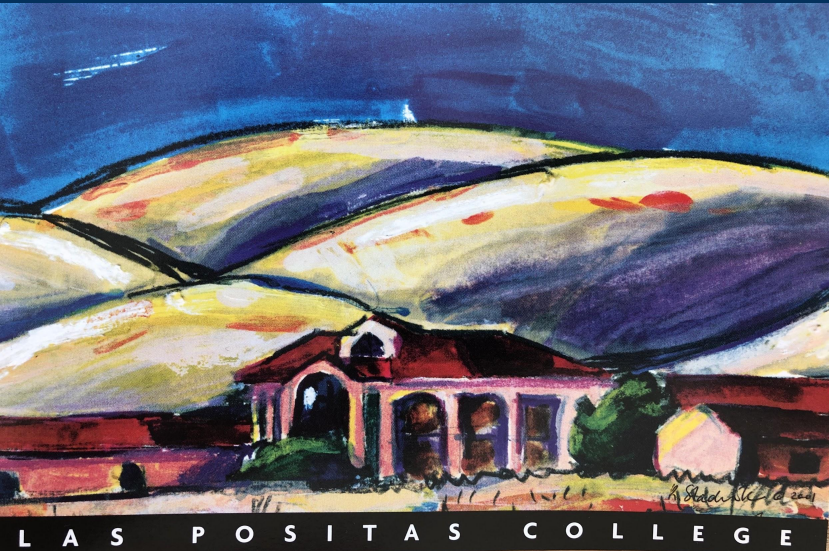


# GUIDED PATHWAYS

August 13, 2021



## LPC Persistence Project Orientation



Persistence Project

Las Positas College

Presented by

Jim Ott, English full-time faculty

Jeff Judd, Biology part-time faculty

Shawn Taylor, Director, Student Equity & Success

# Agenda

Welcome and Opening Remarks

Review of Last Semester's Results

Review of the Engagement Strategies

Let's Hear from Cohort 1 Members

Questions? Concerns?

Adjourn



**Persistence Project**

Las Positas College

# Four Pillars of Guided Pathways

Clarify  
their  
Path



Create Clear  
Curricular  
Pathways to  
Employment  
and Further  
Education

Enter  
their  
Path



Help  
Students  
Choose and  
Enter Their  
Pathway

Stay on  
their  
Path



Help  
Students  
Stay on  
Their Path

Ensure  
Learning



Follow  
Through,  
Ensure that  
Better Practices  
are Providing  
Improved  
Student Results.

# Results of Spring 2021

We received 179 end-of-semester student surveys, with positive results. Percentages shown below are *strongly agree or agree*:

Communicated expectations for grades/coursework clearly: 89%

Instructor knows my name: 87%

Values interacting with me: 82%

Communicated with me that I can succeed in college: 79%

Cares about me as a person: 79%

Met with me one-on-one: 73%

Talks about how college relates to future career: 66%

Communicated with me that I belong a LPC: 63%

Knows important information about me that might be barriers to my success: 63%

# Results of Spring 2021

Written student comments further express appreciation for our teaching methods and our concern for students as individuals. Scanning through the feedback we find words such as kind, welcoming, extremely helpful, understanding, upbeat positive attitude, comfortable and learning atmosphere -- the list goes on.

# The Persistence Project



**Our project was created in Fall 2020 as a component of Guided Pathways and developed through grassroots faculty collaboration inspired by a similar project at Oakton Community College in Des Plaines, Illinois. By introducing several engagement strategies into our teaching practice, our goal is to build human connection, improve student persistence (i.e. enrolling each subsequent semester), and to enhance faculty satisfaction.**

# Required Engagement Strategies

Fall 2021 Semester

Pre-Semester

First Three Weeks

Rest of Semester

# Required Engagement Strategies

Pre-Semester

**Send a welcome email**

to students before the first day of class to set an overall positive tone for the semester



Dear PCN 30 Class,

My name is Jared Howard and I will be your PCN 30 instructor for the spring 2021 semester! I wanted to take a minute to welcome you to my course, highlight some best practices to help ensure that you are successful, and let you know about some easy ways to get a hold of me this upcoming semester.

PCN 30 is a course that focuses specifically on how to be a successful student at Las Positas College! We will be strategizing ways to best manage your time, take personal responsibility over your life, and make goals to be successful both in college and life.

Successful students in my class consistently practice:

1. Attendance/being timely to class
2. Complete all homework assignments
3. Have the book already purchased and ready to go on the first day of class

One of my goals this semester is to get to know each of you personally! I will be scheduling one-on-one meetings with each of you in the first few weeks to get to know you. If you ever need to reach me, I can most easily be contacted via email (I have a 48 business hour turnaround time) at [jhoward@laspositascollege.edu](mailto:jhoward@laspositascollege.edu). You can also visit me during office hours on Tuesdays from 12-1 in room 1616K.

I look forward to having a wonderful semester with you!

# Required Engagement Strategies

Pre-Semester

**Revise the tone of your  
course syllabus**

# Syllabus Tone -What do students "hear" when they read your syllabus?

In our effort to eliminate barriers to student success, one simple strategy we can use is to reconsider the words and tone of our course syllabi and to intentionally make the syllabi welcoming and encouraging.

Ask yourself: Are the words in my syllabus welcoming, encouraging, and enthusiastic? Or are they adversarial, punitive, or jaded?

An adversarial tone--the scolding, finger-wagging voice--tells students we do not trust or like them and that we are more concerned about our own convenience than the needs of the students.

A friendly syllabus increases student trust in the instructor, interest in the class, and likelihood of success.

# Syllabus Examples

**Poor tone example from an actual syllabus:** There are **NO make-up midterm exams** except in cases of **extreme and officially-documented** emergencies. Acceptable documentation includes: a signed note from a doctor/hospital, a letter from a lawyer, or forms documenting jail/incarceration. Any "special circumstances" **MUST** be made prior to the date of the exam. Making a trip to Disneyland, going on vacation, or attending a concert is not a legitimate "special circumstance." There are **NO make-ups for the final exam**. If you miss the final then you ***fail the course***.

**Improved Tone:** I understand that sometimes life can make completing school work difficult. For this reason, I will give each student a late pass at the beginning of the semester to turn in any assignment, except the final project, up to one week late, no questions asked. If you retain your late pass throughout the entire semester, you may turn it in at the end for extra credit.

# Required Engagement Strategies

First Three Weeks of Class

**Learn student names**

by the end of the 3rd week at latest

# Learn student names and help students learn one another's names!

1. Name tents: Create Name Cards that students bring to class and place on their desk
2. Request to take a photo of the student holding their name written on a sheet of paper. You can use these photos like notecards to memorize names and faces
3. My name, my identity: have students create a video (or present in class if time permits) to send to you where the students say their name and share a story of how they got their name, the meaning of their name, or any interesting facts relating to their name.
4. Encourage students take the same seat every day - then visualize each student based on where they sit
5. Create a discussion board where everyone introduces themselves to each other (personal interests, goals, etc.)
6. Create class projects where students work together synchronously (even in asynchronous classes!)
7. Offer check-in assignments throughout the semester with basic questions. For students who don't respond, reach out to them
8. Nametag and speed dating - create a game where students are given nametags and they complete a "speed dating" exercise to get to know each other

# Required Engagement Strategies

First Three Weeks of Class

**Hold one-on-one meetings**

with students near the start of the semester

# Discussion in one-on-one meetings

- Schedule 10 - 15 minute meetings with each student to introduce themselves.
- Use the meeting to get to know the student--not to talk about class expectations.
- Ask about the student's interests, hobbies, major.
- Ask if there is anything the student would like you to know that might be a barrier for student success.
- Let the student know they belong at LPC.



# Discussion in one-on-one meetings

- Listen more than speak. Active listening lets the student know they are being heard.
- Maintain boundaries. Even though this is a non-academic conversation, we need to maintain boundaries. A way to think about this is to speak enough to develop a relationship, but do not offer any information that could compromise you, your job, or those you know.

# Things Not to DO in these meetings

- Do NOT ask about a student's ethno-cultural heritage, sexuality, religious affiliation, (dis)ability, etc. If they bring it up, we can respond, but we cannot solicit this information.
- Do not over-identify with a student's story. For example: You and a student share a similar story or instance and it would be easy to say, "When I was confronted with this, this is how I handled it." Instead: "How do you think you handled it? If faced with the same situation again, how would you respond?"

# Required Engagement Strategies

First Three Weeks of Class

**Give meaningful feedback on  
an assignment**

by the end of the 5<sup>th</sup> week at latest to illustrate instructor commitment and how grading and feedback work in the class.

# Growth Mindset Critiques

Provide thoughtful feedback beyond “Good job”

Encourage effort and focused work; avoid praising talent, intelligence, or the result and instead *praise process and effort*.

With feedback, highlight strengths before suggesting improvements:

*I can see you put a lot of time into this assignment, and I enjoyed how you organized your ideas about this topic. To build on these strengths, I have a few suggestions.*

*Mistakes are so interesting. Here’s a wonderful mistake. Let’s see what we can learn from it.*

# Required Engagement Strategies

Rest of Semester

**Contact students who are  
struggling and offer to help**

# Signs of Student Struggles

**We need to stay alert to who is having problems so we can reach out to these students while there is still time to address issues. Struggling students often do not email instructors, so we need to email them.**

## **Area to watch:**

Attendance

Grade point averages hovering near 70%

Completion and scores on assignments and quizzes

Participation and engagement level of students

Sample email: *I notice you have not been turning in assignments. How are things going? Can I help to get you caught up?*

# Required Engagement Strategies

Rest of Semester

**Complete faculty surveys and  
post student surveys in Canvas**

for data collection and development of the Persistence Project

## Two 5-minute faculty surveys

- One first-three weeks [survey](#)
- One end-of-semester [survey](#)

## One 10 minute student survey

- One end-of-semester student [survey](#)



# Let's hear from You!

Words of wisdom from Cohort 1

Questions or concerns from Cohort  
2?

# Canvas Course

Our Persistence Project Canvas Course offers many resources to assist you.



# Questions/Comments

Jim Ott: [jott@laspositascollege.edu](mailto:jott@laspositascollege.edu)

Jeff Judd: [jjudd@laspositascollege.edu](mailto:jjudd@laspositascollege.edu)

Shawn Taylor: [staylor@laspositascollege.edu](mailto:staylor@laspositascollege.edu)