Reaching Across the Divide
Fostering Communication in Remote Learning
Bates College Panelists

Andee Alford, Assistant Director, Mathematics & Statistics Workshop
Grace Coulombe, Director, Mathematics & Statistics Workshop
Shauna’h Fuegen, Senior Academic Technology Consultant
Kirk Read, Professor of French and Francophone Studies
Adriana Salerno, Associate Professor of Mathematics
Life at College Affects Life After College

The 2014 Gallup-Purdue Index, a measure to evaluate long-term success of college graduates, found that some college experiences correlate strongly with future workplace engagement and overall well-being.

Three College Experiences That Matter

1. Having a professor who cares about you as a person,

2. having a professor who makes you excited about learning, and

3. having a mentor who encourages you to pursue your dream.

Gallup-Purdue Index, 2014.
The Odds of Being Engaged at Work are...

- **2.2x** Higher if … I had a mentor who encouraged me to pursue my goals and dreams.
- **2.0x** Higher if … I had at least one professor at [College] who made me excited about learning.
- **1.9x** Higher if … My professors at [College] cared about me as a person.
- **2.3x** Higher if … graduates experience all three.

The Odds of Thriving in All Areas of Well-Being are...

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Factor</th>
<th>Odds</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Higher if … I had a mentor who encouraged me to pursue my goals and dreams.</td>
<td>1.7x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher if … I had at least one professor at [College] who made me excited about learning.</td>
<td>1.5x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher if … My professors at [College] cared about me as a person.</td>
<td>1.7x</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Higher if … graduates experience all three.</td>
<td>1.9x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Example from the Field

Where: Bates College
When: 1990
Class: French 201

Professor Kirk Read invites every student to meet with him for ~30 minutes to learn about them as individuals.
Options for Getting to Know Each Other

- Poll students using a pre-course survey
- Create an introductory video
- Schedule video/phone chats with students
- Invite students to submit a letter of introduction
- Send Qs prior to class, allow time to reflect
- Ice-breaker activities for meet & greet
- Students who can’t attend may opt to post responses elsewhere
- Week 1 - Offer an optional Zoom gathering
Expectations

Create clear and concise expectations for the course and assignments

Consider a weekly overview video/audio

“I’ve learned that people will forget what you said, people will forget what you did, but people will never forget how you made them feel.”
- Maya Angelou

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=A-I_0YnBDhA
Expectations

- Give clear expectations for asynchronous vs synchronous components of class
  - How can students comfortably participate?
  - Do optional activities truly feel optional to all students?
- Develop rubrics for course assignments
- Clarify connection between assignment and course objectives
- Communicate expectations regarding academic integrity
  - When is collaboration allowed? Are they expected to cite every resource they consult?
- Ensure due dates are clear
Adjust Expectations

“For an [instructor], this means getting to know the learner as soon as possible through the use of profiles and introductory activities that provide insight into who the learner is, not only academically but professionally and personally. The [instructor] can then begin to draw on the experiences of those in the course and empower [students] to capitalize on what they know.”
Asynchronous or Synchronous?

- Asynchronous is more equitable
- Bates student survey suggests that some synchronous time is extremely important -- how do we interpret this?
- Consider the activity when planning for the communication. Which tool will be most effective in accomplishing the learning outcomes?
- Office Hours
- Importance of accessibility: closed captioning for video, accessible document formatting
Discussion Tips

- Post discussion questions in advance of class
- Allow for multiple response options: post text/audio/video response or speak in synchronous class
- Make sure questions are open-ended
- Assign small discussion groups and give each person a role (examples?), then report out
- Give online discussion a minimum of a week to develop
- Be mindful of group dynamics around power and identity
Salut mon ami!

J’espère que tout va bien! On est presque bientôt! Passe-moi encore une fois la conclusion pour que je puisse jeter encore un coup d’oeil.

Woah! Formidable!!!

À bientôt pour le “bridging ceremony”!

Prof. Kirk

Kirk D. Reed
Professor and Chair of French and Francophone Studies
Bates College
405 Segeur Williams Hall / 9 Andrews Road
 Lewiston, Maine 04240
he/him/his
207.786.5780 (O)
Assessing Communication Activities

- How to assess optional vs. required activities
- Consider giving video/audio/screen-sharing feedback on assignments
- Relationships are at the heart of the Colby, Bates, and Bowdoin educational experience, but they should not be a part of the assessment process
“Mistakes are expected, respected, and inspected.”
Additional Resources

2014 Gallup-Purdue Index Report

Engaging the Online Learner, 2011

Small Teaching Online, 2019

How to Hold a Better Class Discussion