Teaching Toolkit: Promising Practices for Undergraduate Success

Introduction

The role of faculty and instructors in creating and sustaining exceptional learning opportunities is critical to achieving UNC's ambitious goals for student success. This Toolkit includes a snapshot of UNC's undergraduates followed by an overview of six promising practices that instructors can use in their classrooms to support student success. The undergraduate snapshot is useful for understanding the experiences, goals, and interests of our students from matriculation to early post-baccalaureate outcomes. The promising practices are strategies that instructors can begin incorporating into their classes immediately.

Contents

2020 Student Snapshot

Each fall, the Office of Assessment compiles a snapshot of the most recent data describing UNC's students. The 2020 Student Snapshot weaves together data from a variety of sources to better understand University of Northern Colorado students and their experiences from matriculation to post-graduation. This year, the snapshot includes information about the impact of Covid-19 on UNC's incoming and continuing students. A list of the complete data reports used for this summary is provided at the end of the document, and these reports are available upon request.

What is the impact of Covid-19 on UNC's students?

Over the spring and summer, UNC surveyed incoming and continuing students about their experiences with remote learning, barriers they encountered, and the kinds of support they anticipate needing if UNC must transition to fully online instruction. Challenges reported include financial pressures, issues with technology, lack of experience with or preparation for being online learners, inconsistent or insufficient contact and communication with instructors and advisors,

UNC's undergraduates. 7.3% are from states in the Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE) and 8.4% are non-resident, non-WUE.

- x UNC enrolls a higher proportion of students who are traditionally underserved in higher education compared to the other doctoral research universities in the state.
  - o UNC serves a large proportion of underrepresented minority students. Only UC Denver is more diverse (62% compared to 42% for UNC). The School of Mines enrolls 9% students from underrepresented minority groups, UC Boulder enrolls 31%, CSU enrolls 25%, and UC Colorado Springs enrolls 22%.
  - o According to the Colorado Department of Higher Education, UNC's enrollment of underrepresented minority students more than doubled (15% to 31%) between 2008 and 2018.
  - o Based on preliminary enrollment data, 37% of incoming freshmen identify as underrepresented minorities; Hispanic or Latinx students comprise the largest proportion of these students (64%), followed by Black or African American students (14%), and multiracial students (14%).
  - o 35% of UNC freshmen are Pell-eligible compared to 12% at the School of Mines, 15% at UC Boulder, 20% at CSU, and 30% at UC Colorado Springs. Only UC Denver enrolls more Pell-eligible freshmen than UNC at 38%.
  - o UNC is the highest ranked public Colorado four-year institution on the Social Mobility Index and is in the top 25% of all institutions included in the rankings. The index ranks colleges and universities based on the proportion of low-income students they enroll and how many students graduate into well-paying jobs.
- x Students enter with several assets.
  - o Nearly all first-year undergraduate students (91%) feel confident in their ability to contribute to the well-being of their community (which has historically been important to our entering students). On average, first-year students do impact their community by spending 2.6 hours/week engaging in community service or volunteer work.
    - ƒ Faculty who utilize community-based projects in their courses help to support students' development. Students who report being enrolled in more courses with community-based projects experience more positive outcomes on a range of engaged learning indicators (e.g., higher order learning, collaborative learning, supportive environment), and are more likely to feel satisfied with their experiences at UNC.
  - o A large percent of first-year students report higher self-ratings compared to students at peer institutions on skills and dispositions appropriate for living and working in a diverse society. These skills and dispositions include resolving conflicts involving race, bias, discrimination, and prejudice and participating in constructive dialogue with someone who disagrees with them.
  - o They enter with high aspirations; 45% plan to complete at least a master's degree in the future.
- x They also face significant barriers.
  - o High school grade point average (GPA) is the strongest predictor of first term academic outcomes and persistence. In fall 2022, 22% of the new first-time full-time freshmen had

for pay compared to students at peer institutions.

What outcomes and experiences do students have while enrolled?

The majority of students who persist through graduation report high levels of satisfaction with their college experience. Survey data, along with retention and graduation outcomes, suggest that students may have different experiences at UNC based on a variety of demographic and other characteristics.

x   The overall fall-to-fall retention rate for first ti-0.6 (t)1.7 (i-)]TJ(i-0.6 (i-) r)-6.2 (f)-1 (ir)-0.8 (s)-2.4 (tem <-

o

contributed to their decision to leave UNC, including fit at UNC, fit in Greeley, social lives on campus, and social lives in the community.

x Students who withdraw completely during a given semester also report a variety of

Data Sources

- x 1617 Alumni Survey Report, Office of Assessment, University of Northern Colorado.
- x 1617 NACE Alumni Survey Report, Office of Assessment, University of Northern Colorado.
- x 2015 Freshman Survey, Profile Report, Cooperative Research Institutional Program (CIRP), Higher Education Research Institute, University of California, Los Angeles.
- x 2016-2017 College Senior Survey Findings, Office of Assessment, University of Northern Colorado.
- x 2017 College Senior Survey, Profile Report, B2h Tj 0 Tc 0.475 (t)2 6 (, 004 Tw TTj .)2.orofhe Re.7 (r)1.2 (a

What do we know about the evidence supporting an attendance policy?

While faculty can track attendance without making attendance mandatory, mandatory attendance policies can also be helpful for students. When attendance is required (i.e., attendance is graded and contributes to overall semester points) there is an additional boost. In other words, taking attendance is clearly positive for students. Taking attendance and including it as a graded event is even better. Attendance for a grade can be done positively instead of punitively. Instead of taking away points for missing class students earn points for attending. This puts them in complete control of that portion of their grade.

How do I take attendance in an online course?

Canvas' Attendance tool, Roll Call, gives instructors the ability to take attendance in a Canvas course shell. During a pandemic, the tool can be useful for contact tracing and reporting, if necessary. The tool includes a drag and drop seating chart that works with your roster and the ability to run attendance reports.

Important things to know about using Roll Call:

- If the tool does not appear in your course menu, you have to activate it in course settings on the navigation Tc -0.0012.5 (e)0.3 (no)-4.1 (Tc 0 Tw 3.23 0 T6.0.7 (i)-0)(e)0.8 /TT0 S-6.22a5.a>nE3 (n)-86 (

Low-Stakes Assessment Ideas

This is not an exhaustive list, but here are some examples of easy, easy low-stakes assessment techniques. There is also information for using these in online courses. For more ideas see Angelo &

- Fill out this form to put something on reserve.
x Consider books with no codes since students can't sell these back
x Consider using a combination of e-books, e-book chapters, and journal articles available in the library rather than a set textbook. Students have free access to all library materials.

Being Available

Be available to students in a variety of ways so that students can communicate with you in a way they feel comfortable. This is especially important during the pandemic as the number of online courses has increased and students may not be able to meet with you in person.

Office Hours

Have office hours and discuss with students what these are. Consider calling office hours something more recognizable, such as Chat Time or Open Lab. Office hours are not familiar to many first year students. Students may have class during office hours and perhaps addressing alternatives would be helpful. Virtual office hours can be held through Zoom or Microsoft Teams; you can use the same session link and keep it posted in a Canvas announcement all semester.

Online Discussion Forums

Set up an open discussion board in Canvas where students can post questions anonymously about course concepts and assignments. This is also a low risk way for students to indicate a question.

Completing UNC Progress Reports

UNC uses a mid-term progress report to identify students who may be struggling in their classes in order to direct them to advisors and faculty who can give them timely help and direction. Around the 5th week of classes, the AVP for Student Academic Success will send a Request for Feedback on select students who are participating in specialized academic programing or identified as someone of concern in their academic program.

Instructors are sent an email with a hyperlink to a page that allows them to indicate which of the students included in the request may be having difficulty and to specify the reason for that difficulty (e.g. excessive absences). Once the report is submitted, the information will be shared with the student by the student's advisor/academic coach, with the intent of addressing any issues before they become too serious. Feedback to the student may include utilizing your office hours to discuss questions they have or to gain a better understanding of the ways they could be more successful. These progress reports are helpful for providing early intervention to students who need support and you are encouraged to complete progress reports when asked.

Working with Student Outreach & Support (SOS)

Student Outreach and Support (SOS) helps students navigate difficult situations, such as food and housing insecurity, mental health concerns, personal or family crisis, and illnesses or injuries that may limit their ability to be successful. To connect a student to SOS, you can email sos@unco.edu, call 970-351-2796, or submit a Student of Concern report at https://www.unco.edu/dean-of-students/share 3gts/sho re2.5 (f)-601 Tc13/sh

Resources

Anglelo, T. & Cross, P. (1993). Classroom assessment techniques: A handbook for college teachers. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Credé, M., Roch, S. G., & Kieszczynka, U. M. (2010). Class attendance in college: A meta-analytic review of the relationship of class attendance with grades and student characters. Review of Educational Research, 80(2), 272-295. doi:10.3102/0034654310362998

Barkley, E. (2010). Student engagement techniques: A handbook for college faculty. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Barkley, E., Major, C., & Cross, P. (2004). Collaborative learning techniques: A handbook for college faculty. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.