How To Use This Booklet

This booklet is filled with a variety of teaching tips to assist you, the instructor, with improving your course and helping your students get the most out of their course experience. Review the entire booklet or use the index on the next page to skip to the topics that are of most interest to you.

Here are some things to keep in mind:

• Some tips may work better for your course than others.
• You may need to try some tips for a while to determine if they are working.
• Begin by selecting a few quick and easy to implement tips then move on to tips that take more planning.
• By gradually implementing these tips you limit the feeling of being overwhelmed by the changes and get to see incremental improvement in your course and students.

If you are unsure of which tips will help improve your course, the Office of Teaching and Learning offers personalized and departmental coaching. Our instructional coaches can help you review your course and design a plan that is manageable and specific to your course.

Sincerely,

Dr. Stacy Duffield
Director | NDSU Office of Teaching & Learning

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These tips are grounded in high-leverage practices you can incorporate into your class. These tips are taken from the sessions offered in the 2024 Teaching and Learning Conference. References and citations for any data or statistics listed here can be found in the videos posted on our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/c/ndsuotl.

What Are High-Leverage Practices?
High-leverage practices are research-based and foster student engagement and learning; they are broadly applicable and usable across disciplines.

Metacognitive Reflection
Provide students with opportunities to plan for their learning, monitor their understanding, and evaluate their thinking.

Share with students how engaging in metacognitive reflection promotes their learning. Repeat frequently!

Introduce students to evidence-based learning practices, like retrieval practice, space practice, interleaving, elaboration, and concrete examples.

Reflective Practice
Ask students to regularly reflect on their learning journey, focusing on what they have learned, how they have applied the knowledge, and their personal growth. These reflections can be powerful tools for both the student and teacher to gauge progress and development.

Cultivate a Growth Mindset Classroom Culture
Create an environment that prioritizes growth, effort, and learning over final outcomes and grades.

Normalize Challenges and Failures
Teach students that challenges and failures are integral parts of the learning process.

Space Out The Learning
Encourage students to space out their learning and avoid cramming. Spacing out learning is more effective and efficient in the long run. You can build spacing into your courses by delaying homework assignments, quizzes, or practice so that students learn about a topic in class, and then some time passes (e.g., a few days or weeks) before students practice with the content through assignments later.

Practice Retrieval
Create opportunities for students to practice retrieval, or bring information to mind from their memory. Retrieval practice is effective and efficient at promoting long-term, durable learning. Give students low- or no-stakes practice quizzes, and include questions that requires them to think back to older content to encourage spaced retrieval practice.

Reduce Test Anxiety
Encourage retrieval practice to reduce test anxiety. Research has shown that practicing retrieval can actually help decrease test anxiety. Free writing about their anxiety related to tests or quizzes can also alleviate test anxiety for students.

The Influence of Cognitive Biases
Acknowledge the influence of cognitive biases on student learning and decision-making, but also recognize your power to navigate them.

Cultivate a Learning Environment
Cultivate a learning environment that supports reflection on reasoning and rationale, especially for common misconceptions that influence how students apply class concepts to every day life.

Frame Your Lessons
Frame the main points of your lesson to align with students’ currently held mental constructs and motivations so they can be more easily learned and applied to daily decisions.

Help Student Understand Their Worth
Help students understand that they are worthy and interconnected with each other and the world. People thrive when they are in good relationships and their environments, and understand they have worth simply as they are.

Create Just And Equitable Learning Environments
Create a just and equitable learning environment: do all students in your classroom feel acknowledged and accepted for who they are, including their race, gender, sexuality, socioeconomic status, religion, language, etc.? • Create opportunities for everyone to participate without barriers. • Endeavor to create a space of belonging for your students. • Consider whether your pedagogy and curriculum consider diverse approaches and are culturally responsive.

Create Lessons For K12 Students
Adding an assignment where college students create lessons for K12 students can increase their scientific identity, encourage skills not typically assessed in a college classroom (like creativity and artistry), and set the stage for community and school involvement.

Make sure to guide the college students in how to structure a lesson well by giving them an outline: introduction, visual aid, hands-on activity, and assessment of the elementary students.

Facilitate reflection about the activity after it is complete, and tell your students why you are providing them with this opportunity and what you hope they will gain from it.

Student Engagement
Using technology as a teaching tool may result in higher levels of student engagement.

Informally Assess Students
Adopting a class starter creates opportunities to informally assess students’ learning and strengthen faculty relationships.

Use Case Studies
Effectively using case studies in the classroom can enhance critical thinking and communication skills.

Understand Teacher Development
Teacher development is a process.

Teacher development impacts the implementation of high-leverage teaching practices.

Teacher burnout impacts development.
These tips are grounded in the idea of retention and are methods, ideas, and actions you can incorporate into your class. These tips are taken from the sessions offered in the 2023 Teaching and Learning Conference. References and citations for any data or statistics listed here can be found in the videos posted on our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/c/ndsoutl.

What is Retention?
Often times the definition for retention focuses on post-course results as a way to quantify student numbers for retention. A shift from that is to a focus on the assignments in classes and how students can persist in a course. It is about student success in the present and how that carries students forward in their degree path and careers.

Mentorship
Increase mentorship opportunities. This establishes a community of peers and increases student confidence in the face of potential failure. This means students are more willing to ask questions and fail if they feel supported.

Why is Mentoring Important For Retention?
Three reasons are that it:
1. Enhances the overall experience for the student.
2. Improves class outcomes & productivity of students.
3. Establishes a community and network for students to work and thrive in.

Types of Mentoring
Hierarchical/Dyadic: Traditional mentoring from one mentor to multiple individuals.
Cyclical: Peer-to-peer mentoring where students work with and support each other.
Network: A newer model of mentoring where the student has multiple mentors from across different disciplines and levels.

*Cyclical and Network mentoring are shown as being more beneficial than the traditional model

Empathy
Teacher empathy, specifically, the degree to which you work to deeply understand and have care and concern for students, can positively impact learning, persistence, engagement, self-regulation, & post-graduation readiness.

Accessibility
Accessibility goes beyond buildings and classrooms on campus with automatic doors and ramps to allow physical access. Students have different needs that can make it harder to achieve; they may have visual, auditory, or physical impairments that may hinder them from completing or working on an assignment, participating in a group, or actively listening during class.

Know Your Students
Getting to know students can help you better understand the issues that are prevalent in your classroom. One characteristic that is important to know is where students come from. Depending on their background, they might have issues and hurdles that keep them from succeeding and feeling a sense of belonging in the classroom. Understanding this and reaching out to students shows you care.

Be “That Person” For Students
Having one person that is truly listening and cares for a student can be a reason a student persists in their program. A student may be going through a hard time and associate this with their schooling at the university. Let them know those feelings are valid.

Understand Student Intimidation
Students often are scared to ask questions and feel intimidated by you. This may stop them from asking an important question that will help them get through a problem they are having. Letting students know, through empathy, that questions are never trivial and it is important to ask them, can help students feel more at ease in the classroom.

Cautions For Using Empathy
1. Bias: People tend to favor those who are more like themselves.
2. Stress: It makes empathy more difficult.
3. Burnout: Important to maintain a self/others distinction when considering other people’s feelings and not feeling like you need to be empathetic 100% of the time.
4. Scope: Know what your scope of practice is. You are not a counselor, so make sure students know where to go on campus.
5. Power: Understanding there is a lot of power between you and a student. Knowing student backgrounds is important but asking students to represent a whole cultural group may put too much pressure and create uncomfortable scenarios.

Allow Students to Have a Part
Rather than you trying to build a static plan, students can be given a choice that lets them have an active part in moving their education forward. Using this method of instruction will not only help students achieve success and persist in their studies, it can also get them more involved and increase the quality of work they see as being more of their own design.

Remove Barriers
Learners come from different backgrounds and experiences that affect the way they learn. You may not see some of these barriers at the beginning of a course. An example of removing a barrier is, allowing a student who cannot type their essay to dictate it via Word or record their voice for the instructor to listen to. While this can be more work, it can also refresh a course in that it opens up new avenues for assignments to be completed.

The Why of Learning
If your course is not necessarily focused on building writing skills, students can be given multiple options for an assignment that does not have to be a typical essay or traditional research paper. Videos, magazine layouts, and podcasts are just some ways that assignments can engage in different ways and at different levels that still meet the why of an assignment.

The What of Learning
In what way is the information presented and accessed? Give students options that go beyond traditional reading, like videos or PowerPoints with subtitles will allow students, who would otherwise not be able to engage with content, to be an active part in the class.

The How of Learning
Creating ways students can express themselves in their own unique way encourages students to be active with their coursework and feel attached to what they are being asked to do.

Co-Create Class Expectations
Create and provide opportunities for feedback from students. This will help you identify issues and barriers in a class your students are grappling with.

Create opportunities to overcome and break down issues and barriers. This way, students can get to their learning and progress forward in a class and help you move forward in the class curriculum.

Community
Make connections to campus, programs, instructors and fellow students. It is important to help students feel like they are a part of a community. This was especially relevant during the COVID-19 pandemic. Friends can make this connection which can last through an undergraduate experience. You can make lasting impacts that keep students rooted on their career path at NDSU.

How to Build Community
Small things to help students feel at home at NDSU are:
1. Call out student names and actively engage them in the classroom.
2. Have in-depth conversations with students as an advisor which makes them feel appreciated and taken care of.
3. Make it known that students can meet with you outside of class which gives students the confidence to seek help and make them feel appreciated in their college community when they are struggling.
4. Offer an introduction which can show students a side of you students would not otherwise see. This shows them an instructor trusts them and wants to welcome them into the NDSU community.

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Guide to Accessibility
1. Make small manageable changes to your course and assignments. Start out with one assignment you tweak to slowly change your course and adapt it to the current cohort of students in your class.
2. Create and provide opportunities for feedback from students. This will help you identify issues and barriers in a class your students are grappling with.
3. Create opportunities to overcome and break down issues and barriers. This way, students can get to their learning and progress forward in a class and help you move forward in the class curriculum.

Connection Before Content
Allow students time to engage with one another before engaging with content. This builds a sense of community and helps them understand where they might want to go with their career as they share knowledge and experiences with fellow students.
Set the Tone
What do you want the class to feel like? Students should feel engaged and excited if that is what you want for the tone of your classroom. Bring in activities for students to do, which is a great way to set this tone.

1. Check in Question: Welcome students and build the classroom community by asking a casual question at the beginning of class. This is a great way to engage students right away and to get to know them better. E.g. What’s your favorite food?
2. Storytelling and Humor: Add these into a lecture or lesson to help students feel appreciated and engaged because it shows them you are human and want to get to know students. Getting too serious about a topic can serve to disconnect with students. Not being afraid to laugh and share experiences is key to developing a community that works toward the goal of learning and growth. E.g. Connect a lecture with your past experience that has a funny element.
3. Get Creative: Mix things up by being creative in the classroom. E.g. Sell-care or snacks, pajamas, blankets, etc.; Competition: Jeopardy, Family Feud, Board Games, Door Prizes; Setting: go outside, walk the halls; Materials: Use Crayons, Play-Doh, rocks.

Belonging
Opening a lecture with a big smile and projecting empathy awakens students and makes them feel alive with empathy. Talking about their place in your classroom opens up students by giving them a clear idea of what their place is in your classroom environment.

Checking in
Whether a class is online or in person, it is important to check in with students with reminders about upcoming important dates and assignments. Showing students you are thinking about them and the class increases a sense of belonging since it shows students you are putting effort in to making sure students are taken care of.

Student Careers
Laying out job prospects and opportunities for students in different programs is a great way to reassure students of the choices that they have made when considering their career after NDSU. Students will develop trust and respect for you if they feel that you have their best interests in mind.

Global Detail vs. Specific Detail
When you describe things in general to students and do not overwhelm them with minute details, students will get a good idea of what a program has to offer them. If they have further questions and are interested in a program, that is where you can step in and answer them.

Highlight Students and Alumni
Potential students want to see themselves in a program. This will attract students to a program that interests them and is a good fit for what they want out of a program.

Get NDSU Students Involved
NDSU students can share their experiences and passion for their program as a way to get prospective students talking and interested in NDSU programs. When NDSU students share details about their program in a way their advisor or instructor allows, this shows trust and responsibility, it also reaffirms the student’s place at NDSU as a member of our community.

Hybrid/Hyflex Courses
These courses can contribute to retention by providing students with flexible learning options and a personalized learning experience. There is more upfront preparation work for you for both of these options, but the pay off in time saved from not having to catch students up is more than worth it. If students know they can access recorded lectures online they will not have to try and piece together what happened from readings and notes. Students who seek to gain the most out of these courses like these are ones who may have other commitments or responsibilities that take them away from their coursework and being able to attend in-person at a regularly scheduled time.

Reasons to Look at the Syllabus
Give students a reason to look at the syllabus. Offer a assignment where students look for topics or scavenger hunt. Students become familiar with content you want them to be familiar with.

Use Teams
Teams can be used in the following ways:
1. Establish community in a virtual environment where students who are spread throughout campus can talk to each other quickly and easily.
2. Access a Resource Hub where resources can be posted for students to use whenever they need them.
3. Post workshop and webinar opportunities for students to access.
4. Provide networking and job opportunities for students so they can talk to professionals in the field and at the collegiate level.
5. Investigate engagement data so these different benefits of Teams can be understood and adapted to better suit students and faculty.

Alternative Assessments
Traditional assessments may not accurately reflect the full range of knowledge and skills students bring to a course. That is where alternative assessments can step in.

1. Offer multiple attempts on tests. If the goal is for students to learn, giving the opportunity to correct mistakes will facilitate that learning.
2. Reflect on work. By allowing students to reflect on their work and the progress of the course, students can go back and conceptualize their learning by ordering it and better understanding it as they seek to recall skills and knowledge learning.
3. Declaration quizzes add another way to give students an alternative path via assessment. These quizzes give students responsibility and trust by having them answer on a quiz whether they completed certain tasks. If they did then they are responsible for knowing that content.
Language Diversity
16. Recognize there is language diversity in every class; it may be through different languages, different regional or cultural dialects, or even familial usage of the language.
17. If personal interactions are pleasant, people are more willing to take on the cognitive load of listening to an individual with an accent. Facilitate pleasant interactions with your students.
18. Students have a higher cognitive load when they are worried about grammar. Consider not grading based on language or grammar. More effort in listening is the most important thing to learn (ex. discussion boards).
19. Grammar is the first thing to breakdown when learning new concepts.
20. Be specific about grammar expectations in your assignment rubrics.

Helping Students Write Better
21. Provide students with many examples of good writing in your field.
22. Instruct students on the writing process, which is: planning, drafting, sharing, evaluating, revising, editing, and publishing. Many students do not know the process.
23. Hold group discussions to give good quality feedback and to discuss their struggles.
24. Peer editing helps students analyze both good work and bad work.

Student Wellness
25. On your syllabus include on-campus resources for wellness and a statement of wellness. Assign wellness-related tasks like writing a paper on their wellness plan or pursuing a wellness resource.
26. In class, use clickers to allow students to anonymously gauge how they are feeling today.
27. Be a wellness role model for your students.
28. Offer flexible homework submissions (ex. videos, creative writing, etc.). Adjust your deadlines to promote better sleep for your students, and consider offering extra credit or make-up points for participating in wellness activities.

Racial Achievement Gap
29. If you have a student’s mindset you can help them have better outcomes.
30. Racial achievement gap was two times higher in classes with instructors who have fixed mindsets.
31. Instructors with a growth mindset tend to include why a student is learning a concept in their class.
32. Cognitive resources are split when a student is actively trying to avoid being stereotyped, which lowers their performance.
33. Active learning strategies have a disparately positive result for students of color.

Learning By Doing
34. Students need to see that you aren’t perfect, and you deal with the same issues they do.
35. Give students more freedom in the concept; the more they need the skills you are teaching them.
36. Bring in concepts that fit with the data they are working with.
37. Teach your students to self-teach. Google is your best friend.

High & Low Technology for Rapid Feedback
38. Some high-tech tools that are fast and provide quick, formative assessments include: clickers, Google products, diagrams.net, free polling software, Zoom chat, and Zoom polls.
39. A useful, low-tech tool for formative assessment is a color-coded card that corresponds to the answers students choose. Then students raise their cards with their answer.
40. Don’t be afraid to improvise in your class.
41. Share the polls with your students and why you are doing them.
42. Let your students know it is okay to say, "I don’t know."

Supporting Students in a Pandemic of Grief
43. Allow students space to share their story or speak about grief in class. Consider using a Blob Tree image to facilitate discussion.
44. Behaviors students might exhibit in class might reflect the stages of grief, be aware of the stages of grief.
45. Sometimes what we see as disengagement our students is actually a grief response.
46. When a student is going through something big, they may tend to be more forgetful, have difficulty concentrating, and difficulty making decisions because our brains can only process so much.
47. Validate your student’s losses.

Flipgrid
48. Flipgrid is a free educational platform.
49. You can use Flipgrid to: encourage effective learning strategies, provide personal and direct feedback, and foster a sense of community.
50. Ask your students to connect a concept to something in their life, have them post a video discussing it.
51. Use video to provide feedback to students so they can hear your voice, inflection, tone, and see your non-verbal cues. It is less formal and faster than written feedback.

Trauma Informed Practices (TIP)
52. If stress is detected in your learning environment, learning will be more difficult for those impacted by trauma. If you, as the instructor, project stress your students can pick that up.
53. Individuals who have endured trauma have a harder time switching out of fight or flight mode and back into a more productive way of thinking.
54. Some of these everyday learning experiences can activate a trauma response: lack of choice, team building, unclear rules, ambiguity, and forced sharing.
55. Conduct a trauma walk through on your classes. There are formal assessment tools available to help with this.
56. Assess your teaching through these six key principles: safety; trustworthiness and transparency; peer support; collaboration and mutuality; empowerment; voice, and choice; and recognizing cultural, historical, and gender issues.
57. You might see the following responses in a student impacted by trauma who is currently in a fight or flight mode: difficulty focusing, attending, retaining, or recalling information; fear of risks; trouble with emotional regulation; anxiety about deadlines or coursework; withdrawal or isolation; unhealthy relationships; or nothing at all. Trauma informed practices is based in equity, meaning you customize the tools for the individual's strengths. Don’t assume that a person has had a trauma, but know it is a possibility.

For more information or assistance, contact:
NDSU Office of Teaching and Learning
701-231-7015 | ndsu.otl@ndsu.edu
www.ndsu.edu/otl
The following tips, you can incorporate into your class, are taken from the sessions offered in the 2021 Teaching and Learning Conference. Coaches and citations for any data or statistics listed here can be found in the videos posted on our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/c/ndsoul.

Teach With Empathy (Not Sympathy)
Sympathy is not empathy. Empathy is a feeling of pity and sorrow for someone else’s misfortune. Empathy is a way of connecting with people that shows you understand they are experiencing something meaningful—even though you may not understand exactly how it feels for them. Instructors high in teacher empathy do not lower standards; they identify and remove obstacles to learning.

Get To Know Your Students
In order to make an impact on students’ lives you need to understand them first. You can do this by deploying a student survey. You can ask students to write a “This is what I believe…” essay. You could also ask students to create a student survey. You can ask students to write a “This is what I believe…” essay. You could also ask students to create a student survey. You can ask students to write a “This is what I believe…” essay.

Ease Asynchronous Learning
For asynchronous learning, make it easy for students to access materials – make it obvious where to start, mention clear, attainable goals and objectives. Mention the standard methods of submitting assignments.

Create An Organized Course
Create streamlined content for students to follow. An organized course is the key to student success. An unorganized course will cause delay in assignments being completed. Make Blackboard navigation easier. Offering opportunities for choice and autonomy is one way you can create a more meaningful and engaging learning environment. Often students do not understand or appreciate the reason why what they are learning is important. Establishing the “why” behind what you teach will help your students see relevance and value in the material.

Use Creative Ways To Engage Students
Instructors can use creative ways to engage students. For example, Dr. Sylvia May presents finger puppets alongside his presentations about the specific scientist being discussed. Dr. Beena Amera created themed weeks for students to create backgrounds on Zoom to fit into the themes. Dr. Jenny Linker shared how she used Swivel software in the classes she holds in the gymnasium. The camera follows the professor and can be integrated into Zoom.

For more information or assistance, contact:
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LITTLE HINTS To Use With Your STUDENTS
Advising Edition
Providing little hints throughout the semester can help your students succeed. Use the content on this printable to provide a new tip for your students each week during your regular class session. Some tips have suggestions for you in parenthesis. You may use this list as written or you may pick and choose which tips to use based on your specific class demographics.

Week 1
Ensure your class registration is final, inquire about wait lists if needed, and introduce yourself to your academic advisor.

Week 2
Identify the office hours on your syllabi for each class and keep the list handy for when you need them!

Week 3
Find a good study space on campus that works for you. Include your residence hall/apartment, the library, and outside some classrooms. There are a lot of great spaces around campus!

Week 4
Check on your current grade and attendance for each class. If you missed assignments or quizzes can you make them up? What else can you do to get back on track?

Week 5
Have you sent or received any emails from your advisor yet? If not, now is a great time to have an initial meeting to start discussing your interests in the major.

Week 6
Learn about academic organizations to get involved with for your major. (Highlight a few that are relevant to your department or program.)

Week 7
Browse your major department’s webpage – view faculty bios and learn about their research interests. Can you get involved with their research or other opportunities? (Share a few minutes about something you are working on and how undergraduate have been or could get involved.)

Week 8
Midterm of the semester – check in with faculty members again and prepare for midterms. Look ahead for any big final projects.

For more information or assistance, contact:
NDSU Office of Teaching and Learning
701-231-7015 | ndsu.otl@ndsu.edu
www.ndsu.edu/otl/faculty_resources/getting_started
Use this list to check for common accessibility issues in Emails. This document specifically addresses Microsoft Outlook as that is the campus-supported software. Microsoft offers in-depth information on the use of its accessibility checker feature as well as step-by-step instructions on how to fix accessibility issues, and further explanation on why these are important.

### Include Alt Text With All Visuals

**Why:** For screen reader users, alternative text helps to communicate what is important in images and other visuals. All text helps people who can’t see the screen to understand what’s important in images and other visuals.

- **How:** Control + Click the image or object > Edit alt text > Type 1-2 sentences in the text box to describe the object and its context.

### Do Not Use Infographics in Place of Text

**Why:** Do not use infographics or animations without alt text. Unless your image has alt text, do not send a .jpg or .pdf as the only item in an email. Another option would be to add the text in the image or infographic as text in your email.

### Add Meaningful Hyperlink Text

**Why:** People who use screen readers sometimes scan a list of links. Links should convey clear and accurate information about the destination. For example, instead of linking to the text Click here, include the full title of the destination page.

- **How:** Click on the insert link option on the bottom toolbar > Insert Link > Write the information about the destination in the description > Write the URL in the web address box.

### Don’t Use Color To Convey Information

**Why:** People who are blind, have low vision, or are colorblind might miss out on the meaning conveyed by particular colors.

- **How:** Add an underline to color-coded hyperlink text so people who are colorblind know the text is linked even if they can’t see the color. For headings, consider adding bold or using a larger font.

### Use Good Contrast

**Why:** High contrast text is easier to read for sighted and low-sighted individuals. If you use black or gray text in your emails, use at least 70% tint for your gray colors. When using color, choose dark colors on a light background. If you struggle to read the email, so will your readers.

### Add Table Header And Column Information

**Why:** To keep track of their location in a table, screen readers count table cells and use header information to identify rows and columns. If a table is nested within another table or if a cell is merged or split, the screen reader loses count and can’t provide useful information about the table. Blank cells in a table could also mislead someone using a screen reader into thinking that there is nothing more in the table.

### Include Sufficient White Space

**Why:** In order to reduce workload for individuals with dyslexia, make sure there is ample white space between sentences and paragraphs.

### Request Accessible Emails

**Why:** If you wish to make sure you receive accessible emails, you can let the sender know that you prefer to receive accessible content.

- **How:** Click the settings icon on your Outlook on the web > Go to: In the search bar type “Accessible Content” > Click on Accessible Content > Select the “Ask senders to send content that’s accessible” checkbox > Click save.

### Insert Document Titles

**Why:** Document titles provide information on what a screen reader reads is reading and the document, so will your readers.

- **How:** File menu > Properties > Summary > Type descriptive title for your document.

### Use Alt Text For All Images

**Why:** Screen readers cannot read photos without alt text or descriptions. Individuals may miss or misunderstand important information.

- **How:** Click image > Picture Format menu > Format Pane > Layout & Properties (Alt) > Alt text > Simple image: Title in title box. Ex: John Doe. Images with words or diagrams, fill in title and description box with information explaining image significance or what text in the image says.

### Use Table Headers

**Why:** Table headers explain the information in columns a screen reader reads. Without table headers, a screen reader reads, “Accessibility issues, 10, 14, 3” versus “Book title accessibility issues, Page 10, Total pages 14, Number of follow up questions 3.”

- **How:** Insert menu > Table > Choose columns & rows + 1 extra row > Table Design menu > Ensure Header Row box is checked > Type column headers in first row of table.

### Use Headings And Sub-Headings

**Why:** Provides a logical reading order for screen readers. Saves time with accessibility issues when exporting to a PDF.

- **How:** References menu > Add Text > Highlight text to classify as heading or sub-heading > Choose Level 1, then Level 2, then Level 3 as needed.

### Use Descriptive Hyperlinks

**Why:** Descriptive hyperlinks enable users to know what information they will receive if they click the link. A screen reader reads a link as, “link click here” versus “link how to fix accessibility issues.”

- **How:** Write a description of what the link provides > Highlight link text > Insert menu > Link > Click web or email option > Insert web or email address.

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For more information or assistance, contact:

**NDSU Office of Teaching and Learning**

701-231-7015 | ndsu.otl@ndsu.edu

www.ndsu.edu/distance_education/course_design/course_materials
Use this list to check for common accessibility issues in Microsoft PowerPoint presentations. Microsoft offers in-depth information on the use of its accessibility checker feature as well as step-by-step instructions on how to fix accessibility issues, and further explanation on why these are important.

**Use Unique Slide Titles**
Why: Individuals using a screen reader skim through slide titles to navigate; they quickly scan slide titles and go right to the slide they want. Using unique slide titles allows them to clearly understand which slide they are on. Avoid using the same title for slides that have spill-over information, consider including additional information such as 'Slide Title 1 of 2'.

**Use Built-in Slide Templates**
Why: Built-in slide layout templates are designed so the reading order is the same for people with vision and for people who use screen readers.

- **How**: Design menu > Select a built-in slide template.

**Add Alt Text To All Images, Objects and Tables**
Why: For screen reader users, alternative text helps to communicate what is important in images and other visuals. Alt text provides a textual alternative to non-text content.

- **How**: Right click the image or object > Format picture/object > Size & Properties > Alt text > fill in title and description explaining the object or image.

**Use Table Headers**
Why: Table headers explain the information in columns and rows. Without table headers, a screen reader would not be able to correctly read the table.

- **How**: Insert menu > Table > Choose columns & rows > Insert extra row > Table Design menu > Ensure Header Row box is checked > Type column headers in first row of table.

**Set Reading Order Of Slide Contents**
Why: Screen readers read the elements in the order they were added to the slide, which might be different from the order in which things appear. It’s important to check the reading order by using the Selection Pane. The reading order in the Selection Pane should be arranged from the bottom up. The Title should be at the very bottom with subsequent content above it.

- **How**: Home > Arrange > Selection Pane > Arrange the reading order by dragging the objects on the right pane.

**Use Descriptive Hyperlinks**
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- **How**: Write a description of what the link provides > Highlight link text > Insert menu > Link > Click web or email option > Insert web or email address.

**Use Good Contrast**
Why: High contrast text is easier to read for sighted and low sighted individuals. If the document is black and white, use at least 70% tint for your gray colors. When using color, choose dark colors on a light background or light colors on a dark background. If you struggle to read the document, so will your readers.

- **How**: Font color menu > Hover cursor over gray/ black color choice > Choose a color that says "lighter 25%" or a lesser percentage. "Lighter 25%" means the tint is 75%. If you use anything more than 25% lighter, your document will be flagged for contrast issues.

**Use Multiple Ways To Identify Information**
Why: If color is the only way to differentiate between items, low sighted, color blind, and sighted individuals may have difficulty seeing the difference between each color. Variations in colors used by computer monitors and printers can be significant; and, when printed in black and white, color variation and meaning are lost.

- **How**: You can use color to differentiate but offer another differentiation tool. This could be numbers, letters, or other characters.

**Avoid Excess Animation**
Why: People can get vertigo or be sensitive to moving or flashing images. Because of this, animation should be kept to a minimum. Strobing or rapidly moving images should be avoided, as this can make certain viewers sick or cause a seizure.

**Make Sure The Document Uses High Contrast**
Why: Make sure that the document is in high contrast so that the text is easier to read for low sighted and sighted individuals. This means dark text on a light background or light text on a dark background.

- **How**: (For Windows): Open File in Adobe Acrobat DC > Click Acrobat Pro DC > Preferences > Select Accessibility > Check the 'Replace Document Colors' box > Select "Use High-Contrast Colors" > From the dropdown list select "black text on white.

- **How**: (For Mac): Open File in Adobe Acrobat DC > Click Edit > Preferences > Select Accessibility > Check the 'Replace Document Colors' box > Select "Use High-Contrast Colors" > From the dropdown list select "black text on white.

**Set The Reading Order**
Why: Since the reading order is unique to each document, the accessibility checker is unable to fully check the reading order. Double check that the PDF is reading the document in the intended order.

- **How**: Click Tools > Accessibility > Accessibility Checker > Reading Order > Show Order Panel > Review the numerical order for each page. For items a screen reader would not read, click + crtl or right click on the number of the item in the side panel. From the menu, choose what type of content it is. "Tag as Decorative/Background" will indicate that it is not content that adds meaning to the document.

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www.ndsu.edu/otl/faculty_resources
Write objectives for using Bloom's Taxonomy and associated action or performance verbs.
**Writing Course Objectives**

**What are course objectives?**
Course objectives directly state what the students will know or be able to do by the end of the course. They ensure the instructor and students have a clear path through the course. All learning experiences and assessments should align to the course objectives.

Course objectives are:
- Specific
- Concise
- Student-centered
- Measurable
- Student-friendly
- Aligned with program objectives/goals

**What does a course objective look like?**

The students will determine the developmental needs of children across all domains.

- Student-centered—it states specifically what that students will be able to do.
- It includes a measurable action verb.
- It identifies the content aligned with program goals.
- Student-friendly—it isn’t overly technical, and is easily understood by students.

A program goal/outcome from which this course objective is derived may look like:
- Students will understand developmental domains.

**How are course objectives different from individual session objectives?**

The learning objectives for an individual course session are at a more granular level than an overall course objective. For example:

**Course Objective**—The students will determine the developmental needs of children across all domains.

**Session Objective**—The students will list the common characteristics of the stages of cognitive development.

**Learning Level** | **Associated Action Verbs**
---|---
Knowledge | define, describe, state, list, name, write, recall, recognize, label, underlie, select, reproduce, outline, match
Comprehension | identify, justify, select, indicate, illustrate, represent, name, formulate, explain, judge, contrast, classify
Application | predict, select, assess, explain, choose, find, show, demonstrate, construct, compute, use, perform
Analysis | analyze, identify, conclude, differentiate, select, separate, compare, contrast, justify, resolve, break down, criticize
Evaluation | judge, evaluate, determine, recognize, support, defend, attack, criticize, identify, avoid, select, choose
Synthesis/ Create | combine, restate, summarize, precise, argue, discuss, organize, derive, select, relate, generalize, conclude

Note: the action verb guides assessment. For example, knowledge-level learning can be measured through limited-response quizzes or tests, while higher level learning can be measured with constructed response and projects.

**Bloom’s Taxonomy**

Although there are several taxonomies for learning, Bloom’s is the most widely known and used. Bloom’s Taxonomy serves as a useful resource for identifying the action verbs needed for writing effective objectives. The following chart provides the six learning levels and examples of aligned performance verbs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Learning Level</th>
<th>Associated Action Verbs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Knowledge</td>
<td>define, describe, state, list, name, write, recall, recognize, label, underline, select, reproduce, outline, match</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comprehension</td>
<td>identify, justify, select, indicate, illustrate, represent, name, formulate, explain, judge, contrast, classify</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Application</td>
<td>predict, select, assess, explain, choose, find, show, demonstrate, construct, compute, use, perform</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Analysis</td>
<td>analyze, identify, conclude, differentiate, select, separate, compare, contrast, justify, resolve, break down, criticize</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>judge, evaluate, determine, recognize, support, defend, attack, criticize, identify, avoid, select, choose</td>
</tr>
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**Tips for Filming Videos**

Whether you are filming a lecture for your class or a video for YouTube, there are some strategies you can use to ensure your video is of good quality. A video of good quality makes it easier for the viewer to receive your message.

Here are a few tips to ensure your video is of good quality.

**Plan your video in advance**
Planning your video in advance provides numerous advantages in terms of quality. The most important reason is that it decreases the amount of time spent filming and editing your video.

**Follow a script**
Write a script before recording. The script entails what you will talk about in the video. The video needs to be short, concise and to the point. So, write your script keeping that in mind.

**Use good lighting**
Preferably record in a shady area that will give a softer light. Avoid overhead lighting because that will cause harsh shadows on the subject’s face.

**Use a clean background**
A smile, especially at the beginning of the video, offers a sense of warmth and appears welcoming. Be sure to look at the lens of your camera or the general direction of the camera on your computer this is how your eyes will connect with your viewers eyes. If recording from your computer, it may help to tape a photo of a person near the lens.

**Avoid shaky footage**
It is not possible to have the camera handheld and not have shaky footage. It is best to use a tripod or set up a camera on a flat surface so your footage looks professional. The Office of Teaching and Learning has a tripod available to borrow.

**Record with the best quality**
Minimum quality should be 1080 pixels (px) at 30 frames per second (fps). Check your camera or phone to ensure it is recording at these settings. If you are using a phone to record be sure you have it set up horizontally rather than vertically.

**Speak slower**
Individuals have a tendency to speak faster when they are on camera or in front of a crowd. Before you begin speaking pause and remind yourself to speak slower and enunciate tricky words.

**Make sure to smile**
A smile, especially at the beginning of the video, offers a sense of warmth and appears welcoming.

**Look at the lens**
Be sure to look at the lens of your camera or the general direction of the camera on your computer this is how your eyes will connect with your viewers eyes. If recording from your computer, it may help to tape a photo of a person near the lens.
The learning environment sets the stage for learning. Here are a few ways to set up your learning environment to make your learners feel welcome and able to learn.

**Comfortable Seating**

Think of comfort broadly.
- The seating should establish opportunities for students to see and be seen and feel like they belong in the classroom.
- Can the seating be arranged in a circle to allow learners to see one another?
- Another option is to arrange the seating around a table or put desks in pods to encourage discussion and collaboration.
- Can you position yourself as the instructor in ways that allow you to be close to your learners, make eye contact, and see and hear them when you are talking and eliciting their ideas?

**Look and Feel of the Room**

Unlike our K-12 educator colleagues, higher education instructors typically don't have their own classroom that can be customized to have a warm or personalized look and feel. However, there are things we can do to personalize the space we use.

For example:
- You can project an image and/or message that students see when they enter the room.
- You can add a message to the whiteboard, welcoming students and/or giving them something to think about related to the day's learning.
- Another idea is to create learner toolkits that can be housed in the classroom or brought with you to class that include items that support thinking and discussion such as a mini-whiteboard, discussion prompts, response cards (Yes, No, Need More Information), activity protocols, resource sheets like嘴角的兴致也可，合作的伙伴等。

**Communication**

Although Zoom and Teams meetings have made us more aware of the expressions on our faces and how the way we look may be perceived, educators are often under-aware of their non-verbal communication and tone. Plan for intentional:
- Position yourself near your students and work the room, so you aren't only interacting with the students in your “splash zone.”
- Practice holding a warm, interested, and friendly expression on your face.
- Make eye contact with your students to show them you are listening and paying attention to them.
- Don’t be afraid to make a mistake or admit you do not know something. Instead, share with the students how you corrected the mistake or how you will learn what you don’t know.
- Finally, review your syllabus for messaging; perhaps even invite a colleague to review it, letting you know the tone they feel. Can you set high and clear expectations while maintaining a warm and approachable tone?

**Engagement**

Engagement is predictive of several positive academic and life outcomes including academic achievement, reduced drop-out rates, greater satisfaction with life, and a better overall sense of well-being. In fact, without opportunities for students to connect with learning in meaningful ways, they don’t learn. So, how can you make engagement more likely?

Engagement by design is an intentional approach to planning built upon the principle that every student deserves a learning experience with high levels of engagement.

**Classroom Relationships**

Relationships are among students and the content, peers, and instructor. Students are more likely to form a relationship with content when they can see how it is relevant, interesting, and useful. Positive relationships with peers that support engagement and learning require time and structure. Structure includes establishing guidelines for interaction that include respectful speaking and listening and worthwhile activities. Roger and David Johnson are experts in the field of cooperative learning with excellent resources on structuring collaborative interactions. Trust is the foundation of forming a relationship with your students. Trust is fostered when students see you as competent, which includes both knowing what you’re talking about and delivering on your promises. Students also trust instructors more who provide the instruction and feedback they need to succeed. In addition, relationships can be fostered with your students through sharing appropriate but personal information such as a photo and brief welcome that includes a glimpse into your interests and hobbies and inviting them to do the same.

**Learner Voice**

This includes listening, learning, and leading. Learners need to be taught how to listen to one another and provided with the structure for listening that includes expectations and modeling of respect and active listening. After hearing the ideas and perspectives of others, learners should be given the opportunity to demonstrate that they heard and learned from that experience. Finally, learners need opportunities in class to take responsibility for their own and others’ learning—not just passively intake content from the educator.

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Student Value

Students need to feel like they belong along with being recognized, appreciated, and celebrated. Value is cultivated when student growth and accomplishment is recognized. Value is also furthered when a student knows others believe in them. Keep in mind that recognition can be private such as sincere and performance-anchored feedback on an assessment. Belief can be conveyed with statements that not only tell the student you believe in their abilities but also explain how you know this (e.g., “I know you can do this. You have the knowledge and skills needed to complete this project. Let’s review what you know…”)

**Clear and Worthy Content**

Thoughtfully examine the content included in your class. Is it all important? Can you provide a strong rationale if asked “Why do we need to know this?” Once the worthy content is established, determine how you will clearly inform learners what they are expected to learn and what the success criteria look like.

**Challenging Learning Experiences**

Learners need an opportunity to rise to the challenge of learning the worthy content. Identify complex questions and problems for learners to grapple with. Help learners see the relevance in the content and the connections across the discipline.

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Qualtrics is a robust survey software available to all faculty, staff, and students. When you take full advantage of its features your survey creation is more efficient. This section offers a variety of tips for using Qualtrics efficiently. Here are some tips for managing your Qualtrics account.

**Register For Your FREE Account**
All NDSU faculty, staff, and students have access to a FREE university-sponsored Qualtrics account. Claim your account here: [https://ndstate.qualtrics.com](https://ndstate.qualtrics.com)

**Change Your Time Zone**
Be sure you have your Qualtrics account set to the correct time zone. NDSU is on Central Time.

To set the time zone:
» Find “My Account” on the right side with your initial.
» Go to each section of the survey and repeat the steps.
» Navigate to “Survey options” and “Responses” tab.
» Then find “Account settings.”
» Highlight a block by clicking on the whole block.
» Change this to the time zone you are in or Central Time for the time zone NDSU is in.

**Customize Home Page**
Customizing your home page allows you to quickly get to what you use most often.

To customize your home page:
» Click the gear icon under Welcome to XM.
» You can turn on or off the Active Surveys and Your workflows summary.

**Manage Notifications**
» Click the bell icon on the top right.
» Click the three dots.
» Notification Settings is where you can turn on or off Notification Channels (Email and Mobile Notifications). Notification Types (Collaboration, Recommendations, Surveys, and Workflows).

**Delete Notifications**
To delete notifications on your home screen that you are done with do the following:
» Hover over a notification you don’t need anymore.
» You will see the three dots.
» Select “Remove notification.”

**Create Folders to Organize Projects**
You can create folders to organize all of your survey projects and allow you to access them quickly.

To make folders:
» Locate “Create new folder” on the bottom left.
» Give the folder a name (folders show in alphabetical order). You can create folders within folders.
» Drag and drop surveys into the appropriate folders.

Search all surveys by highlighting the Project and Programs folder or search within individual folders.

**Identify The Owner Of Your Surveys**
If you have surveys that are shared with you, you may need to know who the owner of each survey is. To find this out, go to the Projects Page. While you are on that page you will notice a gear on the right. Click the gear and there is Owner option check box.

**To do this:**
» Click the gear icon under Welcome to XM.
» You can turn on or off the Active Surveys and Your workflows summary.

**Delete Notifications**
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**Use Next & Submit Buttons**
The next and submit buttons are important for navigating through your survey and are also used for accessibility purposes. The default arrows are not descriptive and are difficult to navigate when using a screen reader. In addition, adding a “Submit” button allows survey takers to know that the survey is ending and is their last chance to edit responses, if they choose.

How to change the buttons to read next & submit:
» Highlight a block by clicking on the whole block.
» Look to the left for “Format.”
» Then look for “Next/previous buttons” when you click the button a Next/Previous Button text box will pop up.
» In the text box, type “Next” (or “Submit” if this is the only block with no page breaks). Remember the block with the “Submit” button must not contain any page breaks.
» Go to each section of the survey and repeat the steps.

This section also allows you to set the text for a “Back” button, if you choose to allow survey takers to change their responses in a previous section.

**Use Survey Display Names**
Screen readers need survey titles and display names in order for the survey to be clear to the survey taker. The default survey name is “Online Survey Software | Qualtrics Survey Solutions,” which is not descriptive of your survey.

To add the survey display name:
» Open your survey.
» Look for the survey options icon. (Hint: if you need labels for the menu icons, click > at the bottom of the screen to enable them.)
» In the “General” tab, look for ‘Display name’.
» Enter the survey title in the text box.

You may also choose to edit the survey description while you are there.

Here are some tips for ensuring your Qualtrics basic survey information is set-up correctly and accessible.

**Use Next & Submit Buttons**
The next and submit buttons are important for navigating through your survey and are also used for accessibility purposes. The default arrows are not descriptive and are difficult to navigate when using a screen reader. In addition, adding a “Submit” button allows survey takers to know that the survey is ending and is their last chance to edit responses, if they choose.

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» In the “General” tab, look for ‘Display name’.
» Enter the survey title in the text box.

You may also choose to edit the survey description while you are there.

**Setting Your Survey Availability**
You can choose to set the timeframe in which your survey is available for individuals to take it. To do this, start by opening your survey.
» Navigate to “Survey options” and “Responses” tab.
» Scroll down to “Survey availability” and click “Set specific start and expiration date.”
» Click “Edit Survey Availability”
» Set the Start date and Start time.
» Set the Expiration date and Expiration time. If you want the survey to end at midnight, set it to 11:59 p.m. to ensure that it is accurate.

The survey will not be available until the start date and time have passed in the time zone your account is set to.

**Coping and Pasting**
To achieve a consistent look in your survey when you are copying and pasting text you want to ensure the fonts are all the same and at the same size. This is easiest to do as you go rather than waiting until you have completed the entire survey.

To do this:
» Look for the “Rich Content Editor” in blue above the text box you are pasting the information into this gives you formatting options.
» The “Remove Formatting” in blue removes all formatting for only that question.

The strip formatting option is also available in the survey’s tool box, but it applies to the entire survey, so if you use it, you will need to redo any special formatting in the survey.
Open your survey and navigate to survey options.
» Look for the "Security" tab.
» Turn on "Prevent multiple submissions" option.
In the Qualtrics panel, by default, the survey taker can only take your survey once, unless you change the settings in the compose email section.

To change the settings:
» Click "Show Advance Options".
» Change "Link Type" to "Multiple Completes" or "Anonymous."

Adding A PDF To A Question

There are times when adding a PDF to a question is useful to your survey takers. First, decide if you need a display logic or skip logic for the question. Then decide what kind of question type you are setting up.

To add the PDF:
» Click into the question you want to add a PDF to.
» Click "Rich Content Editor."
» Click on "More."
» Click the page icon with the corner turned down.
» Upload a New File and choose your PDF file.
» When you are finished uploading, create a link to the PDF by highlighting the link & clicking the chain icon.
» Click on the "Target tab" to make sure it is set to "New Window (blank)." This will open the PDF in a browser window so you don’t lose the survey taker.

Adding A PDF To A Workflow

Have the survey open and click "Workflows."
» Create a workflow
» Under "Templates" select "Start a workflow when a survey response is received or updated" then click "Survey response."
» Name the the workflow.
» Click on the "+". This is where you decide if you have a condition or not. 
» Select "Task."
» Email
» The "To" area can be piped from survey questions, leave "From" as is, be sure you put something in the subject line.
» The body of the email is where you will insert the PDF.
» Select a library the PDF is in or upload the PDF.
» Have the survey open.
» Click "Show Advance Options".
1. Exchange session on Retention study, and receive their degree is the cornerstone of ensuring students stay, move through a program of classes, etc.)

2. 5. Offer class points for coming to office hours. This can help students feel more comfortable in attending future office hours.

3. Call your office hours, student hours or drop-in help hours so it is very clear to students what that means.

4. For office hours, sit in a less intimidating location like the coffee shop in the union or some other location so students feel more comfortable coming to visit.

5. If allowed, bring your favorite pet to your office to help students feel comfortable coming to visit.

6. Make your students feel safe so they can focus on learning.

7. As a way for you to learn names, have students introduce themselves using a video on Flipgrid. They can also watch each other’s videos to build community.

8. Students don’t often know what office hours are. Offer class points for coming to office hours. This is an opportunity to engage in conversation and connect one-on-one in a large class. It also makes students feel more comfortable in attending future office hours.

9. Ask students to tell something interesting about themselves. Do an about me assignment that is not related to the content. Ask students to tell you more about themselves. For example, have them tell you a fun fact, a boring fact, and a pet peeve. This will help you get to know your students more.

10. Give assignments back before you grade the next assignment. This will help students understand the breadth of jobs available in their program.

11. Allow students to step out of class to take breaks as needed.

12. Provide progress reports so that students know how they are doing in a class if there have been no grades posted.

13. Offer a very clear syllabus and if dates need to be moved around, update your syllabus and repost it.

14. Tell students about resources that are available to them. Ask your students to keep them motivated to get to their class. Create a rubric so that students know what to expect for them.

15. Disclosing to your students if you are neurodiverse only if you are comfortable with that disclosure.

16. Behaviors in class may look like a student challenging you in front of the class, students pacing at the back of the room, students leaving class to take a break, sensory issues (too loud, too bright, etc.), students dominating the conversation, or melodowns. You can alleviate these behaviors by offering clear, classroom expectations, having a designated note-taker for when students need a break, offering civil points for discussions, and help students know when they are getting off topic. If there are meltdowns needed.

17. When students are doing in a class if there have been no grades posted.

18. Offer clear expectations for the assignments in your class. Offer class points for coming to office hours. This can help students feel more comfortable in attending future office hours.

19. Help students work through a decision to switch majors. Make it okay to change because students often don’t know what a degree means in terms of a career at the time they choose a major. Help them understand the breadth of jobs available in their program.

20. Call your office hours, student hours or drop-in help hours so it is very clear to students what that means.

21. Break down the norms of your campus or class. Don’t assume students know these norms. (e.g., what credits are, that there is a new semester with new classes, etc.)

22. Students don’t often know what office hours are. Offer class points for coming to office hours. This is an opportunity to engage in conversation and connect one-on-one in a large class. It also makes students feel more comfortable in attending future office hours.

23. Call your office hours, student hours or drop-in help hours so it is very clear to students what that means.

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33. As a way for you to learn names, have students introduce themselves using a video on Flipgrid. They can also watch each other’s videos to build community.

34. Students don’t often know what office hours are. Offer class points for coming to office hours. This is an opportunity to engage in conversation and connect one-on-one in a large class. It also makes students feel more comfortable in attending future office hours.

35. Call your office hours, student hours or drop-in help hours so it is very clear to students what that means.

36. For office hours, sit in a less intimidating location like the coffee shop in the union or some other location so students feel more comfortable coming to visit.

37. If allowed, bring your favorite pet to your office to help students feel comfortable coming to visit.

38. Make your students feel safe so they can focus on learning.

39. As a way for you to learn names, have students introduce themselves using a video on Flipgrid. They can also watch each other’s videos to build community.
Generation Z students. Tips are taken from the sessions between 2001 and 2010. Many of these students are familiar and comfortable learning using almost any technology, they do not have to use any specific technology, they are friends, and will connect with them as comfortable as possible. This may mean using social media for self-diagnosis and getting an accurate diagnosis from a mental health professional. Students or concerning statements in assignments, have an unlimited number of visits for students. Counseling sessions are FREE and helping students. For more information or assistance, contact: NDSU Office of Teaching and Learning 701-231-7015 | ndsu.otl@ndsu.edu www.ndsu.edu/otl

Mental health diagnoses are more common than you might realize. As an instructor you might find yourself in a situation where you need to assist a student with resources for a mental health condition or helping a student who is in crisis. Knowing where to find help and how to get access is an important part of retaining students. The following are tips from NDSU’s Counseling Center and from a panel discussion with counselors.

1. Become familiar with NDSU’s FREE resources for helping students. Counseling sessions are FREE and have an unlimited number of visits for students.
2. For general concerns about the mental health of students or concerning statements in assignments, do not hesitate to reach out to the Counseling Center for a consultation on how to handle the situation.
3. Mental health conditions disrupt a person’s ability to work, carry out daily activities, and engage in satisfying relationships. Its symptoms can be just as debilitating as the symptoms of a physical disability.
4. The most common mental health conditions are anxiety, depression, and substance use disorder.
5. Recommend students to help a student by using the acronym ALGEE.
6. A - Assess for risk of suicide. Ask the individual directly, “Are you having thoughts about suicide?” or “Are you thinking about killing yourself?” If they answer yes, ask, “Have you decided how you are going to kill yourself?” You will almost always get an honest answer. If there is an answer of yes to either of these questions you will need to help them seek assistance. Do not leave someone alone who has answered yes to these questions.
7. B - Be very clear and direct, “Are you having thoughts about suicide?” directly, “Are you having thoughts about suicide?” or “Are you thinking about killing yourself?” If they answer yes, ask, “Have you decided how you are going to kill yourself?” You will almost always get an honest answer. If there is an answer of yes to either of these questions you will need to help them seek assistance. Do not leave someone alone who has answered yes to these questions.
8. C - Call for emergency: “If you do not know what is happening you may have a panic attack.” If you believe a student is having a panic attack in your class, you can: Express concern for the student and ask if they know what is happening - if they had panic attack before they will usually know what it is. Look for a medic alert bracelet that lists other conditions the student may have. E - Encourage appropriate professional help. Students or concerning statements in assignments, have an unlimited number of visits for students.
9. D - Do not hesitate to reach out to the Counseling Center for a consultation on how to handle the situation.
10. E - Encourage appropriate professional help. Students or concerning statements in assignments, have an unlimited number of visits for students.
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media are not vetted so the information included may or may not be accurate. Do not rely on social media for a diagnosis. Remind your students of this as needed.

24. Remind your students to think about their own physical wellness because that goes a long way toward alleviating mental health symptoms. Encourage students to eat right, get exercise, get enough sleep, lower their screen time, take time to meditate or even just sit in silence.

25. Too much screen time can mimic ADHD symptoms because you are training your brain to switch tasks every 30 or 40 seconds. Suggest students limit their screen time.

26. Encourage students to shut off all digital or blue-light devices at least a half hour before bedtime to get better rest.

27. Suggest that students have good sleep patterns, go to bed as close to the same time and get up as close to the same time as possible.

28. As an instructor, learn the art of dialogue and become comfortable with having conversations about mental health.

29. Know there are cultures that do not recognize mental health.

30. Also note, if a student is crying in front of you it may not be a mental health issue, it could be something else like a fear of speaking with individuals in power. Do not be overly quick to walk the student over to the counseling center.

31. Encourage your students to have more authentic and assertive conversations with their friends and family. For example, if they do not feel like going out with their friends they should be authentic and tell their friends. Or, if they feel someone is upset with them ask if their perception is correct.

32. There are services available for veterans on most college campuses, but for more extensive trauma they will be referred to another entity for assistance.

33. Only NDSU students are served by the counseling center. For family members there are some community-based counseling centers that NDSU could refer them to. Some community-based counseling centers offer a sliding fee scale if cost is an issue.

34. Consider taking NDSU’s mental health first aid course to help you learn more about assisting your students with their mental health.

For more information or assistance, contact:

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