Engagement Guide for Your Course

This timeline provides best practices for improving student engagement.

Weeks Before the Semester Begins
☐ Click on the course links to make sure everything is active
☐ Review all materials (syllabus, discussion posts, assignments, etc.) to be sure the dates are accurate
☐ Set Retention Center rules

One Week Before
☐ Make the course available on Blackboard
☐ Provide guidance on how to be a successful student in your class
☐ Send a welcome announcement, email, and/or video

First Week
☐ Administer a syllabus quiz to ensure students understand the course requirements and expectations
☐ Set ground rules for communication
☐ Post an introduction video to the discussion board and invite your students to do the same

Second Week
☐ If possible, send individual welcome messages to students with their names and something specific that they mentioned in their introduction
☐ Start tracking attendance
☐ Identify and reach out to those who are not logging in enough via Retention Center

Third Through Sixth Week
☐ Administer an early low-stakes assignment/test
☐ Provide regular scaffolding assignments and instructional activities to establish structure and maintain engagement
☐ Send out communication about progress via Retention Center by acknowledging students who are doing well and providing guidance to students who are struggling

Midsemester
☐ Gather student feedback via mid-semester evaluation
☐ Make adjustments to the course as appropriate
☐ Keep grades up to date and inform students about their standing in the course

Two Weeks Before Semester Ends
☐ Send out encouraging announcements to finish strong
☐ Remind students of the remaining work and deadlines
☐ Plan a culminating event to end the class

Last Week/Days
☐ Post end-of-class announcements
☐ Post final grades and include grading criteria for clarity
☐ Offer course overview, support, and advice

Things to Take Care of Daily
☐ Monitor class discussions, the help board, and student emails

Things to Take Care of Weekly
☐ Post announcements
☐ Open weekly module and double-check the links/dates
☐ Grade assignments/tests and update gradebook
☐ Summarize discussions and post feedback
☐ Hold virtual office hours

Throughout the Semester
☐ View the SOL calendar for live webinars on on-line teaching and learning
☐ Check out the Grab-N-Go series for more quick tips on student engagement
☐ For instructional support, feel free to visit Blackboard Central, CID and CFLD