COLLEGE OF ARTS, SCIENCES, & LETTERS
UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN-DEARBORN

Academic Belonging Through Warm-Ups: A Cross-Discipline Strategy

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INTERVENTION & STRATEGIES

ACADEMIC BELONGING: Cultivating students' sense of connection to and ability to see themselves in your course, a broader community of scholars, or the discipline.(1)
Build rapport
Validate the range of students' backgrounds

INSPIRATION

SPAN 201-202 warm-ups: borrowed practices from language courses to Foundations and History.
Adapting from in-person to online modalities.

- How to increase class discussions and collaboration?
- How to help students feel comfortable and valuable during class interactions?
- How to humanize online course instruction?

PROPOSAL

Warm-up or icebreaker activities: "Let's Chat" or "Happy Hour Discussion Board"
FOR
"Understanding ourselves and empathizing with students [which] puts the instructor in a better position to create enduring, positive classroom climates." (2)

Supporting student retention: particularly with non-traditional or first generation students, and from linguistic or other cultural minorities.

EVALUATION

Work in progress
Student Evaluations
Student Participation Rate
Anecdotal

1. University of Michigan Center for Research on Learning and Teaching (CRLT).
2. Dewsbury, Bryan. "Deep teaching in a college STEM classroom" (2019)

EXAMPLES

- What do you like about your community/neighborhood? What do you wish was different?
- Which story had an influence on you?
- Has anyone told you a story that you thought was outlandish?
- Share the view from your window and describe in detail what you see. It can be an actual window or a digital one, meaning your camera is the window to your reality.
- What have you learned about yourself during the lockdown and the pandemic?

EVIDENCE

Increased Evaluation participation.
"Good at encouraging students to speak and improve"
"Every class meeting was always engaging, fun, relaxing, but also forced students to critically think and bounce ideas off of one another, in turn building a relationship between students."