



Supporting Transfer Students Series

PART 4: Strategies for Encouraging Instructor-Student Interaction with Transfer Students

Research has found that for transfer students, interactions with instructors are a particularly strong indicator of student learning (Fauria & Fuller, 2015; Levin et al., 2010; Lundberg, 2014). Fauria & Fuller (2015) note that while “transfer student persistence and completion rates towards baccalaureate degree attainment continue to be lower than non-transfer student persistence and completion rates” (p. 40), they also found that interactions with instructors through feedback and direct encouragement had a positive impact on transfer students’ cumulative GPAs. Below are a few suggestions for how to foster supportive interactions with transfer students:

Strategies	Explanations	Teaching Suggestions
Make feedback an integral part of class	Fauria & Fuller (2015) found that transfer students who received <i>timely</i> written or oral feedback on their academic performances were more likely to persist to graduation.	Consider making it an integral part of your class activities for students to seek help and/or feedback. Endeavor to provide feedback in a timely manner (within a week, depending on class size), so that students have an opportunity to integrate your comments into their next assignment. For more feedback strategies, see our “Effective Feedback Series.”
Encourage students to come to office hours, and create opportunities for student-instructor interactions	Transfer students may feel uncomfortable contacting instructors if they need help (CCCSE, 2012), or may have difficulty making time in their schedules to attend office hours.	Reach out to students who seem to be struggling in your class (or work with a TA do so). Remind your students about your office hours frequently. For example, you could give students an idea of things they can do during office hours to encourage them to come (e.g., ask for additional feedback, get strategies for solving problems, discuss research and/or job opportunities, etc.).
Make your students aware of your high expectations for them	Research has shown that educational outcomes for transfer students are improved when instructors hold students to high standards, but help support students in achieving those standards (e.g., Fauria & Fuller, 2015; Levin et al., 2010).	Encourage students to be self-motivated and hardworking, but remind them that you are there to support them if they need help. For example, Fauria & Fuller (2015) suggest challenging your students to meet your high expectations by working harder than they think they can, but make sure to also respond promptly with feedback or answers to questions. Also, consider outlining your expectations on topics like attendance, participation, and teamwork in the syllabus and/or the Canvas site.
Encourage students to seek help outside of the classroom	Help students navigate the higher education system and identify resources where they can receive the help they may need.	Include information on various university support services in your syllabus (see below in Additional Resources, as well as our Campus Resources Guide for transfer-specific services).



Self-identify if you were a transfer student	If you were a transfer student yourself, publicly identify yourself as such; this can help your students feel more at ease in your classroom, while also providing them with a potential mentor.	Invite students to ask questions and learn more about your academic journey or visit you during office hours to discuss your experiences in more depth.
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Additional Resources

- [Transfer and Reentry Center](#)
- [Student Academic Success Center \[SASC\]](#)
- [SASC's Writing Assistance Services](#)
- [Veteran Success Center](#)

In addition to this resource, we would also suggest referencing our “[Supporting First-Generation University Student Series](#),” as the experiences of transfer students often parallel those of first-generation students more broadly.

Citation

Center for Educational Effectiveness [CEE]. (2018). Supporting Transfer Students Series. *Just-in-Time Teaching Resources*. Retrieved from <https://cee.ucdavis.edu/JITT>

References

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