Student engagement in the virtual classroom

Elizabeth A. Stuart, PhD
Associate Dean for Education, Professor Mental Health

Celine Greene
Senior Instructional Technologist CTL

Ryan Kennedy, PhD
Associate Professor Health Behavior & Society

Jamie Young, PhD
Lecturer Department of Chemistry

The material in this video is subject to the copyright of the owners of the material and is being provided for educational purposes under rules of fair use for registered students in this course only. No additional copies of the copyrighted work may be made or distributed.
Celine Greene
Center for Teaching and Learning
Universal Design for Learning (UDL) and Student Engagement
What is UDL?

► A “framework to improve and optimize teaching and learning for all people based on scientific insights into how humans learn”\(^1\) whose ultimate goal is to develop expert learners.

► Focused on the science of learning: what is happening in our neural networks when we learn
  
  ► **Affective – the why**
  ► **Recognition – the what**
  ► **Strategic – the how**

► Translates into “every day” principles

1 http://udlguidelines.cast.org/
Engagement refers to the various ways to spark and maintain learners’ attention, curiosity, interest, passion, and intrinsic motivation.

Factors include:

- Culture
- Personal relevance
- A priori, background knowledge
- Bias, subjectivity
- Comfort
- Confidence
- ...

The methods of engagement work to reach the affective networks – driving “our emotions, motivations, and ability to self-regulate”

This principle lends itself to developing expert learners who are purposeful and motivated.

Provide Multiple Means of Engagement

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method</th>
<th>Guidelines to the WHY of Learning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Provide Access</td>
<td>Options for Recruiting Interest</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Build &amp; Develop</td>
<td>Options for Sustaining Effort &amp; Persistence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Internalize &amp; Empower</td>
<td>Options for Self Regulation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

► Spark interest as a means to provide an opening to relevance

► Motivate students, keeping their attention, as a means to for them to build their concentration, adjust and continue their efforts, and increase their desire to learn

► Allow the students to accept the challenge and responsibility in strategically developing their own purpose, motivation, and desire to learn

One size does not fit all; one moment does not fit all. A flexible approach is the successful approach.

https://udlguidelines.cast.org/engagement
For Further Exploration

“UDL On Campus.” udloncampus.cast.org/home
### Online Courses Taught

- **Program planning for health behavior change**  
  - ~ 200 students
- **Tobacco regulatory science (OPAL)**  
  - ~ 15 students
- **Improving health through health promotion (OPAL)**  
  - ~ 50 students

### Techniques for student engagement

- Course evaluations/updates to course
- Weekly emails: focus on what to focus on
- LiveTalks: engagement strategies
- Keeping the “discussion” in Discussion Forums
### Courses Taught

- Introductory Chemistry (I & II) Labs (6-8 Sections)
  - 500-600 students total
- Science of Color
  - ~ 15 students
- Introductory Chemistry II (Summer only)
  - ~ 50 students

### Techniques for student engagement

- Consistent changes/improvements from course feedback
- Live sessions through various platforms using approachable technologies
- Available lines of communication and online community building
- “Personality” (Bowties, Pets, Animations, etc.)
Thank you and Resources

► Big thanks to today's presenters!
► Email Liz Stuart (estuart@jhu.edu) with any questions, comments, or suggestions
► CTL Virtual Teaching Resources page: https://my.jhsph.edu/sites/ctlt/Pages/resources.aspx
► MS Teams group to continue the conversation: https://livejohnshopkins.sharepoint.com/sites/Office365Hub/SitePages/Teams.aspx
► Reach out to your Department’s Faculty Peer Teaching Mentor(s) and/or Senior TAs for help
► CTL CoursePlus blog: https://ctl.jhsph.edu/blog/
► Next session: Friday March 19, 1-2pm [best practices in the virtual classroom]