

# **Student Success Equals Faculty Success**

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## **“Succeed at UNT” Tips for Faculty**

**Student Guide:**      **Show up.**

**Faculty Guide:**      **Create an expectation that class attendance is important and matters to you as a faculty member.**  
**Make class time meaningful so that students want to show up.**

**Faculty Speak:**      *“Go to class. Attend class. At UNT, we expect you to attend class.”*

### **Possible ways faculty could encourage this:**

- Incentivize attendance. Perhaps require attendance, make a small percentage of the course grade be based upon attendance, provide extra credit points on assignments for those who are showing up. For large size classes, use card scanners to check attendance.
- Include important intellectual, scientific, and/or artistic developments within the field, the history, controversy, and epistemological discussions.
- Encourage relevant input from students—bring up current events relevant to the discussion and/or invite students to do so (informal in-class discussion or low-stakes assignment).
- Create a learning environment that values and respects intellectual diversity and stimulates intellectual inquiry.
- Use hands on/engagement activities.
- Provide references/resources of examples.
- Have students work in groups to answer questions (easy: think, pair, share).
- Use Clickers or other classroom response systems (free, Polleverywhere).
- Use TAs and SIs to facilitate interactive assignments.

- Ask questions and expect responses (give credit via clickers or otherwise).
- Ask for student input and suggestions.
- Point to relationships between and among the disciplines and/or other courses students might be taking currently or in the future.
- Allow student questions to drive content when appropriate.
- Encourage responsibility for attendance – If the class, even a large class, could be split into small groups, even for brief moments of discussion/problem solving during classes, sometimes this group identity aids in boosting accountability (i.e., having some knowledge about the course material, showing up).
- Get to class a few minutes early. Spend these extra minutes interacting with the students, migrating from group to group. Some students are less likely to miss courses if they know that someone is aware of their presence.
- During class, share valuable information with the students, perhaps outside the direct purview of class, but related to career opportunities that they might otherwise miss if they are not in class (i.e., internship opportunities).

**Student Guide:** [Find support. \(Ask for help.\)](#)

**Faculty Guide:** [Know where students can find help.](#)

**Let students know that you are a valuable resource for them throughout the semester and beyond (i.e., career advice, extracurricular organizations, other course work).**

**Faculty Speak:** *"I'm here to help you find the support you need. How may I help you? I'm available. Please stop by during my office hours, I would like to get to know you better."*

**Possible ways faculty could encourage this:**

- Learn about campus resources for students.
- Have information about resources on hand to share/explain.
- Post expectations (syllabus) and information about campus resources (list with contact numbers or links to relevant help centers) on your course website or Blackboard page.

- Treat all students with respect and model respect for cultural differences. Be consistent.
- Reference your office hours and office number/address often—even if students don’t show, they feel certain that there was the option to have done so.
- Ask students to tell you their names as they approach you for questions—even if you don’t remember it, they feel cared for and worthwhile.
- Become familiar with the services available and know where to refer students for support needs. Identify where students can get tutoring appropriate for the specific level of course and include this information in your course syllabus, talking points, and lectures.
- Set fair guidelines in regards to your availability. With the increasingly online world, it is easy for students to expect around-the-clock availability. It is important for to help students in understanding availability, particularly availability prior to an exam (i.e., “I am readily available during office hours, and via appointment, however; I will not be available to address last minute, middle of the night questions about your exam.”)
- Tailor specific help references for classes (i.e., writing center for English courses).

**Student Guide:** **Take control.**

**Faculty Guide:** **Help students get off to a strong start.**

**Faculty Speak:** *“Be a master of time management ---mark important dates for reading assignments, quizzes, exams on your calendar or phone. Learn to prioritize. Ask for help before it is too late.”*

**Possible ways faculty could encourage this:**

- Emphasize the importance of “starting out strong so that students don’t have to play catch up later” in courses, with ties about how strong starts can impact careers.
- Give feedback early and often.
- Have regular assignments from the start of the semester.

- Follow a regular due date schedule (e.g., all online quizzes due on Mondays by 11:59 p.m.), and explain its significance when possible (e.g., completing the quizzes will prepare you for our discussion of the material on Tuesdays in class).
- Set clear expectations and stick to them.
- Reference the syllabus often—remind students that the answers are here; they don't always know (e.g., “We'll be discussing the final project in our next class together, so please read the information relevant to that project that is in your syllabus.”)
- Provide field-/major-specific information about opportunities so students are better able to take control of their success.
- Encourage students to write down everything, to keep a calendar.
- Tie course material and possible future jobs, and the benefit of learning (and retaining) the material at the present time. Help students structure time so that they are not cramming for exams.
- Provide students with the realities of preparation time.
- Consider offering additional rewards for strong starts that are sustained.
- Hold students accountable.
- Use the Early Alert Response System (EARS)

**Student Guide:** **Be prepared.**

**Faculty Guide:** **Give assignments that matter.**

**Faculty Speak:** *“I promise to be prepared to when I come to class and I expect you to do the same. We can accomplish more together, if you are prepared.”*

**Possible ways faculty could help encourage this:**

- Provide students with the realities of preparation time.
- Hold students accountable.
- At the beginning of class, give students a low-stakes quiz or group assignment that is dependent upon them having prepared for class.

- Provide students with a variety of strategies that will aid them in the class (beyond “study, read, practice”).
- Use mastery quizzes (using Blackboard).
- Connect assignments to assessments.
- Be explicit about the value of assignments within the course or beyond the course (connect it to professional requirements for similar content or products, etc.)—this demonstrates the being prepared here is helping them be prepared for the next assignment or for life.
- Organize course content appropriate to the level of instruction and the nature of the subject matter.
- Evaluate students based on clear learning standards and measurable outcomes.

**Student Guide:** **Get involved.**

**Faculty Guide:** **Connect with students beyond the classroom.**

**Faculty Speak:** *“Get involved with meaningful activities that will support your career goals. Get to know at least five classmates, exchange contact information, go to lunch together, attend a study session.”*

#### **Possible ways faculty could help encourage this:**

- Let students know about professional/field-specific organizations at UNT, in the region, and nationally.
- Be available to students as appropriate.
- From time to time, some students need to be reminded of the importance of supplementing/supporting their academics with some form of outside activity.
- Attend and suggest events relevant to your discipline/courses to your students.
- Mention appropriate professional engagements/activities of your own or of your colleagues with an explicit suggestion that getting involved early is important.
- Keep a calendar of such events and offer extra credit for attendance when appropriate.
- Engage students by relating concepts to student's personal experiences and community, and/or global challenges.

- Remind students that while involvement is encouraged, course work comes first.

**Possible ways departments could help encourage this:**

- Use social media to keep students alerted to opportunities.
- Create an electronic newsletter detailing career tips, internship/scholarship opportunities, activities, course announcements. Highlight students, alumni, staff, and/or faculty.
- Hold a talk and/or Q&A session for any interested students about careers, internship opportunities, career advice, what employers/internship providers may look for in a letter of reference, etc.
- Make students aware of different “levels” of letters of recommendation. If they are provided with several examples of letters of recommendation early on at UNT (perhaps even at an orientation session?), this might provide a lasting impression about the importance of early success. The letters could represent a high GPA student, a high GPA student with activities, a mid-range student, a student who did poorly and did not know an instructor outside of class, a student who rarely showed up for class. The letters could be accompanied by a question: “Which student would you hire?”

**Student Guide:**      **Be persistent. (Don't give up.)**

**Faculty Guide:**      **Give constructive advice.**  
**Give positive feedback.**

**Faculty Speak:**      *“That problem was a little tricky; I was glad to see that you kept trying. Thanks for staying after class to solve that case study. You were a great role model for others in the class. Good job on your first test. Keep up the good work.”*

**Possible ways faculty could help encourage this:**

- Be encouraging of the students, with examples of how prior students/classes may have overcome challenges that the student(s) is facing, whether it is early poor performance in a class, or some other matter.
- Give second chances when appropriate.

- Be clear on when/how/if any second chances (extra credit, etc.) will be offered.
- Explain that the syllabus is an “agreement” and everyone must be given the same opportunities to be successful—otherwise it is “unfair.”
- Remain flexible.
- Send an encouraging email.
- Ask a struggling student to make an appointment for office hours.
- Put sticky notes on exams that simply say, “Keep up the good work, I’m proud of you.”

## Suggested Language for Course Syllabi

As part of the “Succeed at UNT” initiative, it is suggested that the following language be included in each course syllabus:

UNT endeavors to offer you a high-quality education and to provide a supportive environment to help you learn and grow. And, as a faculty member, I am committed to helping you be successful as a student. Here’s how to succeed at UNT: Show up. Find support. Take control. Be prepared. Get involved. Be persistent.

To learn more about campus resources and information on how you can achieve success, go to [succeed.unt.edu](http://succeed.unt.edu).