Instructor to Instructor: Student Engagement Tips from the Fall 2020 Coffee Break

Faculty Advisory Group, Team G

The following are small suggestions for engaging students inside and outside of class. Hyperlinks will take you to additional resources.

Student engagement

At the start of class
- Icebreakers at start of class to create community (trivia, favorite desert, 2 truths and a lie, bring a bad joke or use some of these 65 questions)
- Spend the first few minutes asking how everyone is doing (more challenging for large sections – although you can use chat) - if students are struggling, you can help
- Create a shared document and allow students to share their pets (here is an example)

During class

- Tech Tutors and TAs are very helpful
  - If not available, ask class volunteers to monitor chat for questions so you don't miss anything
- Use polling to keep students engaged (Zoom polls, Tophat, Yammer, etc.)
- Use Zoom annotation to allow interactive elements in class
- Use google docs/slides in breakout rooms so groups have a deliverable to share
  - You can also follow progress and hop into rooms as needed
- Encourage students to use Zoom reactions
- Dealing with "black boxes" - can encourage turning on cameras where possible, ask students to post picture, have each student bring an object then turn the camera on to show the object, strong communication and honesty from faculty about importance of cameras helped to keep cameras on

After/Outside of Class

- Stay in Zoom room after class (like you would in a classroom)
- Use video- or audio-based discussions (rather than text-based)
- Send video messages to students every week (as an example a Sunday movie trailer for the week)
- Use video to provide feedback on assignments
- Create a virtual office to help students navigate (here is an example)
- Holding office hours at "alternative" times to best meet student needs (weekends, later, earlier for international students)
- Ask for student feedback at several points throughout semester – and try to be flexible where possible

New technologies that multiple faculty recommended

- Jamboard, Tophat, Nearpod, Padlet, Yammer, Flipgrid

- Although sometimes it is hard for students to keep track of technology across classes – so use technology with purpose