

Supporting struggling students

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Learning objectives:

1. List University resources available to course directors and students
2. Identify strategies to support students in course design
3. Discuss how to communicate with struggling students

Agenda

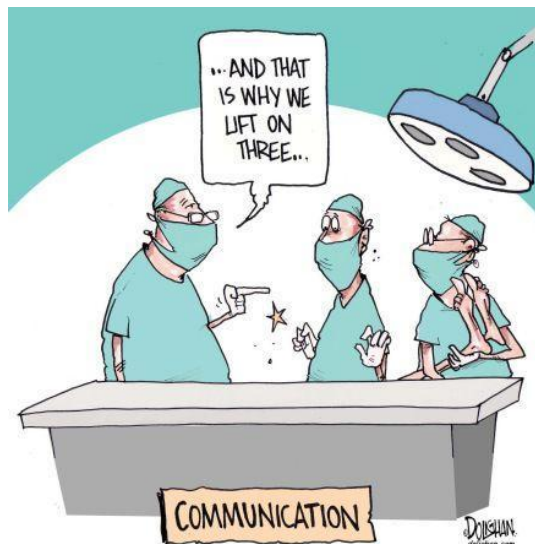
Time	Purpose	Content
12:30-12:35	Overview	Learning objectives, schedule for the workshop
12:35-12:40	Group introductions	Name, course taught/supported, favorite part about teaching, one thing you hope to learn today
12:40-12:50	Introductory reflections	Introduce speaker, opening questions. If no response- pearls of wisdom, 10-15 minutes • What are the most frequent problems students encounter? • How do you use student feedback for the next time you teach? • Figuring out how they are studying
12:50-12:55	University resources	Handout with referral resources and contact information. Discuss how to do a warm handoff with university services, ex • Centers for Teaching and Learning • Penn Nursing Office of Student Services • Weingarten Learning Resources Center • Marks Family Writing Center
12:55-1:05	Group brainstorm	Ideas to support students, will cover topics that don't emerge: • Office hours • Low risk assignments before tests • Frontloading content • Well-designed syllabus • Tone setting on first day of class • Using TA/tutoring supports • Eliciting feedback throughout the semester • In class, real time assessments • Using course materials like textbooks • Providing power points or notes • Suggesting assessments from student disability services
1:05-1:20	Activity: Developing a plan	In groups of 3, two case studies. 10 minutes to discuss and plan, 5 minutes group report.
1:20-1:25	Ending reflections	Another time to ask speaker questions
1:25-1:30	Wrap up	Restate learning objectives and resources

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Resources at Penn

- Centers for Teaching and Learning
- Penn Nursing Office of Student Services
- Weingarten Learning Resources Center
- Marks Family Writing Center
- Student Intervention Services
- Counseling and Psychological Services
- Albert M. Greenfield Intercultural Center
- African American Resource Center
- Lesbian Gay Bisexual Transgender Center
- La Casa Latina
- The Office of the Chaplain
- Pan-Asian American Community House
- Penn Women's Center
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Warm hand off:



Strategies to identify and support students

Course design	Course materials	Communication	Identify changes
Low risk assignments before exams	Power points available before class	Carefully explain office hours first day of class	Affect shifts, avoidance

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Scenarios

Scenario 1:

It is the start of the fall semester, and you are teaching an introductory class for freshman nursing students called the Nature of Nursing Practice. The initial submissions have emphasized learning core concepts from the reading, but the first major assignment required students to synthesize this understanding and apply it to a real work context. Taylor is one of your students who did not receive a passing grade. You ask them to come to office hours, knowing that the first assignment is the easiest of the semester. Taylor tells you they also received poor scores on their other classes, which include Chemistry and Cell Biology. They are not sure how to best study for college level courses and are feeling overwhelmed with their course workload.

What else might you want to know about the situation?

Develop a plan to support the student using at least one strategy discussed.

Scenario 2:

You are teaching a sophomore course on anatomy and physiology, and it is shortly after spring break. Anna began this semester excited to take the course and frequently asked questions that demonstrated mastery of core concepts. However, she recently missed a couple classes and received a C on the last exam. This grade is much lower than her previous assignments. You realize that many students are applying for summer internships and may be distracted after a break from school, but you suspect something else is going on with her. She seems to be avoiding eye contact with you, but you manage to catch her on the way out of class.

What else might you want to know about the situation?

Develop a plan to support the student using at least one strategy discussed.

