** menu, click **Save As**.
3. In the **Save as type** list, click **PowerPoint Show**. Your slide show file will be saved with a .pps file extension.

When you open this file from your desktop, it will automatically start your presentation in slide show view. When you're done, PowerPoint automatically closes and you return to the desktop.

If you want to edit the slide show file, you can always open it from PowerPoint by clicking **Open** on the **File** menu.