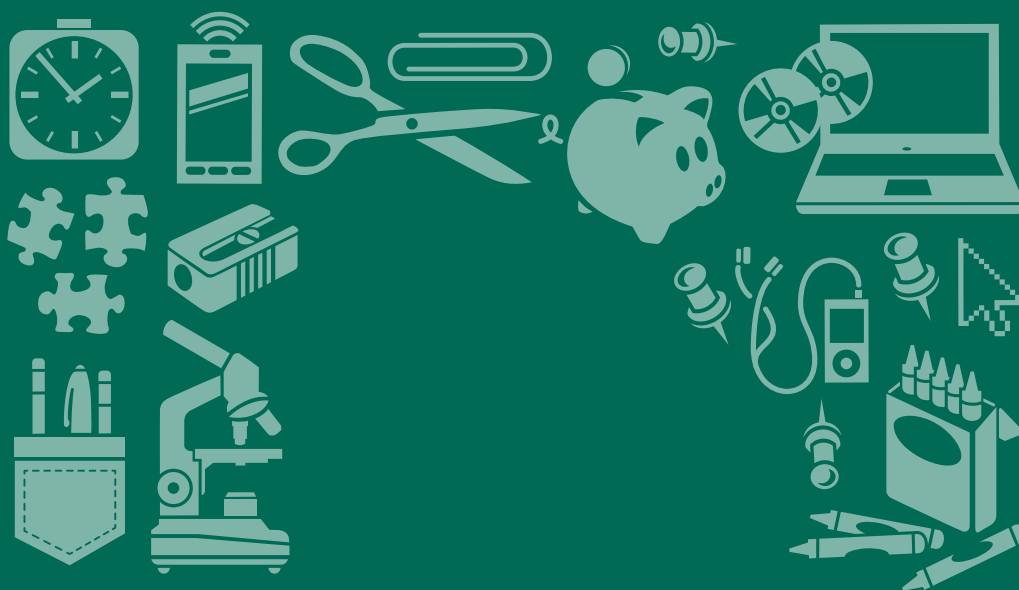




NORTH DAKOTA STATE UNIVERSITY
OFFICE OF
TEACHING & LEARNING



TEACHING TIPS



701.231.7015

NDSU

WWW.NDSU.EDU/OTL

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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FACULTY & STAFF ACADEMIC CONFERENCE TIPS

These tips are taken from breakout sessions at the 2024 Faculty & Staff Academic Conference. References and citations for data or statistics listed here can be found in the videos that will be posted on our YouTube channel at www.youtube.com/c/ndsuotl.

Research & Creative Activity Services: From Proposal Development to Intellectual Property

1. To reach the right person to answer your questions, get to know RCA staff and the services each unit provides. These emails can also be used for questions. Ndsu.researchdev@ndsu.edu, ndsu.businessdev@ndsu.edu, ndsu.research@ndsu.edu. Find a staff contact list at https://www.ndsu.edu/research/about_rca/contact/
2. Learn the acronyms - The Research Development (RD) office is for pre-pre-award support, Sponsored Projects Administration (SPA) office is for pre-awards, Innovation & Economic Development office is for industry relations, NDSU Research Foundation (NDSURF) is for intellectual property access and Strategic Research Initiatives (SRI) is for large, multi-disciplinary efforts or federal relations.
3. Sign up for an Orcid ID which is your personal “Digital Persistent Identifier.” It will seamlessly amalgamate your publications when needed for NSF, NIH Biosketches. <https://orcid.org/signin>
4. Sign up and get to know ScieNCv – a new, required formatting for sponsored project Biosketches and Current and Pending Support documents <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/sciencv/>
5. Novelution is NDSU’s proposal development & tracking software. Your proposals must be routed and signed off through Novelution https://www.ndsu.edu/research/for_researchers/novelution/
6. RCA publishes a newsletter twice per month during the academic calendar which contains stories about successful researchers, tips and tricks for grantwriting, information about Limited Submissions, finding funding, and federal regulation changes. Read or at least skim the newsletter to see what’s new and required.

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Admission Overview & Diverse Student Recruitment

1. Know how your program/department compares to NDSU’s top competitors and be able to highlight differentiating factors.
2. Be able to share the value of your program/department with a variety of populations
3. Develop experiential activities for recruitment events. These hands-on elements give prospective students a tangible sense of what studying in your program will be like and showcase the practical skills they will develop.

Recruiting Graduate Students: Tips For Faculty

1. Consider the following ideas for finding prospective graduate students. 1) Update your program website 2) Mention your program when you give presentations 3) Host a virtual open house 4) Ask for student recommendations from colleagues in your field 5) Encourage your own undergraduates to apply 6) Recruit at conferences 7) Advertise on Google ads or social media.
2. Responding to prospective students who are already in the “recruitment funnel” is highly effective. Admitting students in a timely matter is *the* most effective recruitment tool.
3. Be sure your prospective students are able to easily find deadlines, admission criteria, and application requirements on your program web page and in the catalog? A holistic admissions process is considered best practice and typically yields more underrepresented students.

Human-Driven Generative AI & Authentic Assessment Design

1. Remember the many limitations of GenAI outputs.
2. Review and revise all of the GenAI outputs.
3. Use the effective prompting framework, including role, task, and requirements to get the best output.

Being a Good Partner to TCUs and Tribal Communities: An Indigenous Perspective

1. When considering working with TCUs and/or Tribal Communities, remember to have early, often, and transparent communication with them. Trust takes time to build and they, as a stakeholder in your proposed partnership, should have an equal voice in the proposal design and implementation process. Contact them before your “pen hits the paper” and write them in as a partner with predefined activities and budgets.
2. Each TCU and Tribal Community is unique in its culture, people, and practices. Each bring a different perspective and strength to the table. Each community also has different challenges, so understanding the needs and strengths by having meaningful conversations should be a priority.
3. Become familiar with data sovereignty as it applies to research within Tribal Communities before approaching a conversation about a potential partnership. Do your part to educate yourself on the diverse cultures, norms, and regulations as it applies to what you will be proposing.

Encouraging Academic Honesty In The Age of AI

1. AI Detectors: Violate FERPA and are proven inaccurate.
2. Instructional Design Center & Office of Teaching & Learning can help you develop alternative assessments.
3. Communicate clearly your expectations regarding use of generative artificial intelligence, both in the syllabus and verbally.

Giving Engaging Presentations

1. Prior to giving a presentation, identify your intention. What exactly do you want to accomplish with this presentation?
2. Now identify the actions you will use to accomplish your intention. For example, I will (action:) excite my audience so they will (intention:) discuss my research with their colleagues.
3. Practice your presentation. If you tend to be nervous when presenting, practice in front of others. Actors spend about one hour practicing for every minute they perform in front of an audience.

Event Planning 101

1. It will help you avoid conflicting events if you pick your date and time based on the Campus Events Planning Calendar.
2. Work with Event Services on the details.
3. Use myNDSU to promote and market your event.

CCAST Support For AI-Related Research & Teaching

1. Discuss AI needs with CCAST. If you plan to make use of CCAST HPC resources for AI research and education, set up a time to talk with us about your needs. If you plan to use CCAST in the classroom, let us know your needs a semester in advance so we can make sure you have the resources prior to the start of your course.
2. Participate in CCAST HPC training programs. HPC skills are essential for conducting AI-related research at scale. Develop these skills by participating in our training programs offered every fall, spring, and summer semester. CCAST training programs are open to all faculty, staff, & students at NDSU, and collaborators at other institutions.
3. Contact CCAST Support for help. Adapting existing AI workflows to run on HPC clusters can be difficult and is a frequent source of frustration for AI researchers. CCAST staff have substantial experience deploying AI/ML software for HPC, and we are here to help. Review our Knowledge Base articles and tutorials on AI/ML and email us at ndsu.ccast.support@ndsu.edu if you’re having trouble getting AI codes to run properly.

Best Practices in Course Materials

1. The NDSU Bookstore is here to help with all your course material needs!
2. If digital course materials work well for your course, save your students money with NDSU’s Inclusive Access program.
3. The NDSU Bookstore supports faculty academic freedom and affordable course materials for all students.

Moving Your Technologies/Ideas From Lab To Market With I-Corps

1. Get Out of the Lab: By going out and talking to your potential customers and end users, you will gain a stronger understanding of the daily problems they experience and how your project could help alleviate those issues.
2. Keep an Open Mind: You may think you know exactly who will use your research, but you will be surprised when you go out and interview people. By keeping an open mind and listening to your interviewees, you can gain a much stronger understanding of their needs and areas that your research could grow.
3. Utilize Your Resources: Recognize the various networks and channels you have available to you, and put them to good use to find stakeholders to

talk to. Is there a trade show or conference coming up? Attend it and gain some great perspectives from others working in your field.

The Art of Recruitment: Creative Strategies For Recruiting Prospective Students

1. During recruitment events, offer a broad description of the program. Highlight key aspects such as curriculum structure, specializations and unique features like dual degrees or certifications. This helps prospective students understand the full scope of what your program offers and how it aligns with their career goals.
2. Include experiential activities, such as interactive workshops, lab demonstrations, or simulation exercises, in your recruitment events. These hands-on elements give prospective students a tangible sense of what studying in your program will be like and showcase the practical skills they will develop. This can be particularly engaging and help differentiate your program from others.
3. Utilize current students and alumni to participate in recruitment efforts. They can share their personal experiences, achievements, and insights, making the program more relatable and accessible. Featuring "cool" students and successful alumni in these events or on your digital platforms can inspire prospective students and provide real-world examples of the program's impact on career paths and professional success.

Managing Conflict With Emotional Intelligence

1. You have innate emotional intelligence AND you can improve it.
2. Emotional intelligence focuses on both personal competencies and social competencies.
3. There are multiple intelligences and they are complex.

Unlocking Success: Maximizing the Power of Generationally Diverse Teams

1. When collaborating with a generationally diverse group, it's crucial to reflect on your own assumptions and biases. Consider how generational stereotypes might unconsciously shape the way you interact with others.
2. To foster a truly cohesive team, focus on finding a shared purpose that everyone can rally around. This collective goal will channel the team's diverse passions into effective collaboration.
3. Make it a point to share your expertise openly and be equally eager to learn from the expertise of others. Remember, everyone brings unique skills and talents to the table. By fully embracing and leveraging this diversity, your team can achieve more robust and innovative outcomes.

Artificial Intelligence in Application

1. If you are going to use software, be sure to check for FERPA Compliant Software.
2. Although there are many benefits remember that it is a suspension of reality.
3. Be creative!

Starting the Difficult Conversation

1. When preparing for a difficult conversation, be sure to start with you first.
2. Take time to prepare or think about what you will say during your conversation.
3. Create an environment where everyone is talking.

All About The Center For Accessibility and Disability Resources (CADR)

1. Learn about different processes that The Center for Accessibility and Disability Resources supports students and staff.
2. Gain knowledge on the framework of Universal Design for Learning.
3. Gather some insight on quick and fast ways to create an accessible classroom looking through the lens of Universal Design for Learning.

Why “Laziness” Might Be A Myth

1. The next time you notice you may be frustrated with a student, it may be helpful to reflect on if you are blaming them as a person or the situation.
2. How might you use your knowledge of intrinsic motivation to both design your class and better understand student behavior?
3. The presence of co-creation and shared responsibility for learning can be a deeply motivating learning environment for students.

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

Notes

This image shows a blank sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

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TEACHING & LEARNING CONFERENCE TIPS

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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

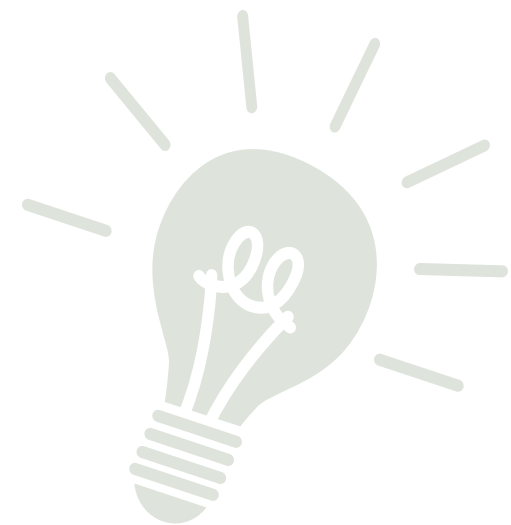
Effectively using case studies in the classroom can enhance critical thinking and communication skills.

Understand Teacher Development

Teacher development is a process.

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

Teacher burnout impacts development.



For more information or assistance, contact:

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TEACHING & LEARNING CONFERENCE TIPS

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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/ndsuoatl.

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.

Cyclic: 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.

*Cyclic 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.

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/other 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: Understand 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.

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.

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 those 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? Giving 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.

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.

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 to:

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.

Co-Create Class Expectations

Allow students the opportunity to understand and add to what the expectations of a class are. This gives them responsibility and helps them understand what their role as a student is and what the teacher's role is.

Connect 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 book? If you could remove one stressor from your life, what would it be?
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 as a 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 growing. 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. Self-care day: 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 and a part of a community that cares.

E.g. Ask yourself questions like “Do students feel as though they belong?”, “What is my part in that sense of belonging?”, and “What intentions and actions are being reflected in my classroom?” These all give you a place to start when thinking about retention and how you can be an active part of influencing students in a positive way.

Showcase Optimism and Excitement

Hindering the building of community is the fact that some students feel and even know that some professors do not want to be in their classroom and that they would much rather be spending their time working on other things such as research. This makes it hard for students to feel that important connection to campus, especially when professors are blatant about how much they do not like teaching or dealing with undergraduates.

Be Honest About Courses

Generally, students do not understand what it really takes to teach a class at the undergraduate level. Being open with students without revealing too many personal or work-related details will key students in on just what it takes and will make them more sympathetic to your struggles and will encourage students to respect your time. This means if students know you cannot see them this week, they have an opportunity to plan ahead and be understanding of your busy schedule.

Course Materials

Make an easy to follow schedule and syllabus that are linked together with assignments makes the transition into the NDSU community easier since it gives them a clear structure to follow that guides them in a new environment that might seem daunting. Reassuring students with clear and concise materials like these 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. Help them see this by highlighting successful students. 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.

Miscellaneous Teaching Tips

Here are some tips every instructor should keep in mind!

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 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.

Examples of students who need or would benefit from these courses are students who are parents, are sick, work full-time, have health issues or disabilities, lost a family member or are having a family emergency.

Ungrading

When students focus on learning rather than solely the grades they retain information and get more value out of course content. This is especially true when considering that at the college level, their grade is their own responsibility. This means if there is an opportunity to guide from the sidelines and be solely a resource and mentor, those opportunities should be taken to encourage students to work and achieve through their own volition. Keeping this in mind, you should strive to provide extensive feedback to students.

Make Courses More Affordable

If you are able, give students open and free resources online via NDSU licenses, this can be a great way to avoid students having to buy textbooks. This ensures students who can not afford a textbook stay in class, since the materials and resources are free and easily accessible.

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.

Reasons to Look at the Syllabus

Give students a reason to look at the syllabus. Offer an assignment where students look for typos or a 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 quick and easy.
 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.

For more information or assistance, contact:

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www.ndsu.edu/otl/faculty_resources/getting_started

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TEACHING & LEARNING CONFERENCE TIPS

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OFFICE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

The following tips you can incorporate into your class are taken from the sessions offered in the 2022 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/ndsuoatl.

Videos in Classes

1. The four types of videos you can use in your course are: microvideos, tutorials, lectures, and screencasts.
2. Adding video to a course increases engagement and is 83% more effective for retaining information.
3. Pre-recorded videos allows students to rewatch or prewatch videos to learn in their own way and time.
4. Offering videos reduces cognitive overload for your students.

Mental Models or Systems Models

5. Mental models or systems models are the top student-ranked most helpful technique or strategy, even when the instructor isn't using it in their class.
6. Mental models help you evaluate the starting points of your students. If students can work backwards, forwards, and in all directions within a concept, then they have deep understanding.
7. Mental models work best over time and in groups. It is cognitively demanding to work alone.

Alternative Grading

8. Equitable grading strategies include: optional retakes, which can be split out by topic; flexible deadlines; limited grading of behaviors; equitable grading scales; and ungraded formative assessments.
9. Use homework and class time as opportunities for learning and feedback. Learning happens through mistakes.
10. Grades promote risk aversion and encourage performance over mastery. Grading everything equates to constant judging.

Adult Learners

11. In adult learning you are the facilitator who helps students navigate their learning.
12. You can promote independent learning in your class by slowly removing supports throughout the semester.
13. Connect adult student's learning with life experiences.
14. Adult learners tend to learn more from their peers.
15. Practice the See, Do & Teach method with adult learners because they learn better when they have to teach someone else a concept.

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 and grammar usage when the concepts are 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 their own 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 touring 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 can adjust 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 many examples of why 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 answer choices. Students then 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 from 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.

Use of Video In Your Course

48. You can use video to: encourage effective learning strategies, provide personal and direct feedback, and foster a sense of community.

49. Ask your students to connect a concept to something in their life, have them post a video discussing it.
50. 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)

51. 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.
52. 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.
53. Some of these everyday learning experiences can activate a trauma response: lack of choice, team building, unclear rules, ambiguity, and forced sharing.
54. Conduct a trauma walk through on your classes. There are formal assessment tools available to help with this.
55. 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.
56. 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; absenteeism; 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
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www.ndsu.edu/otl

2021
EDITION!

TEACHING & LEARNING CONFERENCE TIPS

The following tips, you can incorporate into your class, are taken from the sessions offered in the 2021 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.

Teach With Empathy (Not Sympathy)

Sympathy is not empathy. Sympathy 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 I believe..." essay. You could also ask students to create their reflexivity statement.

Adopt A Growth Mindset

Help students adopt a growth mindset. This is the belief that I will need to persevere through difficulty before I succeed. The desire to work hard consistently with the courage to ask questions when confused.

Inclusive Course Policies

Design course policies that reflect a deep understanding of students' personal and social situations – Incorporate course policies for greater inclusion and equity. Inclusive and equitable teaching provides opportunities for success for students from ALL identities.

Build Trust With Your Students

Trust your students, assume they are trying their best. Recognize each student has different pressures on their time and energy. Help your students understand the learning goals. Tell them the "why" behind each assessment.

Collaborate With Students

Let students lead the learning process by collaborating with students to discuss progress on meeting their learning goals. Invite students to set personal learning goals within the domains of the course. Enable students to complete self evaluations and reflections across the semester. You might also reconsider strict deadlines.

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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. Allow for students to have easy, accessible, and organized materials on Blackboard.

Be Flexible With Your Students

Flexibility improves the learning experience of your students. Post notes, assignments, class materials at least 5-7 days before deadlines. Provide structure by having assignment deadlines but have a flexible deadline policy. Allowing students to resubmit assignments or retake tests increases their motivation to learn.

Create An Engaging Learning Environment

Using a variety of ways to display and provide information is optimal for desired learning outcomes. 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. Sylvio May presents finger puppets alongside his presentations about the specific scientist being discussed. Dr. Beena Ajmera 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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www.ndsu.edu/otl

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. Spaces 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 to discuss 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 undergrads 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.

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Week 9

Take a look at your [Degree Map](#) and familiarize yourself with the academic requirements for your major. You can plan a tentative list of classes to discuss with your advisor. (<https://ndsudm.civitaslearning.com/>)

Week 10

Think about Spring registration and meet with your academic advisor.

Week 11

Take note of your current grade in the class and remaining work. Do you need to consider a withdraw from the course? Discuss options with your instructor and advisor. (Put a note on the syllabus/weekly tip that you are willing and open to chat. Students may need the reminder it's okay to visit.)

Week 12

Check your Campus Connection account for any holds that may prevent timely registration for next semester. (<https://www.ndsu.edu/onestop/holds>)

Week 13

Register for classes as close to your assigned registration time for best availability of classes and class times. (<https://www.ndsu.edu/onestop/registration>)

Week 14

Put together a study plan for final exams.

Week 15

Make use of any study sessions offered. (List study sessions for your class.)

Week 16

Reflect on how the semester went and what adjustments you might want to make.

Inspired by an NDSU OTL We Learn Together Blog post titled, Being First, in which a student named Hajira greatly benefitted from the little hints her instructor gave.

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701-231-7015 | ndsu.otl@ndsu.edu
www.ndsu.edu/otl/faculty_resources/getting_started

CREATING ACCESSIBLE DOCUMENTS

Email - Microsoft Outlook

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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 step-by-step instructions on [how to fix accessibility issues](#), and further explanation on why these are important. Use this quick tips sheet to meet the basic accessibility requirements.

Include Alt Text With All Visuals

Why: For screen reader users, alternative text helps to communicate what is important in images and other visuals. Alt 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: Screen readers cannot read images or infographics 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.

Use A Larger Font Size

Why: People who have dyslexia describe seeing text "swim together" on a page (the compressing of one line of text into the line below). They often see text merge or distort. To reduce their reading load use a larger font size, 11pt or larger.

- » **How:** Click on the font size bar > Select a font size of 11pt or larger

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 > In the search bar type "Accessible Content" > Click on Accessible Content > Select the "Ask senders to send content that's accessible" checkbox > Click save

For more information or assistance, contact:

NDSU Office of Teaching and Learning
701-231-7015 | ndsuo.tl@ndsuo.edu

www.ndsu.edu/otl/faculty_resources/course_design/course_materials

CREATING ACCESSIBLE DOCUMENTS

Microsoft Word

Use this list to check for common accessibility issues in Microsoft Word documents. 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.

Insert Document Titles

Why: Document titles provide information on what a screen reader is reading.

- » **How:** File menu > Properties > Summary > Title > Enter 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 wonder if they have missed important information.

- » **How:** Click image > Picture Format menu > Format Pane > Layout & Properties () > Alt text > Simple images, fill in title, 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 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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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 70% tint for your gray/black 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 struggle to see 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.

Watch For Extra Spaces After Words

Why: Extra spaces after words or sentences are read by a screen reader as either "space" or "blank." Neither convey meaning and can contribute to confusion.

- » **How:** Make an effort to NOT add spaces after sentences; and, add, "check for extra spaces," to your editing process. Place cursor at the end of each paragraph, use the right arrow key to see if there are extra spaces, and delete any you find.

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www.ndsu.edu/otl/faculty_resources/course_design/course_materials

CREATING ACCESSIBLE DOCUMENTS

Microsoft PowerPoint

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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 () in the left pane > Alt text > fill in title and description explaining the object or image.

Use Table Headers

Why: Table headers explain the information in columns a screen reader reads. Without table headers, a screen reader would not be able to correctly read the table.

- » **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

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

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

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 struggle to see 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.

For more information or assistance, contact:

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www.ndsu.edu/otl/faculty_resources/course_design/course_materials

CREATING ACCESSIBLE DOCUMENTS

PDFs

Use this list to make sure the final PDF document is accessible when converting documents into a PDF file. The first and most important thing is to ensure the document you are converting follows all accessibility standards. Once you have made sure there are no accessibility issues, follow these steps. The most common adjustments will be discussed below.

Save A Document As PDF

Why: In order to preserve the accessibility changes made in the PowerPoint or Word document, the PDF conversion has to be done in a specific way.

- » **How(For Mac):** Click file > Save As > Select PDF from the file format dropdown > In Microsoft word check the box labeled “Best for electronic distribution and accessibility” > Save.
- » **How(For Windows):** Click file > Save As > Select PDF from the file format dropdown > Options > In Microsoft word check the box labeled “Document structure tags for accessibility” > Ok > Click save.

Use The Accessibility Checker Feature

Why: The Accessibility Checker feature will automatically check to see if there are any accessibility errors. If you have used the accessibility checker features in other platforms, you will have minimal adjustments to make in a PDF.

- » **How:** Click Tools > Accessibility > Accessibility Checker > Start checking > The system will automatically check for accessibility issues and show if there are any issues. To resolve issues simply Right Click on the unresolved issue > Click Fix.

Add A Title To The Document

Why: Having a document title makes it easier for someone using a screen reader to know what document they are listening to. If you missed this, you can still do this during the PDF accessibility check.

- » **How:** Click Document > Title > Control + Click > Fix > Uncheck “Leave as is” and change document title.

Set The Appropriate Reading Language

Why: An appropriate language must be selected in the PDF properties so that the screen reader knows what language to read in.

- » **How:** Click File > Properties > Advanced > Reading Options > Select “English” or the appropriate language the document is written in.

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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 sighted and low sighted individuals. This means dark text on a light background or light text on a dark background.

- » **How(For Mac):** 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 Windows):** 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 + ctrl 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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LITTLE HINTS FOR INSTRUCTORS

Get off to a great start and keep the momentum going with these helpful hints for your classes this semester.

💡 Week 1

TIP 1: Check on your books and materials in the NDSU Bookstore to ensure the books are in and there are adequate numbers for your course enrollment.
TIP 2: Provide a tour for your students in Blackboard to show them how you will use it and where to find important items. You can do this during a class session, record a video and post it in Blackboard, or provide a written guide.

💡 Week 2

Administer a survey to get to know your students better and support their learning. A survey template is available in the Qualtrics NDSU Library. [See sample items.](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1RmqzI9yZWTOz2mMqzwiE4K31LL-kcwrn/view)

💡 Week 3

Help your students get to know one another by using group activities to learn the content and allotting the first minute or two for introductions and sharing.

💡 Week 4

Your students will learn better and are more likely to retain the information when they can experience the content by seeing, hearing, saying, and writing. We often only plan for the seeing and hearing. Include activities during class that allow students to write and speak about the content.

💡 Week 5

Learn more about the Student Course Experience Surveys your students will be asked to complete at the end of the semester.

💡 Week 6

Spring semester course materials orders are due November 1st. The NDSU Bookstore is required by law to list all course materials for all NDSU courses.

💡 Week 7

Prepare and administer a midterm feedback questionnaire in your classes. A survey template is available in the Qualtrics NDSU Library. [It can be as simple as this.](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1EYWHdHSzNE9PTvXlbnxo19swOD3Yud69d/view)

💡 Week 8

Share the midterm feedback and how you will address any concerns with your students so they know you are listening.

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💡 Week 9

Students will learn more when they receive narrative feedback that tells them what they are doing well and how they can improve.

💡 Week 10

Want help building your final assessment? Consultants in the Office of Teaching and Learning can help, whether it's a traditional exam or a performance assessment.

💡 Week 11

Keep notes about what is going well with your class and what you want to change for next time. We think we will remember, but when it gets busy, it's easy to forget.

💡 Week 12

Have you kept your grade center up to date? If not, now's a good time to catch up and communicate with students to let them know where they are at in the class.

💡 Week 13

Sign up for Peer Teaching Partnership for the next semester. Select either the formal or informal track. [Learn more.](http://www.ndsu.edu/otl/programs/peer_teaching)

💡 Week 14

Set your students up for success by holding office hours for additional study time for the final exam or, if students are completing projects, workshop time to consult with you and receive feedback.

💡 Week 15

Avoid getting numerous emails from students by posting the timeline for posting grades for the final assessment and course.

💡 Week 16

Even though it's tempting to disconnect immediately after finishing up the class, take a few minutes to revise your syllabus for next time while everything is still fresh in your mind.

PERFORMANCE OBJECTIVES

What should the students be able to do?

What are instructional objectives?

Also often referred to as learning objectives and performance objectives.

- » Instructional objectives are specific, measurable, short-term, observable student behaviors.
- » An objective is a description of a performance you want learners to be able to exhibit before you consider them competent.
- » An objective describes an intended result of instruction, rather than the process of instruction itself.

Writing objectives for using Bloom's Taxonomy and associated action or performance verbs.

Learning Level	Associated Action Verbs
Knowledge	define, describe, state, list, name, write, recall, recognize, label, underline, 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

Parts of a performance objective:

Answer the question: "What should the students be able to do?"

Objective: The students will be able to infer the developmental needs of a child by documenting evidence aligned with developmental theory.

Adapted from resources found at:

www.bu.edu/cme/forms/RSS_forms/tips_for_writing_objectives.pdf
<https://tips.uark.edu/using-blooms-taxonomy/>

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The students will be able to	determine the development needs of a child	by documenting evidence aligned with developmental theory.
Audience: Standard introduction for an objective. Hint: Focus on the students, not the teacher.	Behavior/Action Verb that is measurable and can be assessed. What is the learner to do? Content- description of the subject matter to be learned. Hint: Must specify observable and measurable behaviors.	Condition to be met by the students in order to demonstrate that the objective has been achieved. Hint: Describes the circumstances, situation or setting.

Sample Performance Objectives:

- » The students will be able to draw inferences about the causes of WWII.
- » The students will be able to identify the verbs in sentences.
- » The students will be able to explain the purpose of a given text.
- » The students will be able to apply the principles of design to a poster.
- » The students will be able to categorize rocks by type.
- » The students will be able to describe the habitats of various animals.
- » The students will be able to predict the outcome of habitat changes.
- » The students will be able to accurately measure wet and dry ingredients.
- » The students will be able to select the correct plant types to be grown in a particular environment.

The following are NOT observable or measurable performance objectives:

- » Appreciate the beauty of a circuit
- » Understand relativity theory
- » Be familiar with the law
- » Understand the process of osmosis
- » Enjoy speaking French
- » Learn about erosion
- » Listen to the lecture

For more information or assistance, contact:

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701-231-7015 | ndsu.otl@ndsu.edu
www.ndsu.edu/otl/faculty_resources/getting_started

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WRITING COURSE OBJECTIVES

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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?

Example
The <u>students</u> will determine the <u>developmental needs</u> of <u>children</u> across all domains. » <u>Student-centered</u> —it states specifically what that students will be able to do. » It includes a measurable action verb » It identifies the <u>content</u> 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 and lead the student toward the corresponding course objective.

For example:

- Course Objective— The students will determine the developmental needs of children across all domains.
- » Session Objective—The students will recall the developmental domains. (knowledge)
 - » Session Objective—The students will list the common characteristics of the stages of cognitive development. (knowledge)
 - » Session Objective—The students will recognize developmental delays. (evaluate)
 - » Session Objective—The students will create a therapy plan for a child with developmental delays. (synthesis)

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 verb needed for writing effective objectives. The following chart provides the six learning levels and examples of aligned performance verbs.

Learning Level	Associated Action Verbs
Knowledge	define, describe, state, list, name, write, recall, recognize, label, underline, 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

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TIPS FOR FILMING VIDEOS

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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

An easy way to do this is to have a solid-colored background like a blank wall. If you do not have or do not want to use a clean background, be sure to check that background elements in the camera frame are representative of the message you want to send and are not distracting.

Film with minimal background noise

Depending on the microphone sensitivity, lots of times microphones will record random noises like a fan, traffic, or background conversations. Record in a place free from those background noises.

Have good audio recording device

Borrow a microphone if needed and connect it to the camera. The Office of Teaching and Learning has microphones available to borrow.

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.

Appear natural in front of the camera

Try to appear as natural as possible. Use open body language. Maintain good posture. Keep your shoulders relaxed. Avoid crossing your arms since this makes you look closed-off.

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.

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GETTING OFF TO A GOOD START

Helping All Learners Feel Welcome

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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 all 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 a conversion chart or glossary, etc.
- » Finally, consider creating a personal introduction for your students and inviting them to do the same. For example, post a photo and brief welcome that includes a glimpse into your interests and hobbies.

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 intentionality.

- » 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?



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GETTING OFF TO A GOOD START

Engaging Learners

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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.

Student Value

¹ Fisher, D., Frey, N., Quaglia, R. J., Smith, D., & Lande, L. L. (2018). Engagement by design: Creating learning environments where students thrive. Corwin.

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

Managing Your Account

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>

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.
- » Then find “Account settings.”
- » Look for Time Zones. The default is Mountain Time.
- » 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).

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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. By checking that box a column will appear with the name of the owner of each survey listed.

QUALTRICS

The Basics

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 the 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.

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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.

Copying and Pasting

To achieve a consistent look in your survey when you are copying and pasting text you will 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 tools, but it applies to the entire survey, so if you use it, you will need to redo any special formatting in the survey.

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QUALTRICS

Advanced Survey Set Up

Here are some tips for intermediate and advanced users.

Ensure A Survey Is Only Taken Once

There are times when you may want to ensure individuals take your survey only one time. To do this:

- » 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 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.

When you are finished there should be a PDF link in the body of the email.

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Create A Loop & Merge Block

Loop and merge is based on a question that requires a number entered as an answer. The numeric question would be on a separate block from the loop and merge. For instance, How many pets do you have? loop and merge questions would repeat based on the number you entered. If you answered 3 pets, it loops back to the question, What is your pet’s name?, two additional times.

To create a loop and merge:

- » Make your numeric question required.
- » Make another block with the questions you want to repeat.
- » Highlight the entire block and look to the left for Block behavior, similar to Loop & Merge.
- » Enable Loop & Merge.
- » Select the option “Loop” based on a question and select the question in which you want to base Loop & Merge on
- » Select Choice and Maximum Loops.
- » You can delete Field 2 if you don’t need more than Field 1.
- » Save
- » You can pipe the Field 1 (Click where you want to put the Field 1 and then click on Rich Content Editor) by each question in the Loop & Merge. followed by {A} icon to pipe find Loop & Merge and Loop & Merge Fields. This will indicate which loop the question is on.

Have A Survey Redirect To Another Survey

If you are doing a drawing or collecting personal data after a survey, this is a good setup to keep everything anonymous.

- » On the first survey you will click the bottom Block that says “End of Survey.”
- » To the left you will see “Messaging” and a drop down list.
- » Click “Redirect to URL.”
- » Paste a second survey link in the “Website URL” box.
- » Publish the first survey.

Recode The Values Of Choices

The default for the first choice in Qualtrics is 1. However, if you begin with a positive scale, you will want that value to be the highest. To do this:

- » Make sure the question is checked.
- » On the left select “Question behavior” & “Recode values.”
- » Renumber the choices.

Create a Survey Key

Survey keys are created to ensure questions are correctly coded. You also need to send this to the statistics department or anyone else who is assisting you with survey analysis. The document will show you blocks, skip logics, and display logics. The values are in parenthesis.

- » Keep your survey open.
- » Look for “Tools” menu.
- » Select “Import/export” and “Export survey.”
- » Select “Export survey to Word.” Accept all defaults.
- » Click “Export.”

Auto-Renumber Your Survey

Once you’ve finished editing your survey you can auto-renumber your questions. Here’s how:

- » Have your survey open.
- » Look for the “Tools” menu.
- » Select “Auto-number questions.”
- » Select “Sequential Numbering.”

Set Up A Pre And Post Survey

With a pre and post survey you can compare the data without asking the respondent for a code, which means you must use the same Qualtrics panel/contacts.

Start with your pre survey and go to the survey flow:

- » Click “Add a New Element Here.”
- » Click “Embedded Data.”
- » Pick from the “Survey Metadata” drop down and scroll until you find “Recipient ID.”
- » Add a New Field.
- » Type “ID” in the first box and “Value” will be piped. Click on the down arrow to find “Insert Piped Text” and look for “Embedded Data Field.” Type in the box RecipientID and click Insert.
- » Move the “Set Embedded Data” block to the top so it is the first thing in the survey flow.
- » Apply the changes.
- » Repeat the steps for the post survey.

When it comes to “Distributions,” you must use the same Qualtrics Distributions email and panel for both surveys. If you check the “Anonymize responses” box, the survey remains anonymous, but you will see the ID in a column where you can compare the data.

Produce Survey Printouts

To produce a survey printout that accurately reflects what respondents view, do the following:

- » Have the survey open.
- » Look for “Tools” menu.
- » Select “Import/Export.”
- » Select “Print Survey.”

Anonymize Responses

The anonymize responses option doesn’t record the survey taker’s IP address, location data, or contact information. Once you turn on the Anonymize responses option, your respondents’ identifying information is hidden. If this setting is turned on before a response is recorded, that response’s identifying information is not retrievable. If this setting was turned on after a response was recorded, the response’s identifying information will be retrievable.

If you send the link through Qualtrics email you can still see who has responded to your survey by looking at the “Distributions email history” which is under the drop-down arrow of your invite.

To turn on anonymize responses:

- » Have your survey open.
- » Go to “survey options.”
- » Select the “Security tab.”
- » Scroll to the bottom.
- » Turn on Anonymize responses.

How To Find More Help Documents

NDSU offers a wealth of help documents for the Qualtrics survey software. Here are several ways to get additional assistance:

- » Search the ITS Knowledge Base using “Qualtrics” as a search term. You will bring up dozens of articles with answers to common NDSU usage questions. Access the knowledge base at >> <https://kb.ndsu.edu/>
- » View the OTL YouTube channel for tutorial videos on Qualtrics features. Visit the YouTube channel at >> <https://www.youtube.com/c/ndsuotl>

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RETENTION

Ideas for Retaining Students

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Ensuring students stay, move through a program of study, and receive their degree is the cornerstone of higher education. You, the instructor, play a pivotal role in student retention. What follows is a list of ways you can help retain students which was taken from our Idea Exchange session on Retention.

1. Tell students what you are grading and when they can expect their grades.
2. Give assignments back before you grade the next assignment so students can use your feedback to improve on the next assignment.
3. Offer a one-minute paper on what students learned, what stood out, what didn't make any sense, what questions do they still have. Then start the next class with that information. Student Course Experience survey results go up as a result.
4. Students are overwhelmed when coming into a large lecture. Find ways to connect with those students and build community to build a sense of cohesion and belonging.
5. Make your students feel safe so they can focus on learning.
6. As a way for you to learn names, have students introduce themselves using a video. They can also watch each other's videos to build community.
7. 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.
8. Call your office hours, student hours or drop-in help hours so it is very clear to students what that means.
9. For office hours, sit in a less intimidating location like the coffeeshop in the union or some other location so students feel comfortable coming to visit.
10. If allowed, bring your favorite pet to your office to draw students to your office hours and lower their stress level.
11. 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.)
12. Have students name why they are interested in going into the field they are and one thing they want you to know about them. Address this when they are settled in, around week three.
13. Students don't know what they don't know.
14. Tell students about resources that are available to them, then take them on a field trip to some of the key resources, so they know where to go. This instills confidence in seeking assistance.
15. Ask your students to tell something interesting about themselves and then ask about their interest.
16. Become more than just an instructor to your students

by showing them something about yourself. (e.g. a photo of your pet)

17. 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.
18. Have individuals in the workforce come speak with your students to keep them motivated to get to their career.
19. Remind students to take one step at a time to get through their degree program. They don't need to know everything about their degree, they will be introduced to the items they need as they get to them.
20. 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.
21. Focus on students in a program minor because some of those skills are applicable across careers.
22. Think about how the things that frustrate you as an instructor would impact your students. Remind students to be patient in those frustrating situations. Also, try to identify ways to minimize those frustrations for your students.
23. Offer clear expectations for the assignments in your class. Create a rubric so that students know what to do. Clear expectations helps avoid frustrations.
24. Identify and work to fix hurdles for students in their specific program.
25. Recognize there is a level of growth that happens when a student first gets to campus.
26. Help students develop resiliency so they are able to deal with challenges when they come up.
27. The first few weeks of school are most important for ensuring students know the resources available & how to access them. This can contribute to their sense of belonging & their ability to work through any discomfort the student experience may present for them.

For more information or assistance, contact:

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NEURODIVERSITY

Ideas for Serving & Retaining Neurodiverse Students

NDSU OFFICE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Neurodiversity consists of individuals whose brain processes information differently than a typical brain would. Individuals may have development delays, be on the autism spectrum, have adhd, have dyslexia, are gifted, or have a number of other diagnosis. Many of the tips here focus on autism but these tips are good for most neurodiverse students. This collection of tips for working with neurodiverse students in taken from the sessions offered in our neurodiversity faculty development series.

1. Ask and remember whether a student prefers person first language (e.g. student with autism) or identity first language (e.g. autistic student) and how they prefer to be addressed.
2. In 2023, 1 in 36 children at age 8 have an autism diagnosis, compared to 1 in 150 in 2002. This means that a significant number of students coming to college in the future will be neurodiverse.
3. The autistic brain processes information at a conscious level, whereas a typical brain processes about 80 percent of information at the subconscious level. This conscious processing of information can lead to the sensory overload you might see.
4. Students with autism struggle with being overwhelmed, time management, organization, multi-tasking, task initiation, follow through, managing deadlines, and handing in assignments. Design your course with this in mind.
5. Neurodiverse students may also struggle with presentations, group work, and writing. Assist students when and where it is appropriate in your class.
6. Disclosing to your students if you are neurodiverse may help them feel more understood. But do this only if you are comfortable with that disclosure.
7. Examine your course and see if you are ready for a neurodiverse student population. If not, make some of the following small adjustments that are good for all learners.
8. Offer a very clear syllabus and if dates need to be moved around, update your syllabus and repost it rather than telling your students to modify their syllabus. Doing so offers clarity on dates and deadlines.
9. Offer interim deadlines so that students will know when they should have specific items completed. For example, first draft is due by, final draft is due by...
10. Meet individually with a student as needed. Provide a short overview of what you will be meeting about. Sit side by side facing the same direction as them. Use a whiteboard to post instructions that they can take a photo of. Speak slower when providing instructions to allow for slower processing speeds.

11. Provide progress reports so that students know how they are doing in a class if there have been no grades posted.
12. Allow students to step out of class to take breaks as needed.
13. Allow students to bring sensory objects that help them focus or stay calm in class.
14. If students struggle with social anxiety, offer them alternatives to presentations (as appropriate). For example, allow them to videotape or present in a webinar format. Or even have them present to a smaller group.
15. If students struggle with group work, which can present in many ways, consider selecting groups and dividing tasks ahead of time. Neurodiverse students may struggle with those type of tasks. Assign a TA or GA to monitor group dynamics and ensure no one is being bullied or being a bully. Or, allow students to work alone if they prefer that and it doesn't affect the intended learning.
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 meltdowns. You can alleviate these behaviors by offering clear concrete, classroom expectations, having a designated note taker for when students need a break, offer civility points for discussions, and help students know when they are getting off topic. If there are meltdowns you should speak calmly and quietly to them, offer a quiet space for them to recover, don't argue with them, don't touch them, and if necessary contact a point person/parent or guardian.

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GEN Z STUDENTS

Ideas for Serving & Retaining Gen Z Students

NDSU OFFICE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

Generation Z consists of individuals who were born between 2001 and 2010. Many of these students are in college now or will be entering college soon. This collection of tips is for understanding and working with Generation Z students. Tips are taken from the sessions offered in our Gen Z faculty development series.

1. Gen Z students are considered the first generation to have never known a world without technology. It is said they “were born with a device in their hand.”
2. They seek personalized, value-added education experiences, are socially conscious and focus their education on their career and future.
3. They want to know the “why” of what they are learning.
4. They are visual, tech saavy, gamers, social, demanding, goal directed, and self-reliant.
5. Students are not willing to spend time attending class if lectures are passive and they can get the information later. For example, if your lectures are made available online they may choose to skip class and watch the lecture on their own time.
6. Getting them to attend class may be as simple as providing an engaging reason why they should know the content you are teaching. Find a way to let them dive in to the content and problem solve.
7. Rethink the way you teach them. Our speaker called this “the meddler in the middle” instead of the “guide on the side.”
8. How can you maximize the contact time you have with students?
9. For each learning objective stop and ask how would my students best learn this, then design a classroom activity around the “why.”
10. Make the content personally relevant and meaningful by presenting tough questions or case studies that students connect with and will connect them with the learning objectives. This fuels a desire to do further research and reading. Encourage them to use their devices in class to support their research on the topic. AI software can help design case studies or thought provoking questions.
11. Help your students be engaged in discussion by forming a classroom community.
12. Let students know how the case studies or information presented will help them in their future careers or their personal life.
13. Ask students to bring examples of the concept you are teaching, this allows you to see that they are connecting the concepts with their world.
14. When asking students to reflect on their learning, allow them to pick how they will achieve that.
15. Allow your students to use their technology to research on the fly as part of discussions in your class.
16. You do not have to use any specific technology, they are familiar and comfortable learning using almost any type of technology.

17. Students are motivated to attend class for many of the reasons listed here, but also if they receive points for attending.
18. Regarding group projects, students want groups assigned at the beginning of class so they sit with the same people to form a small community they trust which makes doing group work easier. Successful group projects are ones that require brainstorming or sharing of ideas to complete the task rather than writing reports or doing presentations. They want to be able to offer feedback on the group work so students do not receive the same grade for not doing any of the work.
19. Consider how much reading you are asking a student to do and be aware they may have multiple courses asking them to do them same. If you assign readings, make them meaningful so students will prioritize the reading for your class. Many students have to choose which readings they will finish.
20. Bring in someone who currently works in the field to help connect the learning, but also to see how they structure their work.
21. Organized classes tend to relieve stress & anxiety most. Be sure your course has built in reminders and suggested dates for completion of work, especially if it is a 100-200-level class. Or offer a group project that teaches them how to create their own schedule for project completion.
22. Students reflected on what helped them learn most. Quiz retakes, one-to-one discussions, application of the content learned, and personal check-ins if they are not doing well in the class were strategies that helped them most.
23. Gen Z students want you to know that they are not lazy, they are just extremely efficient in their use of technology.
24. Show grace to your students during busy times, especially if you ask for grace during your own busy times.
25. If students do not see the value in an assignment they may not do it. Give an opportunity to improve on their work if they hand it in on time. Also, do not take away so many points for late work that student no longer see the value in turning in the assignment.
26. Let students know what they can come to talk to you about at office hours or via Zoom meeting sessions.

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STUDENT MENTAL HEALTH

How To Help Students

NDSU OFFICE OF TEACHING AND LEARNING

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 finding resources for a mental health condition or helping a student who is in crisis. Knowing where to find help and how to assist a student in need 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 genuine 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. Remember how 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 either of these questions. Get the student to the Counseling Center or call FirstLink.
7. Do not use use guilt to try to stop them or agree to keep their plan a secret.
8. Have the individual assist in seeking help. Who do they want to call to take them to the hospital? Where would they like to go? This allows them to feel more involved with the process and their treatment.
9. Self injury, in any form, is a coping mechanism to deal with the distress or pain they are feeling. If you notice a student who has been through a traumatic event encourage them to tell others what they need, seek help, and use positive coping strategies that have worked for them before.

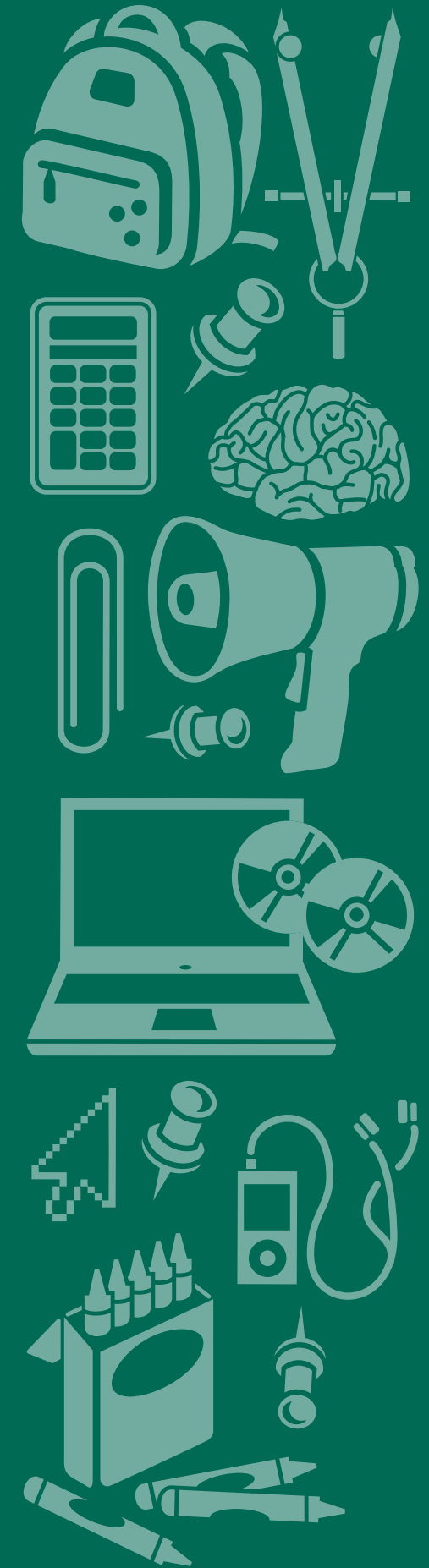
10. **L - Listen non-judgementally.** Show that your concern is genuine, have empathy, and show acceptance. Be attentive to their needs and make them as comfortable as possible. This may mean sitting down, adjusting eye contact, or having open body language.
11. **G - Give reassurance and information.** Treat the person with respect. Show them you care by periodically checking in with them but don't get overly involved or try to solve their problems.
12. **E - Encourage appropriate professional help.** Suggest they contact a primary care doctor, psychiatrist, counselor or psychologist. Remember NDSU's Counseling Center offers FREE support.
13. **E - Encourage self help and support from others.** Self help can include caring for oneself through exercise, nutrition, meditation, support groups, self-help books, and friends or family.
14. Watch for these signs: fatigue, sleeping too much or too little, eating issues, unexplained pains, crying, isolation, slow movements, etc.
15. Think of depression as worries about the past and anxiety as worries about the future.
16. Depression contributes to students not returning to college in future semesters or years.
17. Know that panic attacks feel real to the person having them but they are not life threatening. The individual may have a pounding heart and start sweating.
18. 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 have had a panic attack before they will usually know what it is. Look for a medic alert bracelet that lists other conditions the student may have. Err on the side of a medical emergency if the student does not know what is happening and call for medical assistance.
19. If it is definitely a panic attack you can: Reassure the student that it is a panic attack, ask them how you can help, remain calm, speak in a reassuring manner, speak slowly and clearly, use short sentences, let them know it will pass, and avoid expressing negative thoughts.
20. NDSU's Counseling Center does not work with complex trauma, eating disorders, or substance use. However, they make referrals to an outside agencies.

21. Raising a student's distress tolerance is important so they are not seeking unhelpful ways of numbing their feelings which could include use of social media. Counselors want to see more normalization of mental health and the use of mental health professionals. This protects against a student's inclination to use social media for self-diagnosis and get an accurate diagnosis from a mental health professional.
22. It is important for students to see that instructors are participating in conversations around student mental health.
23. Know that mental health reels and stories on social 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.

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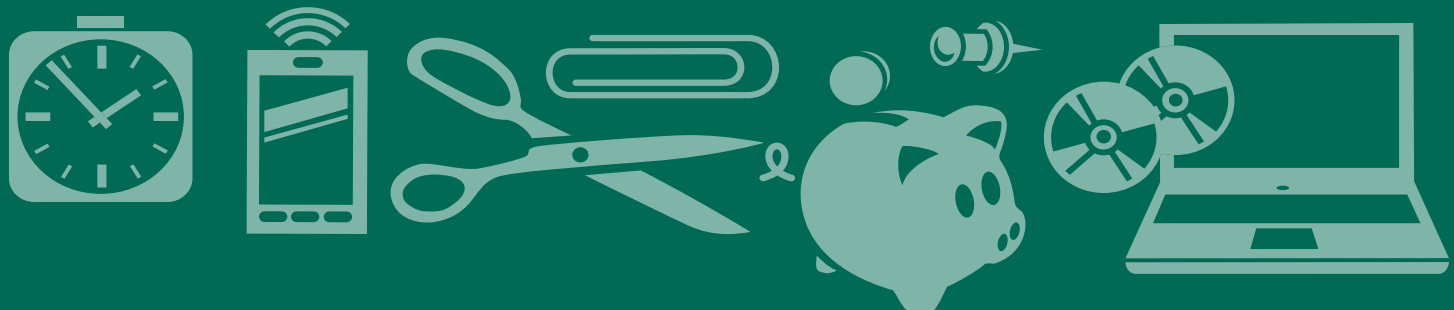
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