

## BRINGING OUT THE BEST IN YOUR STUDENTS!

Students are in charge of their own success. Their choices on a daily basis will determine what they learn in your class and their ability to apply it to future coursework. However, as a faculty member, you have significant influence over their learning and study behaviors. Here are some proven strategies for “bringing out the best” in your students!

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### **1. *Require students to attend class.***

- Take attendance – many instructors are using technology (PRS or i>clickers) to make this easier. (And experience shows that course pass rates increase when attendance counts!)
- Include a provision in the syllabus regarding how unexcused absences will impact final grade.
- Give quizzes periodically and/or on days that students are likely to skip class.
- Encourage attendance and share your own rationale about why it is important.
- Refer students to their dean’s office to discuss their options if they are missing class excessively for health or personal reasons.

### **2. *Give timely feedback on tests and homework assignments so that students know where they stand and can get help early if needed.***

- Design your syllabus so that students know their grades on several assignments and/or tests by the beginning of the 7<sup>th</sup> week (last week to drop classes) or the 8<sup>th</sup> week (mid-term). This will give them time to make changes or get help!
- Make grading a time-sensitive priority and use the Blackboard grade book to post grades.
- Provide ways for students to review their test errors so they can learn from them.

### **3. *Make it personal -- get to know students individually as much as possible.***

- Use the photo roster to learn their names and then use them in class.
- Encourage students to visit during your office hours.
- If class size permits, include an individual or group meeting with the instructor as part of the course requirements.
- Meet with students individually to discuss disruptive or inappropriate behavior.

### **4. *Encourage the highest level of academic integrity among your students.***

- Discuss the Academic Honor Policy on the first day of class.
- Change your test material for different sections and for each semester.
- Break large writing assignments into stages (e.g., topic/outline, draft, final).
- Develop unique writing assignments that make it difficult for students to use another’s work.
- Require students to submit their assignments via Safe Assign.
- Meet with a student immediately if you suspect an academic honesty violation. Contact the Office of Faculty Development and Advancement for guidance regarding this process.

**5. Take the time to teach study skills and success strategies in the context of your discipline.**

- Give advice about how to take notes on your lecture. (Math notes are different from history notes – and printed PowerPoint slides don't always make good notes!)
- Post sample problems or study resources on Blackboard.
- Utilize techniques that promote student engagement with course content beyond passively sitting and listening (e.g., panel discussions, student debates, or team-based learning).
- Provide examples of how successful students have studied for your tests in the past (e.g., practice essay questions for higher level thinking vs. memorization).
- Encourage students to consult with the Reading-Writing Center or other tutors as they work on draft papers or projects.

**6. Let students know what you expect in the classroom and how you grade.**

- Review your syllabus on the first day to highlight important policies, dates, and expectations.
- Explain your grading rubric to students – what constitutes an “A” grade vs. a “C” grade?
- Provide clear directions on assignments and establish deadlines in advance so that students can plan accordingly.
- Provide individual and group feedback on returned assignments. Share examples of high-quality work so that students can better understand your expectations.

**7. Identify and encourage talent.**

- Discuss your research agenda and your discipline with students who express an interest in learning more about you and your career.
- Agree to serve as a faculty mentor for an undergraduate student interested in research opportunities. Contact the Office of Undergraduate Research for more information.
- Encourage the Honors in the Major (thesis) for outstanding undergraduate students. Contact the University Honors Program for more information.
- Make students aware of opportunities to compete for national scholarships or fellowships, especially as related to your discipline or experience. Contact the Office of National Fellowships for more information.
- Encourage your best students to become a tutor with one of our on-campus tutoring programs (see <http://ace.fsu.edu>).

**8. Refer students to on-campus academic support services if they need outside help with tutoring, study skills, or time management.**

- Let students know about review sessions, study groups, or on-campus tutoring opportunities in class, via Blackboard, and on your syllabus.
- Include the FSU Tutoring Statement on your syllabus so that students know where to go for a comprehensive list of free on-campus tutoring programs (see <http://ace.fsu.edu>).
- Refer students to the Academic Center for Excellence (ACE) for study skills workshops, credit courses, personal academic consultations, and web resources (see <http://ace.fsu.edu>).
- Visit the ACE website for a complete list of academic and student support services at Florida State University (see <http://ace.fsu.edu>).

**Academic Center for Excellence (ACE)**

**ACE Learning Studio, WJB G051 • ACE Faculty Offices, UCA4304**

<http://ace.fsu.edu> ~ [ace@admin.fsu.edu](mailto:ace@admin.fsu.edu) ~ (850) 645-9151