

Engaging Students in the Online or Hybrid Classroom

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What is Engagement and why is it important?

Phillip Schlechty's [5 Stages of Student Engagement](#):

1. **Engagement-** Students are present, prepared focused, persistent, making connections, converting knowledge into practice. Students are invested in learning materials because they feel the material is worth knowing.
2. **Strategic Compliance:** Learning is not the main focus. Students are focused on another goal such as the grade, or in the case of workers, the raise. They may do the work and do it well, but not at a level that illustrates that they are connecting with the material or taking any deeper, long term knowledge from the learning. They will quit if they don't feel like they are meeting their goals or if they can meet their goals in another, easier way.
3. **Ritual Compliance:** Students just want to complete the task and focus only on avoiding negative consequences. They are not engaged and not drawing connections. They just want to finish.
4. **Retreatism:** Students are withdrawn and disengaged. They either do not understand the goals or have no desire to meet them. They are thinking of other things and see no relevance in the subject matter.
5. **Rebellion:** Students are actively engaged in another agenda and encouraging other students to rebel as well. Students have their own goals for the class, which are unrelated to the goals set by the teacher or the other students.

Ideas for Keeping Students Engaged:

1. Be present.

- Use “high touch” teaching practices.
- Be available.

2. Provide Clear Purpose and Learning Outcomes.

- Adult learners need a practical purpose for engagement.
- Draw connections between what they know and what they need to know to ground the ideas.
- Set learning outcomes with the help of the students.

3. Encourage Peer interaction.

- Students can learn as much from peers as from instructors.
- Provide space for students to share ideas and learn from one another.
- Guide interactions with peers

4. Consider the assignment style.

- Asynchronous assignments allow students to do work when convenient, but sometimes students get overwhelmed and too much freedom can hamper engagement.
- Synchronous assignments help forge a sense of community, but they require everyone to stop what they are doing to participate (not always a bad thing)
- High stakes vs. Low Stakes Assignments
- **Let them try and fail. Reward repeated effort toward success.**

5. Keep students submitting.

- Students must get into a pattern of participating.
- Arrange assignments so that students submit along the way, rather than all at the end.

6. Evaluate their engagement frequently.

- Keep track of participation and reach out. Contact the students to make sure they are staying engaged.
- Offer course evaluations when you have time to make changes.

What is a learning outcome and how should I set them?

Learning outcomes set your expectations for students in your course. They present specific, measurable abilities successful students will exhibit upon completion of your course. Learning outcomes can reflect the value of both knowledge attainment and skill development if they are phrased properly. Most learning outcomes begin with the phrase

Upon completion of this course, students will be able to...

This statement is generally followed by active verbs that specify abilities or knowledge students will have on completion. Below is a selection of verbs that can help in constructing learning outcomes:

Analyze	Calculate	Differentiate	Identify	Perform	Synthesize
Apply	Defend	Discuss	Integrate	Plan	Test
Assess	Define	Evaluate	Hypothesize	Propose	Translate
Classify	Demonstrate	Experiment	Judge	Recognize	
Compare/ Contrast	Describe	Explain	Justify	Research	
Create	Design	Formulate	Organize	Solve	

The verbs above represent a small group of terms that can help you create your own learning outcomes. Note that the verbs can require very different levels of expectation. For example, the terms recognize and define represent much lower orders of thinking than terms like defend, evaluate, or synthesize. Keep this in mind as you are creating your outcomes and be sure that the outcomes you create match the course requirements and the level of students enrolled in your course.