Practical strategies for enhancing student engagement in a diverse context

Diversity and Engagement WORKSHOP
Charles Sturt University
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Overview

An introduction to engagement and the AUSSE

Identification of challenges around student engagement for a diverse population

Discussion of possible responses to challenges

Sum up
What is student engagement?

Official (ACER) definition:

University student engagement is understood as students' involvement with activities and conditions likely to generate high-quality learning. The concept is based on the assumption that student learning is influenced by how students participate in educationally purposeful activities while at university.

(Australian Council for Educational Research, 2009)
What is student engagement?

“In trying to understand what …[student engagement] was all about, I found the following not particularly helpful.

University student engagement is understood as students’ involvement with activities and conditions likely to generate high-quality learning. The concept is based on the assumption that student learning is influenced by how students participate in educationally purposeful activities while at university.

I wonder if you can direct me to a full description or examples of your meaning of ‘student engagement’”.

‘Damian’, 2009
What is student engagement?


A website with advice, resources, suggestions on student engagement, gathered from Deakin staff and students, with sections for:

Students
Casual academic staff
Academic teaching staff
Teaching and learning leaders
What is student engagement?

The Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE):

6 **Student Engagement** scales:

1. Academic challenge
2. Active learning
3. Staff-student interactions
4. Enriching Educational Experiences
5. Supportive Learning Environment
6. Work Integrated Learning
What is student engagement?

The Australasian Survey of Student Engagement (AUSSE):

6 **Student Experience** scales:
1. Higher Order Thinking
2. General Learning Outcomes
3. General Development Outcomes
4. Average Overall Grade (single item)
5. Departure Intention
6. Overall Satisfaction
What is student engagement?

A focus on a positive experience, retention, progress and completion (DEEWR)
A focus on student activities and institutional conditions – ACER/AUSSE
A focus on attendance and ‘attentiveness’ – coal-face staff
Importance of context (TQI)

Quantity: (DEEWR) progress and completion rates
(ACER/AUSSE): ‘How often…?’; ‘How much…?’
Quality: (Teachers) More nuanced – ‘What kind…?’ eg authentic, aligned assessment that requires less than 1000 words of writing
Exercise

1. Select a scale of interest. Consider the items in that scale.

2. Using the record sheet:
   
a. Record what you **predict** the combined score out of 100 will be for CSU.

   b. Record your **preference** for the score out of 100.

3. In groups, consider your Institution Report and record the **actual** score.
Improving engagement

4. Consider the gaps between predicted, preferred and actual scores.

5. What is needed to improve engagement in your context?
   5a. What ideas do you have for improvement
   5b. What are the obstacles?
   5c. How will you overcome these?
Reflections

Institutional change is difficult and complex

Buy-in at the coal face is critical

Professional development is necessary

Institutional culture matters (no one size fits all)

Institutional leadership is critical
Your reflections

One minute paper:
What have you learnt?

Final comments:
What will you do differently?