

Perspectives on Engaging Online Students



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Why question online student engagement?



- ❧ Student engagement pertains to the time and physical energy students expend on academic activities (Kuh, 2003)
- ❧ Effective online instruction: can be as effective as traditional instruction, online courses need active learning, and online courses need strong instructor presence (Dixson, 2010)

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☞ Programming coordinator, Center for Women Students at Penn State; graduate student through Penn State World Campus

☞ Online engagement varies by instructor; impacts overall feeling of courses

Questions to ponder



- ❧ Are strategies the same for engaging students?
- ❧ What challenges arise?
- ❧ How do you overcome barriers?

Teaching context matters



Jason Laine

- ☞ Director of Penn State University Park Italian language program and author of Italian 001 for Penn State World Campus
- ☞ Online course focused on recreating key elements of face-to-face language classroom

Transitioning from a traditional class matters



- ❧ Assistant professor of science education at Penn State; developing first online course
- ❧ Course development has been a struggle

Challenge areas



Social	Administrative	Motivational
Mandy Biggers Traditional courses mainly discussion-based; struggling to replicate interaction online	Front-loading prep of course before teaching it.	Needing to replicate traditional student involvement in online environment
Jason Laine Recreating larger discussion dynamic	Instructors dedicate majority of time to grading and e-mail interaction	Large number of students inactive; lag with e-mail as primary mode of communication

Emphasizes a caring class atmosphere



Fred Loomis

- ☞ Associate professor of education and coordinator of higher education online program
- ☞ Balance of involvement/multi-media tools

5 DO'S FOR ENGAGING YOUR STUDENTS



Conclusions



- ❧ Active learning assignments
- ❧ Relate students to each other and topics
- ❧ Provide multiple ways of interacting
- ❧ Assess, assess, assess!

Topics I want to study



- ❧ Focus on students who register for online course yet do not participate
- ❧ Universal assessment strategies: Is a scale, survey, or other tool most effective in measuring effectiveness of engagement methods?

Questions?

