

Teaching Non-Traditional Adult Learners Online: Strategies for Explicit & Learner-Centered Instruction

Overall Purpose of Strategies:

- Be responsive to the non-traditional adult learners in your online course
- Empower and motivate learners by leveraging their expertise & experiences
- Be explicit about what learners will gain & how they can contribute

1. Learning from & with Each Other: What Learners Do to Share & Grow

Design Pre-Course Survey & Activities for Learners to Introduce Self

- Make your learners the experts for them to share personal/professional experiences & apply learning to their contexts/real world situations

Canvas Resource on Steps to Create a Survey Quiz (graded for completion)

- <https://community.canvaslms.com/t5/Instructor-Guide/How-do-I-create-a-survey-in-my-course/ta-p/782>

2. Learning Hopes: What Learners Want to Gain & Contribute

Have Learners Share Learning Hopes to Thread into Course Content

- Question: *What do you hope to gain from this course?*
- Have learners share 1 sentence responses via Zoom chat box or out loud

3. Learning Objectives: What Learners Will Gain & Contribute

Review Course Objectives in Syllabus on the First Day of Class

- Add 3-4 bullets of objectives under your *Course Description*

Review Individual Class Objectives at the Beginning of Each Class

- Add an objective for each class/module in your *Course Outline/Schedule*

Sample Course Syllabus:

- <https://canvas.harvard.edu/courses/94604/assignments/syllabus>

4. Learning Expectations: What Learners Need to Commit to

Share Time Commitment for Assignments Inside/Outside of Class

- Provide estimated times for readings & viewing videos
- Build in time during class for students to work on group projects

Guidelines on Co-Creating Class Expectations with Students

- <https://teaching-and-learning-website.document360.io/v1/docs/setting-class-norms-expectations-and-participation-guidelines>

5. Learning Intentions: What Learners Will Do to Achieve Goals

Create Peer Learning Groups & Partners

- Have learners set weekly intentions with actionable steps in breakout rooms and place them in the same groups the next class to share progress/reflections

Sample Google Slide Deck for Learning Partners Activity (viewer mode)

- https://docs.google.com/presentation/d/1_IWrqu86-KqBOYK6hKX7DiBEjXK0DEY7sUVIO4eTvjk/edit?usp=sharing