

2023 Student Success Conference

The Power of Agency

Voice, Choice, and
Student Success



From a humble beginning...



Student Success Defined

What does student success look like?

self-sufficient thirst for knowledge	competent professional excellent communicator	contributor to society pursues passions	<i>graduation</i> self-aware
academic success resourceful <i>engaged in life</i>	<i>innovative</i> <i>self-assured</i> transformative growth	strong social skills sense of belonging self-motivated	<i>resilient</i> sense of purpose global vision
future without debt productive adult	maximizes potential versatile	sense of fulfillment <i>achieving life goals</i>	self-advocate empowered

Encourage student success by providing . . .

sense of belonging resources	metrics friendliness	opportunities honest communication <i>connection opportunities</i>	<i>peer tutoring</i> advice <i>new experiences</i>
fairness guidance <i>empathy</i>	support <i>understanding</i> choices	authentic assessment learner-centered work encouragement	timely feedback mentoring validation
help open-door policies	insights clear expectations	problem-based learning	transparency

...to a deeper dive, with diverse input and heightened intentionality



UI's Annual Student Success Conference brings faculty, staff, and students together to address critical issues affecting the student experience.

Every year we collaboratively identify, share, and develop strategies to remove barriers to student success.

This year, our focus is on student agency.

Together we will explore strategies for understanding and enhancing student **agency, voice, and choice.**

Our approach is to share success stories as well as mile-markers, and to hear from and build on the words and experiences of our faculty, staff, and students.

Our goal is for everyone to leave with new partnerships and a blueprint for change.



Session 1: The Meaning and Value of Agency

Exercise 1: Think, Pair, Share

Prompt:

1. What does student agency mean to you?
2. Why does it matter?
3. How does “voice and choice” fit in?
4. How do you, in your role, support or promote agency?

Show your work/share your ideas

Agency, Voice, and Choice

- When we talk about agency, we often talk about taking control of something, or at least having a say in it.
- How does this apply to teaching, learning, and support?
 - It empowers students to have a say.
- Specifically, student agency refers to **learning through activities** that are **meaningful and relevant to the students**. Learning therefore has value to students and can be **driven by their interests**.
- There is at least a modicum of decisional autonomy: **students have a *voice* and a *choice* in their learning**.
- How do we foster agency without losing control?
- Consider:
 - UDL
 - Equity Frame
 - Opportunities to co-create knowledge and even the class



Threshold Concepts

- **Transformative**
 - Once they're understood, they change the way a student views a subject.
 - A new lens for thinking.
- **Troublesome**
 - Sometimes they're counterintuitive, strange, and complex.
 - Meaning is not immediately obvious.
- **Integrative**
 - They bring together different pieces of the puzzle – different aspects of a subject– that may not have appeared to be related.



Session 2: Challenge

Exercise 2: Identifying, Understanding, and Addressing Challenges

Prompt:

- Think about “one big thing” essential to your work, your field, and student success and identify...
 1. A critical concept or skill that you have struggled to...
 - Learn (Students?)
 - Teach (Faculty?)
 - Support (Staff?)
 2. What’s one thing that worked to get through, master, or support the development of that concept or skill?
 3. What’s one thing you learned from someone at your table about overcoming that challenge?
 4. How can you work together to help one another better understand, support, and overcome such challenges?

Show your work/share your ideas

Session 3: The Productive Struggle

Exercise 3: Discussion & Collaboration

Prompt:

1. How do we help students embrace and work through the productive struggle of learning?
2. How do we help students, and how can we, master key concepts, essential skills, and learning processes?
3. How can we help our students become persistent, metacognitive, and self-regulated learners?
4. How can an equity frame support student success?

Show your work/share your ideas

The Value of Critical Reflection, and...

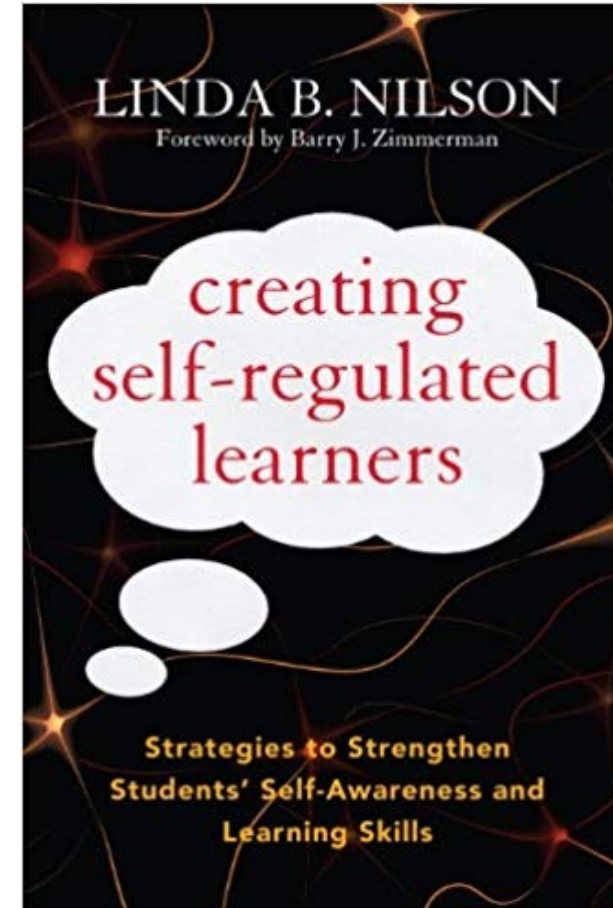
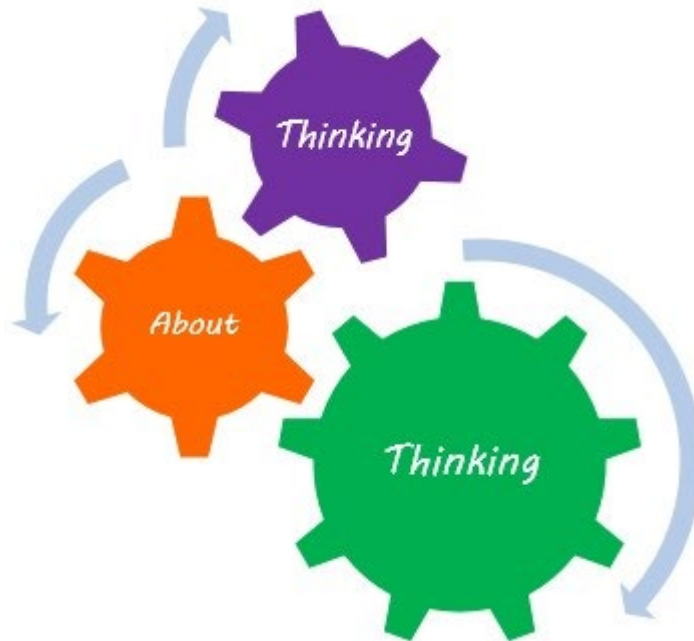
- Critical Reflection is the “active, persistent and careful consideration of any belief or supposed form of knowledge in the light of the grounds that support it, and the further conclusions to which it tends”.
- It involves “thinking about our thinking” (John Dewey, *How we Think*).



Linking Critical Reflection, Metacognition, and Self-Regulated Learning



Conscious control over one's cognitive processes



The monitoring and managing of one's cognitive processes as well as the awareness of and control over one's emotions, motivations, behaviors, and environment as related to learning.



A BLUEPRINT FOR CHANGE

Thank You!



Resources

Information, Tips, and Techniques

For all session materials, “share-outs”, and past event findings, please visit our [Student Success Conference Page](#)

What Can I do? General Advice



Get students to understand how they approach their work –ask them to think about it!



Give them a chance to do something with your feedback...and their own. Fold it into graded work!



Ask your students to write down the things they know or fear might have an impact on their academic performance.



If you teach a class that has a reputation for being particularly hard, has a high DFW rate, is way larger than it should be, etc: talk about it and what you –and they– can do to increase the odds of success.

Remember: We have a diverse learner population. Many are learning unfamiliar topics in unfamiliar ways. It is easy for them to become overwhelmed and shut down or withdraw. There are things going on in their lives that we don't know about. They're human. So are we. We can help them learn the value of managing their time, emotions, distractions, and well-being.

What Every Student Can/Should Do: Four Steps to Self-Regulated Learning

Step 1: Make a plan

- Identify goals;
- Map out a strategy and timeline to accomplish them;
- Identify potential obstacles –self-awareness is critical!– and how to address/overcome them.

Step 2: Monitor performance

- “Today I will ___”;
- “Today I did (or did not) ___”
- “When I _____, I _____”
- “An option might be to _____”

Step 3: Reflect on performance

- Students must reflect on their work and final product –what they did, how they did it, how well they did (the grade), and how well their plan and strategies worked.
- They must think outside the box of “it is not written well enough” or “well, I did my best” and “I guess I bombed that one!” Think about why...

Step 4: Use results to improve their process

What else?

Easy to Use Activities and Assignments

“Chunk”
information

Think-Pair-
Share

Reading &
discussion
reflections

Ticket out the
door

Quick writes

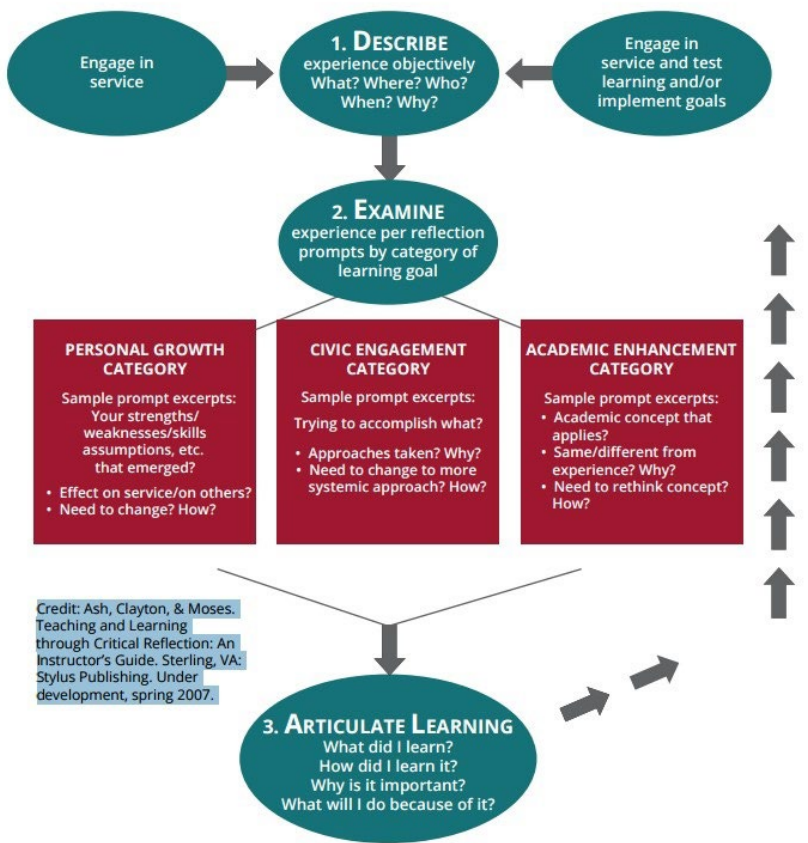
Wrappers

Learning
Journals

Simulations

DEAL with it

SCHMATIC OVERVIEW OF THE DEAL MODEL FOR CRITICAL REFLECTION



D	E	AL
<p>DESCRIBE the learning experience.</p> <p>Think:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What? • Where? • Who? • When? • Why 	<p>EXAMINE the experience through the lens of academic concepts, theories, or strategies</p> <p>EG: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy, UDL, Course Learning Goals</p>	<p>ARTICULATE LEARNING by discussing and explaining what you learned, when you learned it, how you learned it and why it is important—to you and the field!-- and what you can/will do differently because of it.</p>

Consider Using this Cognitive (and Non-Cognitive) Wrapper Template

COGNITIVE WRAPPERS TEMPLATE

This template was designed to help students better understand their own learning –what’s working, what’s not, and why...and what they/we can do about it.

Note that it emphasizes REFLECTION, FEEDBACK, and ADJUSTMENTS

REFLECTION

1. **How much total time** did you spend preparing for/working on this assignment or project? _____
2. **When** did you prepare for/work on it? How did you spread out your preparation? USE TIME LINE TOOL: <https://timeline.knightlab.com/>. Can be used for collaborative projects. _____
3. Did you make time for thinking and reflecting? If so, when, how much, and what breakthroughs? Remember the 5 day rule. _____
4. **How** did you prepare? _____
5. How much time was spent:
 - a. Conducting research? _____
 - i. Did you work with a librarian? _____
 - b. Reading course material _____
 - c. Re-reading course material _____
 - d. Working independently _____
 - e. Working in groups _____
 - f. Pausing _____
 - g. Thinking _____
 - h. Reflecting _____
 - i. Note taking _____
 - j. Drafting _____
 - k. Editing _____
 - l. Problem solving _____
 - m. Memorizing _____
 - n. Brainstorming _____
 - o. Practicing _____
 - p. Other _____

USING FEEDBACK

- First, *GIVE GOOD FEEDBACK*.
- This can come in a variety of forms –what do you do?
- It can come from other sources, like their peers.

Based on the feedback,

- What went well/what’s working?
- What went wrong/what kind of mistakes did you make?
- When you review the feedback, do you think that you lost points because of
- Trouble understanding the instructions/assignment? (Lack of clarity or direction/misunderstanding; unclear expectations)
- Trouble understanding concepts
- Trouble understanding or remembering processes or techniques
- Misapplication of techniques? (doing the wrong thing the right way)
- Carelessness
- Lack of preparation in class or on your own
- Time limits/management/not enough time given (explain)
- Frustration / anxiety
- Trouble with format / assignment type (eg, writing, problem solving, collaborative, performative)
- Other?

ADJUSTMENTS

1. Name at least three things you can/will do differently next time.
2. Assess if these changes work.
3. What will help you learn or demonstrate your knowledge or ability most effectively?
4. Propose alternative formats?