



Supporting Your Students' Pursuit of the Finish Line

As we approach the traditional close of the academic year, it is common for many students to demonstrate telltale signs of a loss of momentum, including:

- Arriving late to class, often in a flustered state;
- Missing class meetings when their previous attendance was exemplary;
- Failing to meet due dates for assignments;
- Being under-prepared for in-class assignments;
- Submitting assignments that don't meet their previous standards, and/or yours;
- Appearing A.W.O.L. from classroom discussions;
- Reduced spontaneity and openness to humor.

Since many of our students are working long hours and trying to balance other areas of their lives, try to practice Stephen Covey's "Habit 5: Seek First to Understand, then to be Understood." The key to overcoming barriers to students' completion of your course is proactive, helpful communications. Talk with individual students - especially those, whose loss of momentum has been most dramatic, and to the class as a whole, to foster a grounded perspective. Students may perceive doom in not only your courses, but in their others as well. Consider making slight adjustments – without lowering standards – that students will perceive as a huge stress reducer.

In addition, examine your plans for the remaining few class meetings. Consider modifying activities to induce added energy into each by:

- Shortening the length of lectures;
- Using more visuals, such as video clips [see www.Ted.com] to increase the relevance and applicability of course material in students' minds;
- Employing more group activities to reinforce especially important learning outcomes;
- Scheduling an upbeat guest speaker who can synthesize course material studied;
- Providing individual feedback to each student more frequently;
- Adding humor when appropriate, e.g. "top ten reasons why . . ."

We can all recall a time when we "hit the wall" -- physically, intellectually, or emotionally. And we can also probably recall a coach, mentor, or teacher who helped us get over that overwhelming obstacle. Becoming that kind of supporting person for your students during the last class meetings will enable you to have a long-term impact on their academic and career success.

Since we will be held accountable for our student retention rate, i.e. the ratio of original students who actually complete our course, it is critical to refocus students on the desired outcomes of your course by:

- Summarizing the progress of the group and providing broad feedback on their efforts;
- Clarifying the path ahead by providing a rubric of projects, overview of final exam, etc.;

- Sharing [and having students share] time management strategies;
- Reviewing the rubrics for assigned projects to foster greater student success [see model in Online Resources at <http://www.adjunctsuccess.net>];
- Making yourself available before class, during breaks and after dismissing class meetings to discuss individual progress and issues.

Lastly make it a point to reassure students regularly that they can “make it to the finish line,” and achieve the degree of success that they hoped for when the course began.

Schedule of Upcoming Webinars: The following webinars are available for your participation. Your personal log in directions can be found in the e-mail with the subject line “AdjunctSuccess.net User Information” that you received previously. If you deleted that e-mail, please e-mail lyons@adjunctsuccess.net for a duplicate copy. All webinar starting times listed are Eastern. If you are unable to attend a webinar on a particular topic during real time, e-mail lyons@adjunctsuccess.net for access to an archived recording.

Tue., Feb. 28, 8:30 pm	Teaching Online: The Basics
Thu., March 1, 8:30 pm	The Adjunct Professor: Formulating a Strategy for Success
Sat., March 3, 11:30 am	Managing Your Teaching Life More Effectively
Mon., March 5, 8:30 pm	Employing Alternative Assessment in Your Teaching
Tue., March 6, 8:30 pm	Building Your Adjunct Teaching Career
Thu., March 8, 8:30 pm	Achieving Exemplary Student Retention
Sat., March 10, 11:30 am	Teaching Online: The Basics
Tue., March 13, 8:30 pm	Managing Examinations Effectively
Thu., March 15, 8:30 pm	Assessing the Effectiveness of Your Teaching
Sat., March 17, 11:30 am	Building Your Adjunct Teaching Career
Mon., March 19, 8:30 pm	Infusing Technology into Your Teaching
Thu., March 22, 8:30 pm	Bringing Your Course to an Effective Conclusion
Sat., March 24, 11:30 am	Bringing Your Course to an Effective Conclusion
Mon., April 2, 8:30 pm	Building Your Adjunct Teaching Career
Tue., April 3, 8:30 pm	Managing Your Teaching Life More Effectively
Thu., April 5, 8:30 pm	Employing Alternative Assessment in Your Teaching
Sat., April 14, 11:30 am	Managing Your Teaching Life More Effectively
Mon., April 23, 8:30 pm	Bringing Your Course to an Effective Conclusion
Tue., April 24, 8:30 pm	Assessing the Effectiveness of Your Teaching
Thu., April 26, 8:30 pm	Building Your Adjunct Teaching Career
Sat., April 28, 11:30 am	Assessing the Effectiveness of Your Teaching

Note: Between March 24 and April 20, we cannot provide access to archived webinars. After logging on to our WebEx landing page, you will see some webinars and meetings with prefixes SUS or NCSPD that are not open to AdjunctSuccess.net members.

Additional Resources for AdjunctSuccess.net members: Designed with the busy instructor in mind, a rich set of printable resources is posted at AdjunctSuccess.net. Also in this **Members Only** area is an alphabetized [by topic] compilation of over 100 Websites, each focused on a critical aspect of teaching and classroom management. Utilizing these resources regularly can save you a great deal of time and make your teaching more rewarding.

Heads Up: To avoid long distance charges, you must use a computer headset microphone and select the “use computer for audio” option when logging in to a webinar. If you misplace this eNewsletter, the most current issue is always posted at www.AdjunctSuccess.net. The webinar schedule is also posted at our WebEx page, accessible through the Members Login box.

Troubleshooting Technical Problems: As with any technology resource, glitches sometimes occur that affect AdjunctSuccess.net members. To troubleshoot problems, call the WebEx help desk, at 866.863.3908.

Also: Inside the “Members Login” box of the AdjunctSuccess.net home page appears a link to a set of frequently-asked questions [FAQs] to facilitate your use of our resources. Please submit your suggestions for improving your AdjunctSuccess.net experience to lyons@adjunctsuccess.net.