# The Coaching Chronicles

*Issue I Volume 38*

## THE CENTER FOR ACADEMIC EXCELLENCE (CAE) ROUNDTABLE DISCUSSIONS ARE CONTINUING!

Join us for our next topic of **Diversity-Equity-Inclusion Roundtable**

**Tuesday December 1 3:30pm-4:30pm**
**Friday December 9 12:00pm-1:00pm**

Zoom Link

## 2020 COACHING CHRONICLES NEWSLETTERS

Click this link to view all previous newsletters!

## How to Successfully Navigate the Final Weeks of the Semester:

**Communicate**

Communication in a remote environment is essential for student learning. This has many facets, such as being clear about assignment expectations and behavioral norms in online environments, actively soliciting feedback to gauge student progress, using multiple modes of communication to stay connected and actively reaching out to determine students' general well-being. Not only does regular, clear and consistent communication foster community—and thereby work against student feelings of isolation—it also provides a road map for what lies ahead, allowing students to focus with confidence on what is expected of them to be successful in a course.

**Motivate**

With disruption to the spring semester and myriad uncertainties surrounding the future, many students struggle to remain motivated. Research suggests that within college classes, two factors play a key role in student motivation: a feeling of agency and identifiable value. Clear assignment expectations and goals help promote a sense of student agency, as do choices within and for assignments. Articulating how your class links to future classes your students might take, how it might relate to their career plans, or how it provides insight into current events can help students find value. An extremely helpful overview of evidence-based practices that promote student motivation can be found in chapter three of Susan A. Ambrose et al., *How Learning Works: 7 Research-Based Principles for Smart Teaching* (San Francisco: John Wiley, 2010).

**Remain flexible in assessments**

Faculty have demonstrated great flexibility, accommodating and acknowledging that many of our students have issues with accessibility of technology, live in different time zones and face any number of other challenges. If possible, present students with options for completing final assignments and taking exams to promote a sense of agency and boost motivation. Offering choices further allows students to select the options that make sense under their current living conditions. Consider what learning goals you would like students to demonstrate in their final assignment(s). Might it be possible for students to demonstrate competencies in multiple modes or formats? Some students might prefer to prepare a report, while others might opt for a synchronously delivered exam.

**Promote structure**

With all the demands on their time and attention, as well as the loss of structure that campus life provides, many students are having difficulty finding the ability to focus on their studies. Encourage students to develop daily schedules, making time for all activities, such as study, meals and self-care. Suggest the use of checklists to help them stay on track for completing coursework and for ensuring that all expectations for assignments or exams are met. In general, provide articulated, manageable steps for remote coursework to help students feel that they are making steady progress toward course completion.

**Consider “chunking”**

Many of our students express fatigue from spending so much time on the computer. In synchronous classes, consider offering breaks or shortening class times by delivering some content asynchronously. For asynchronous delivery, consider breaking videos into chunks of five or ten minutes to allow students to better pace their studies.

**Encourage self-reflection**

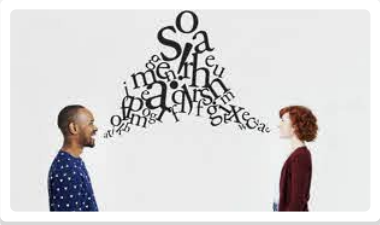
Students have demonstrated great resiliency during the past weeks. Encourage them to reflect on what they have learned about themselves as learners and how this understanding not only might help them in their final projects and exams, but also succeed in the future.

**Provide clarity around grading**

If you have not already done so, inform students of their current grades in your course to ease their anxiety and to help them develop a working plan for completing the final weeks of the semester. Whenever possible at semester’s end, reach out individually to acknowledge accomplishments and provide tailored feedback to encourage persistence and help students feel valued.

**Signal that there is a community of support**

Students are experiencing food and housing insecurity, domestic violence, mental health issues and a host of other challenges. Promote the broad array of campus support services for students, staff and faculty and the availability of emergency financial support for faculty and staff.



## COMMUNICATE

## MOTIVATE

## REMAIN FLEXIBLE

## YOUR FEEDBACK IS NEEDED

The Center for Academic Excellence needs your input! Whether you have read the newsletters; had a coaching session; maybe even participated in one of our Roundtable Discussions, YOUR INPUT IS NEEDED. Click the button above to submit your feedback.

## SCHEDULE A COACHING SESSION

Do you have specific questions you want to have addressed? Would you like a one-on-one conversation with your Instructional Coach to get some ideas regarding instructional strategies?

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