Navigating Successful Mentor-Mentee Relationships → PG. 3

Feature Article

Distance Learning Courses and Programs

Teaching Tips from Other Educators

Tips for Improving Course Evaluation Response Rates

www.nehpdpg.org
Join our closed group on Facebook: Nutrition Educators of Health Professionals to share ideas and network.
HEALTH FACT:
Spinach is a powerhouse when it comes to phytonutrients that promote optimal health and prevent disease. And, as spring arrives, fresh spinach is also one of the first vegetable crops available, even in cooler climates. Spinach is nutrient-dense with 2 cups of fresh baby spinach providing approximately 20 kcals, 2 grams of fiber, 275 mcg vitamin A RAE, and 25 mg vitamin C. A spinach and berries smoothie can make a healthy and tasty breakfast or snack!

Source: USDA Agricultural Research Service, National Nutrient Database for Standard Reference

Berries and Spinach Smoothie

INGREDIENTS:
2 cups frozen unsweetened strawberries
½ cup blueberries
1 banana cut in chunks
½ kiwi, sliced
2 cups fresh spinach
½ cup ice cubes
1 cup fat-free milk
½ cup 100-percent apple juice

DIRECTIONS:
1. Combine strawberries, blueberries, banana, kiwi, spinach, ice cubes, fat-free milk and apple juice in blender.
2. Blend until smooth.
3. Serve in a cup with low-fat or fat-free string cheese for a tasty treat.

Serving size: 1 cup
Serves 4

NUTRITION INFORMATION:
Calories: 100; Total Fat: 0g; Saturated Fat: 0g; Cholesterol: 0mg; Sodium: 45mg; Total Carbohydrate: 25g; Dietary Fiber: 4g; Protein: 3g; Calcium: 101mg

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**THE EDUCATOR’S RESOURCE**

**Nutrition Educators of Health Professionals**

a dietetic practice group of the

Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics

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Tips for effective distance learning

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Fellow Educators,

Depending on where you live, the spring term in higher education can include dealing with cancelled classes and weather-related campus closures. I have already experienced this in 2019. Thankfully, the opportunity for online engagement means that we can continue to educate without missing a step while we wait for the roads to clear.

This edition of The Educator’s Resource focuses on effective and successful distance learning programs. Maybe you teach only in a distance program. Maybe you have been teaching online as well as in-person for some time now. Or, maybe you are being asked to create an online course and have little experience with this engagement method. Regardless of where you are in your distance learning teaching, there is much benefit in exploring what others are doing.

Successful distance program development and engagement depends on many things, and you will find some great tips and ideas in this edition. One of the topics I most appreciate is mentoring. The Mentoring Infographic gives us some best practice ideas for a mentoring relationship. In distance learning programs, mentoring can be underused or unsupported for many reasons. Be sure to sign up for the Society of Nutrition Education and Behavior (SNEB) webinar on April 11th to learn more about effective mentoring practices and how to build effective mentoring relationships.

Whether we are new to considering online instruction or have done it for many years there are always things to learn, different ways to engage students, and new technology to incorporate as we stretch and grow as educators of health professionals.

Thank you for reading, and thank you to those who have contributed to our current topic! I hope you enjoy this edition of The Educator’s Resource!

Cecile

Interprofessional Education for the Health Professions

The Health Professions Accreditors Collaborative and the National Center for Interprofessional Practice and Education released Guiding Principles on Developing Quality Interprofessional Education for the Health Professions on February 1, 2019. The guidelines provide evidence-based recommendations to support development and implementation of quality interprofessional education. The full report can be found at: https://healthprofessionsaccreditors.org/ipe-guidance/.
Navigating Successful Mentor-Mentee Relationships

By: Katherine Gardner Burt, Brandy-Joe Milliron, Megan Patton-Lopez, and Mallory Koenings

Effective mentor-mentee relationships can be mutually beneficial but challenging to develop. Students or professionals early in their career may be unsure of or unclear how to approach potential mentors, while senior faculty or professionals may be unsure of their role or responsibilities to help mentees. To help nutrition students and professionals define steps and strategies to develop effective mentorship relationships and overcome challenges, the Society for Nutrition Education and Behavior is sponsoring a free webinar on April 11th.

This webinar will provide valuable information to persons at all stages of their career for developing effective mentor-mentee relationships. Challenges to developing effective relationships include, but are not limited to identifying effective mentor-mentee pairs, approaching potential mentors, lacking defined roles or clear goals/objectives, and effective time management for both parties. Webinar attendees will learn how to define expectations and goals, overcome aforementioned challenges, and take actionable steps toward developing an effective mentor-mentee relationship.

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**best practices for an effective mentoring relationship**

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Please join the Society of Nutrition Education's Higher Education Division webinar on April 11, 2019 (2-3 PM EST) to learn about these practices and how to build effective mentoring relationships.

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Tips for Improving Course Evaluation Response Rates

How can we improve course evaluation response rates in our online courses, and improve the quality of student feedback? According to Chapman & Joines,1 “Low response rates for online student evaluations of teaching are a recognized problem in higher education,” resulting in feedback that is not representative of the entire student population within a course. This lack of student feedback makes it difficult for online instructors to improve their courses.

To remedy that problem, the Instructional Designers in the Troy University’s College of Arts & Sciences (CAS) program researched strategies to boost response rates and solicited tips from faculty within the college who receive consistently high course evaluation response rates (85% response rate and above). These tips compiled below entice more students to participate in end-of-course evaluations and improve the quality of student feedback.

TIP #1: Extra Credit Enticements – The faculty receiving an 85%+ response rate for student evaluations of teaching all have one thing in common: They ALL give extra credit for students that complete the course evaluation. The amount of extra credit varies, and doesn’t seem to be an important factor. CAS instructors reported awarding from 0.5 (a half-point) to 5 points on a 500-point grading scheme to boost response rates, totaling less than 1% of the total grade in a course. Some of the instructors that award extra points indicated they use the honor system, while others asked for a screenshot of the survey completion page as proof a student had completed the task.

“Low response rates for online student evaluations of teaching are a recognized problem in higher education”
TIP #2: Tell ‘em why it matters – Being open and up front with your students makes a difference. Sharing with your students early in the term why course evaluations matter and that their feedback is used to improve upon the course gives them a sense of having a voice in the process. Always drive home the fact that course evaluations are 100% anonymous and, that they are not received until after the course is completed; therefore, course evaluations will not influence their final grade.

An example of a course announcement sharing these ideas is as follows:

“Hello (Name of Course) Scholars! Here’s an easy extra credit opportunity for you. For those that would like a half-point extra credit, complete the course evaluation you received earlier this week, and simply send me a note, or screenshot, that you have completed the course evaluation. It’s on the honor system, as I have no way of determining who completes the evaluations. The course evaluations are 100% anonymous, and we instructors generally receive them 3 months after the course has ended. We have no way of knowing who writes what as it is all compiled together. I VERY much value your ideas and feedback on what we’re doing right in this class and what could be improved upon, as does my supervisor. I would like to encourage each of you to take advantage of this easy extra credit opportunity.

Regards (name of professor)”

TIP #3: Ask for very specific feedback – When encouraging students to participate in the course evaluation, share with them that you care deeply about their feedback, and that specific feedback helps you learn as an instructor to grow and improve your teaching abilities. Then suggest certain aspects of the course that you would like feedback on – for example, some instructors asked students to identify one thing they enjoyed about the course and one thing that in the course that needed improvement (e.g., such as a discussion board they disliked), etc. Express to them that you value their feedback as a means to learn from your mistakes and to identify what you do well as an instructor. Implore them to be honest in their evaluations.

TIP #4: Reminders and more – Faculty who receive high-response rates in their course evaluations often remind their students to participate in the survey even up to the day before the course evaluations close. Encourage them to fill out the survey completely, especially the open-ended comments. Remind them that the survey responses are anonymous, and again assure them that you will not see the results until long after grades are posted and it will not affect their final grade.

TIP #5: Use the research – Existing research can provide a faculty member excellent strategies on boosting their course evaluation response rates. Through our research, we found helpful tips. The University of Buffalo (2018), suggests including information about the course evaluation in the course syllabus itself as well as adding the course evaluation due date into the course calendar. The University of Oregon, encourages instructors to make the evaluation an actual assignment, even if no point value is assigned. Instructors at Duquesne University found that conducting a mid-course evaluation helps identify areas for improvement, and also increases end-of-course evaluation response rates.

Creating a climate that fosters mutual respect between yourself as an instructor and your students gives your students a sense of value and may further entice them to participate, as does emphasizing the importance of evaluation feedback and how it is used to improve future offerings of a course. By enhancing communication through the five strategies above, online instructors may enjoy improved response rates and more in-depth feedback about their online courses.

REFERENCES
2. University at Buffalo. Improving Student Response Rates. Available at: https://www.buffalo.edu/course-evaluation/resources/response-rates.html
Distance Learning Courses and Programs: Teaching Tips from other educators!

While overall higher education enrollment has been declining in recent years, enrollment in distance education courses and programs continues to rise. According to the Babson Distance Education Enrollment Report of 2018, distance education enrollment increased by 5.6% from Fall 2015 to Fall 2016. Today, over 30% of higher education students take at least one distance learning course.

In 2016, over 6.4 million higher education students took at least one distance learning class. Approximately half (3.0 million) of these students were taking all of their courses through distance learning with the remaining (3.3 million) taking some, but not all, of their courses through distance learning.

Interestingly, between 2015 and 2016, distance learning enrollment increased by 7.3% at public institutions and by 7.1% at private non-profit institutions while declining by 4.5% at private for-profit institutions. In 2016, nearly 7 in 10 students were taking distance learning courses offered through public institutions.

This edition of The Educator’s Resource includes teaching tips from nutrition educators teaching distance learning courses and, in some cases, in distance learning nutrition programs. Let’s continue our conversation and best practice sharing on the closed NEHP Facebook page!

Source: Grade Increase: Tracking Distance Education in the United States: https://onlinelearningconsortium.org/read/annual-reports/

QUICK FACT: 30% of higher education students take at least one distance learning course.

PHOTO: PEXELS.COM
From the NEHP Facebook Page:

**Question:**

Have you ever found out that answer keys for case studies + question banks + exams, either your own or from a textbook, are available for free or for a cost to students online? What advice/ideas do you have for other educators on how overcome this challenge?

- **Member Comment:** I’ve found some assignments online that had incorrect answers and showed them in class to illustrate that you can’t always trust the information that you find online.
- **Member Comment:** [www.coursehero.com](http://www.coursehero.com) has my exact assignments with answers. Students either post things or pay to use the site. I’ve started by making some changes in homework assignments every semester or using a variety of different assignments instead of the same one several semesters in a row.
- **Member Comment:** I suggest that professors **DO NOT** use question banks from the textbook companies. We found every nursing textbook question bank at a website last semester. Students could access many of them for free.
- **Member Comment:** If possible, mute the scores on an automatically graded assignment (online quiz) until everyone has finished it and the deadline has passed. Set test options to **NOT** let students see their incorrect answers; set to show questions one at a time and time the exam. Another professor friend says all her online tests do not apply toward the final grade and she does not use any of the online test questions for the final. The final is also weighted heavier and proctored.
- **Member Comment:** We use the program [turnitin.com](http://turnitin.com). This program does an originality check for papers submitted online.
Distance learning is the new wave that we all need to catch on and ride because programs are going to continue to move with the technology.

At one time I was resistant to the change, until I realized all the ways to build a successful online course. Here at the University of North Florida, there are many training programs that faculty can register for to build the skills to teach online. Here are some of my favorites:

1) **Take Time to Design:** The course structure and layout are essential the overall success of your course. I have built modules that are identical in structure (i.e. introduction, content and assignment pages). This allows my students to get familiar with the layout and know how to navigate easily. This design also allows me to be consistent when adding new content or linking new materials. I know exactly what page to go to.

2) **Engage in More than One Way:** While submitting assignments is important, add a section of your rubric for students to review/comment on others’ work. This allows the online students to connect and create conversation about a post that would mimic an in-person environment.

3) **Let Creativity Flow:** For my assignments and/or discussion posts, I allow students (undergraduate and graduate) to be creative in the method of their submission. I allow for *some* of the assignments to be in video format, written format or in a drawing. This allows my students to utilize their creative potential and gives them creativity in completing the assignments.

**Teaching Tips for Online Instruction:**

1) **Before creating an online course:**
   a. Identify pros, cons, and demand for the course.
   b. Determine key objectives, concepts, and assignments to assess if they can, and how they will, be transferred to an online format.
   c. Design a standard template that can be used for multiple courses and reflects uniform formats, flow, sequential and progressive learning.
   d. Review Steps a-c with colleagues and IT and course design experts.
   e. Do a run-through of the course before using it to identify kinks, etc.

2) **When teaching the course:**
   a. Have a 1-2 minute video introducing (and perhaps at the end of) a unit. Discuss the objectives, how the readings, assignments, etc. link to the unit. Include a personal anecdote, supportive or humorous comment or meme.
   b. Break instructional materials into sections. For example, a face-to-face lecture that has 30 Power Point slides can be broken into three segments of 10 slides (or two of 15 slides). Or indicate midway “Take a 15-minute break then continue with the next slide.”
   c. Avoid inserting comments, links, dates, days, reading assignments, etc. into the PPT slides. If you change this you have to re-do the slides.

3) **Student engagement:**
   a. Have sufficient, relevant and meaningful discussion boards, not excessive ones. Ask for comments to a certain number of peers (e.g., two) and grade on both quality of posts and meeting minimum requirement for number of posts.
   b. Send a personalized comment to each student several times throughout the semester (e.g., space out to send comments to at least ¼ of students every two weeks). Comment on what they did well, or ask why they did not do as well in a current versus past assignment, etc.
   c. Let students know, in advance, the frequency with which you will respond to their comments.
Distance Learning: Setting up Your Virtual Classroom

Deciding what the landing page will look like when a student clicks on your course the first time is a big decision. It is the first place students will interact with you in your virtual classroom. Using your course topic, content and learning objectives, decide the best way to set up the course. This can be done by chapters, modules (modules can include one chapter or four, if you are following content from a textbook), or specific topics your course focuses on. Let the course learning objectives guide your decision on this. Breaking up the course into sections makes the course assignments manageable and provides flow as student’s progress through the course.

Next, explore all the options provided by the course management software. Course management software (CMS) has come a long way in having options to individualize the different course pages. Many educators that have advanced technical skills have already personalized their course pages and shared themes for others to use.

Additionally, there are many apps and features that can be added to your course page. For example, you can integrate Microsoft 365, Vimeo and Google Apps. There are hundreds of these, therefore, make sure your add-ins are aligned with or enhance the learning objectives in your course. If you have explored the CMS themes and add-ins and your need is not being met, consider creating a website for your course. Through a separate website, such as WordPress or Google Sites, you can present content, and embed interactive tools such as Google Forms or Survey Monkey to collect answers to questions you want your students to answer.

Finally, do not be afraid to try something new and ask for help. Many of us have information technology and instructional design specialists on campus that are there to us implement learning and instructional technologies into our virtual classrooms.

There are several ideas that I have used in various online courses.

1) In any course, a quick check-in seems to engage students. I email each student a message and ask if they could please respond. I mention specific things related to their work in the course, and I ask them to let me know of any questions or concerns. I find that this helps students who haven’t emailed yet to feel comfortable asking questions. However, this may be challenging with really large courses!

2) Another form of engagement involves having students create presentations on various topics. Knovio (https://www.knovio.com) is an excellent platform for creating presentations to add some interactions within the course. I found this software easier to use than other video platforms, and my students loved Knovio. In one course, students created presentations on various topics, and others were required to watch and come up with three questions about each presentation.

3) One more tip to create interaction within an online environment is to use both peer-review and self-review. Students are provided a rubric to use in their review. They provide feedback to other students, and they also self-grade their own projects. After the first one, many students have found that they put forth more effort on future projects, after using and reviewing the rubrics.
Step up in the debate about healthcare that impact our profession

Today’s world is very volatile. As a trained professional, it is imperative to tactfully submit our ideas and have a civilized discussion to reach our goals. We need to be diplomatic, persuasive and patient.

As a student of American history, I am drawn to the writings of Evelyn Hall who reported her understanding of the French philosopher Voltaire’s comments about an acquaintance’s idea. “I disapprove of what you say, but I will defend to the death your right to say it.” Powerful words from Voltaire. His work greatly influenced the founding fathers in their decision to establish the principles of our country: freedom of religion, freedom of expression, free trade and separation of church and state. The founding fathers very carefully crafted the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights to protect us.

“Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.” (Emphasis added by author)

I know I’m preaching to the choir to tell you that lifestyle is the major contributor to health outcomes and thus, in the end, a major factor in health care cost control. Academy members, because of our experience and education, we need to step up in the debate about healthcare!

We must urge our congressional members to improve health care through good nutrition care, education, and research.

The easiest and most direct way to get involved in political action with the Academy of Nutrition and Dietetics is to make a contribution to ANDPAC. Your donation to ANDPAC helps support candidates for federal office who are pro-nutrition, food and health.

Academy members can take action by sending an electronic letter, also known as an action alert, to their member of Congress. Action alerts allow us to bring our priority issues to the attention of members of Congress and raise awareness on legislation that will impact the health and nutrition of Americans. Take action—it literally only takes a minute!
Mega issue survey results revealed at spring meeting

The HOD sent members a survey requesting input for the Spring Meeting Mega Issue. As a result of the survey, three topics were identified:

1. Technology
2. Consumer Awareness
3. Collaborative Ready Practice.

The selected mega issue should be announced prior to the Spring meeting.

Also, as a result of work done after the fall meeting, the HOD convened the HOD Evolution Designers Team. Chairs of that team Annette Maggi and Meg Rowe presented their findings to the House Leadership Team on Friday, January 11, 2019.

The report includes recommendations for enhanced processes and communications to achieve better member and delegate engagement leading to meaningful outcomes.

Additional recommendations on the future composition of the HOD are not finalized at this time but will be presented at the Spring meeting conducted electronically March 30-31, 2019.

For more information about the HOD, visit https://www.eatrightpro.org/leadership/governance/house-of-delegates/overview.
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