

Closing **the** Gap: Ideas for Implementing High Impact, Low Cost Faculty/Student Interactions

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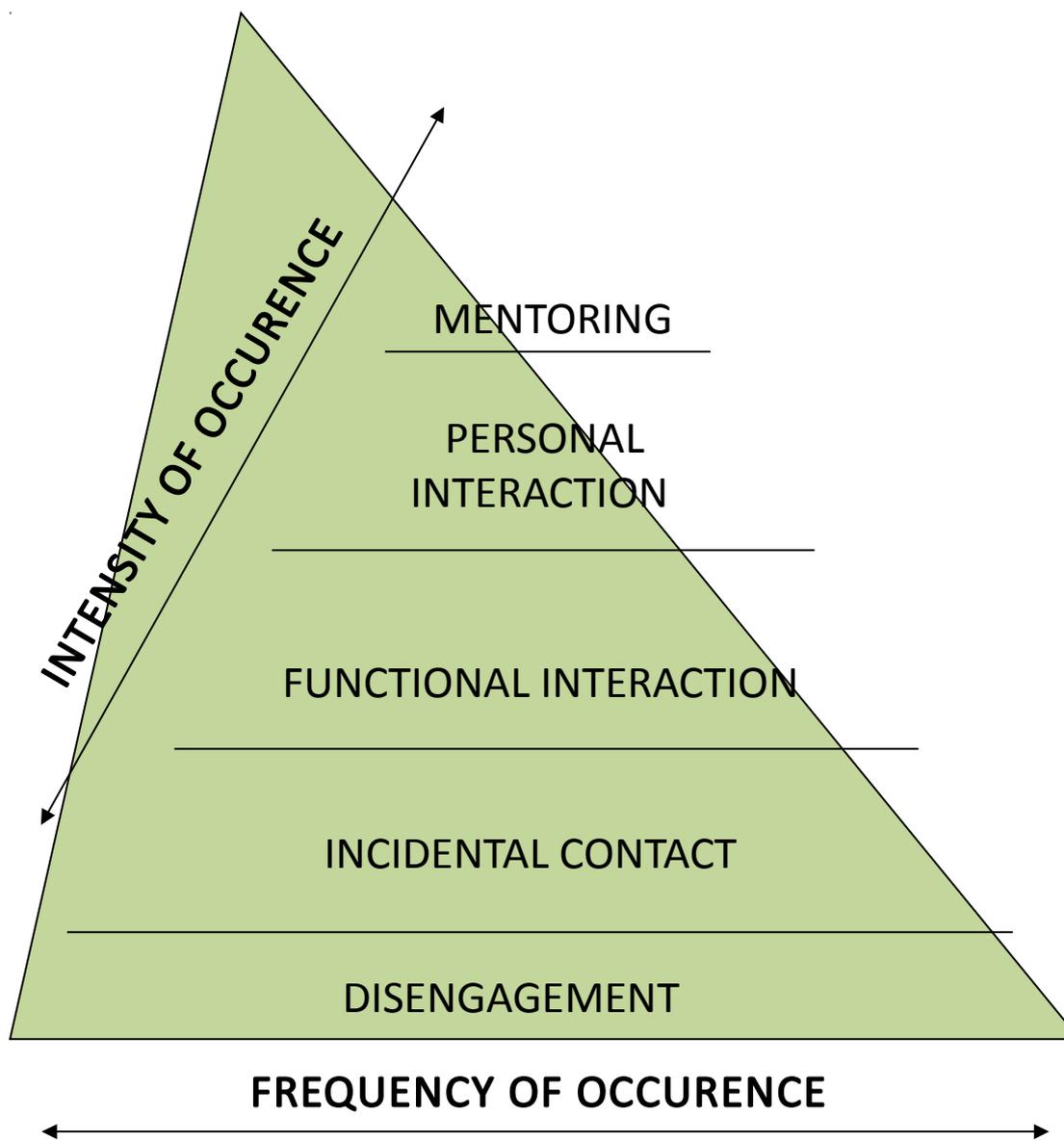


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Learning Outcomes

- Understand the importance of faculty/student interaction
- Discover practical strategies for facilitating faculty/student interaction on your campus
- Reflect on the challenges and opportunities of faculty/student interaction on your campus

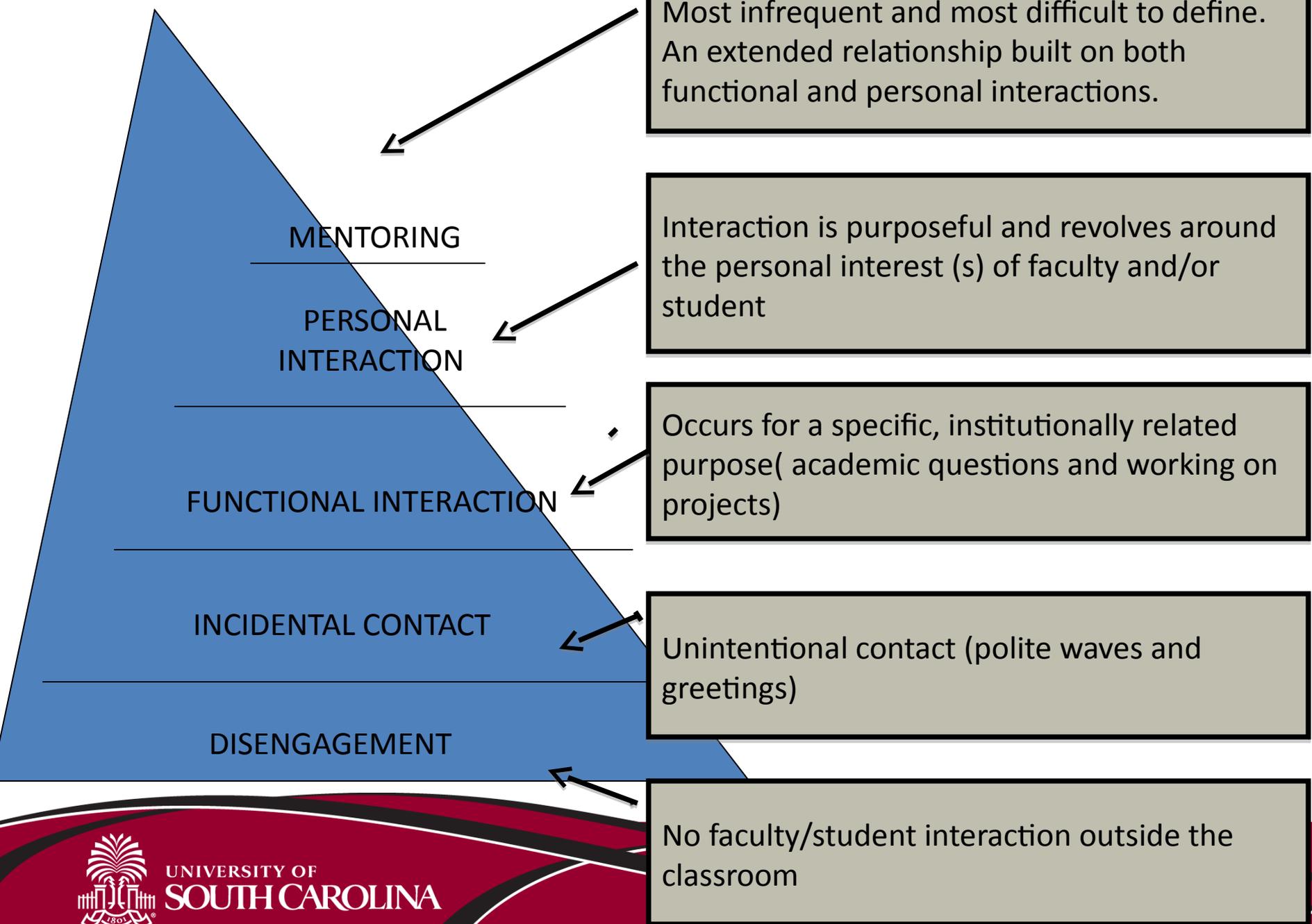




“Faculty-student interaction is an essential component of the collegiate experience. Significant research has demonstrated the importance of interaction between faculty members and students, both in and outside of the classroom” (Cox & Orehovec, 2007).



(Cox and Orehovec, 2007)



Benefits for First-Years

Frequency and quality of student faculty interactions significantly predict first-year academic outcomes such as college satisfaction and attrition (Pascarella and Terenzini)

Overcome Professional Distance Between Faculty and Students

Students need to see faculty in a variety of situations involving different roles and responsibilities...see faculty as **real people** who are **accessible** (Chickering)

*“Students learn firsthand how to **think and solve practical problems** by interacting with faculty inside and outside the classroom. As a result, **teachers become** role models, mentors, and guides for lifelong learning.”*
(Kuh, Kinzie, et. al, 2005)



- **Promote Intellectual Development**

- Interactions are crucial to persistence and intellectual development of students (Tinto)

- **Student Validation**

- When students feel like they are contributing and active in the academic community it fosters academic and interpersonal development (Rendon)

- **Positive Impact on Student Affairs**

- Stronger student-faculty relationships will have a positive impact on student affairs work; by increasing knowledge and experiential base of the faculty we gain valuable allies in our work outside of the classroom. (Astin)

“Frequent interaction with faculty is more strongly related to satisfaction with college than any other type of involvement or, indeed, any other student or institutional characteristic.”

(Astin)



- **Promotes Academic Motivation**

- “Students who perceive their faculty members as being approachable, respectful, and available for frequent interactions outside the classroom are more likely to report being confident of their academic skills and being motivated” (Komarraju, Musulkin, & Bhattacharya, 2010)

- **Increased Persistence**

- “Regardless of position, the primary behavior of staff that were described by students as making a difference were that they cared about students, helped meet their needs and get their questions answered, knew them by name, encouraged them, and spent time with them.” (Schreiner, Noel, Anderson, & Cantwell, 2011)

*“Students appreciated interactions with **caring** faculty, staff, and peers who **supported them** in transitioning to college learning and the university community.”*

(Goodman, Baxter-Magolda, Seifert, & King, 2011)



Retention & Faculty/Student Interactions

- Vince Tinto (1987) reached this conclusion: “Institutions with low rates of student retention are those in which students generally report low rates of student-faculty contact.
- Conversely, institutions with high rates of retention are most frequently those which are marked by relatively high rates of such interactions” (p. 66).



What Is Out-to-Lunch?

- Program for students to dine with faculty members on campus during lunch
- Allow students to interact with faculty members outside the classroom



How Out-to-Lunch Works

- Students choose a faculty member
- Students sign out a ticket at a number of campus locations
- Ticket is a voucher for faculty member's meal
 - Receive meal free with ticket and USC ID
- Student pays for own meal with their meal plan or other form of payment

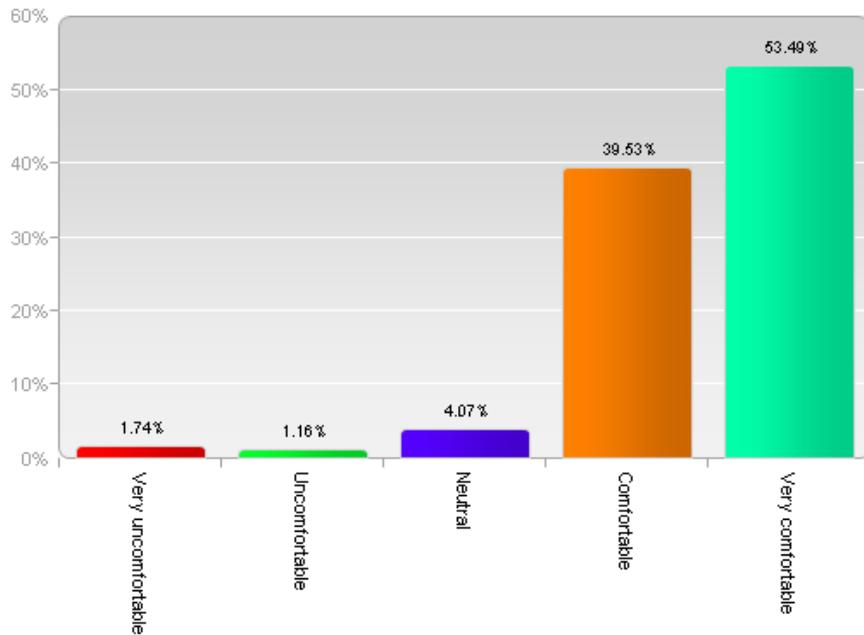


Out-to-Lunch Assessment

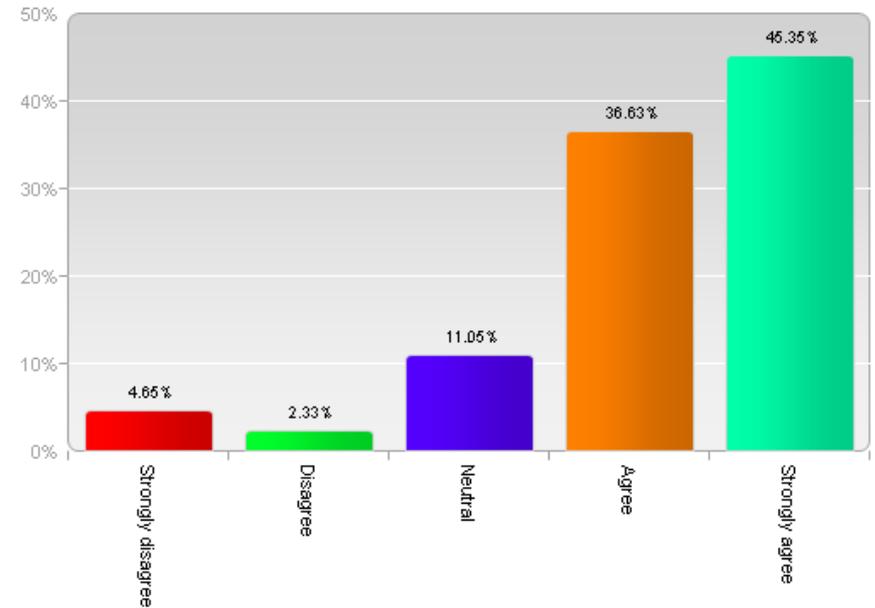
- Data collection
 - Ticket sign-out form
 - Student residence hall, major, year in school
 - Intended professor and ticket number
 - Student post-assessment
 - Rationale behind participation and professor selection
 - Student perceptions on knowledge gained
 - Comfort and satisfaction scales
 - Faculty post-assessment
 - Satisfaction, enjoyment, and recommendations



Q12. Please indicate how comfortable you were in the following situations: - Communicating with your professor AFTER using the Out-to-Lunch program



Q20. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: - I would recommend the OTL program to another student.

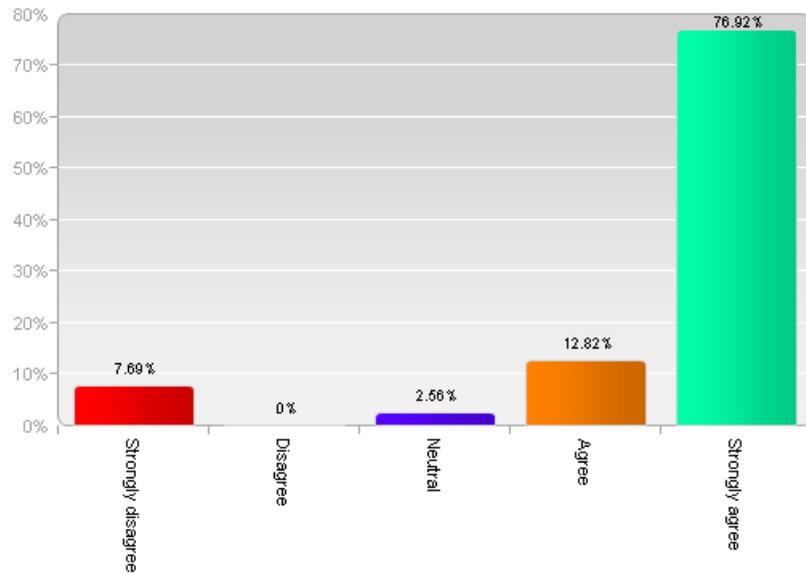


- **49.61%** participated in Out-to-Lunch as a class assignment
- **30.71%** utilized Out-to-Lunch as a way to get to know their professor better

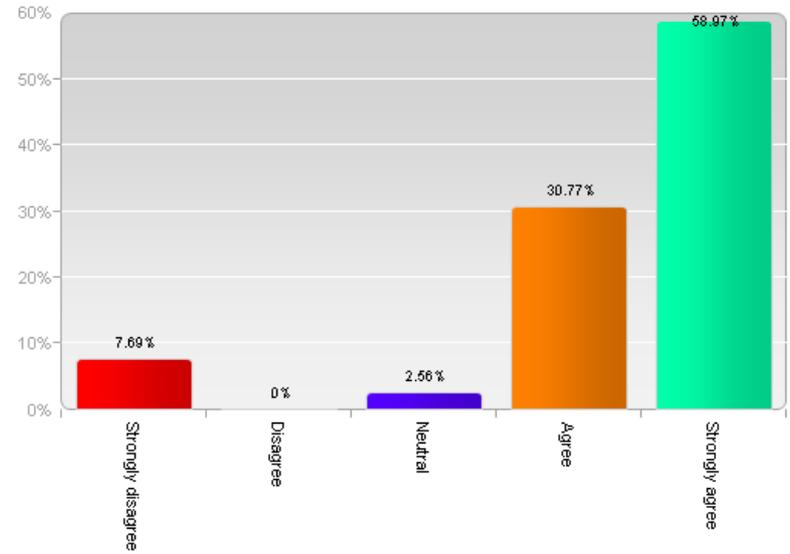
“I better learned the scope and sequence of the class over the next 8 weeks. Also, I learned my professor's expectations of high-performing students. Also, I learned how to better study, better prepare for the class, and also, I learned how to better utilize the 75 minutes in class each day.”



Q9. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: - I enjoyed participating in the Out-to-Lunch program.



Q10. Please indicate your level of agreement with the following statements: - I found the Out-to-Lunch program beneficial in establishing better communication with the student(s).



“I think this a great opportunity for a student to have that communication with their professor. It makes them stand out as a person and not just a number in these large classes.”

“I think this is a great idea to foster communication between students, especially freshmen who are often scared to come talk to professors about issues in class or on campus.”





Mutual Expectations Origins

- Based on a well-regarded program for undergraduate education at the University of Missouri that brings together students and teachers for open conversation
- The Mutual Expectations program explores the wide gap between students' understanding of faculty roles and the faculty members' understanding of student roles



USC Mutual Expectations

- Designed to bridge the gap in communication between faculty and students regarding their expectations of each other.
- Through both large and small groups, a structured dialogue encourages faculty and students to develop a more collaborative learning environment

Workshops



Mutual Expectations Facilitation

- Students and faculty come together for a 90-minute dialogue to discuss expectations of each other in the classroom.
- Students and faculty are evenly divided among a number of small discussion tables, where they are allowed to brainstorm individually, discuss expectations with their small group, and then share their thoughts and comments about specific expectations with the larger group.
- The dialogue concludes after attendees individually reflect on how they can modify their behaviors to impact the learning environment .



Mutual Expectations Facilitation

Potential Topics

- Academic Integrity
- Technology in the Classroom
- Supplemental Instructors and Professors
- Online Courses
- Syllabus Structure

Potential Partnerships

- The Center for Teaching Excellence
- The Student Government Association
- The Faculty Senate
- The Office of Judicial Affairs
- University Housing



Mutual Expectations Assessment

- Qualitative Data
 - Faculty and students learned that they must work together to have a great learning environment. Additionally, both agreed to be **more considerate** of the input of the other.
 - Students as a group defined the meaning of **academic integrity** and which produced a better understanding
 - Students perceived that as a result of **being able to talk and interact** with faculty outside of the classroom, they will respect and appreciate faculty more
 - Faculty suggested that students have **“changed”** less than generational thinkers propose and that they do care about their learning



Mutual Expectations

- Quantitative Data **Assessment**
 - During Fall 2010 The University of South Carolina hosted 2 Mutual Expectations Workshops
 - 99% of faculty and students who attended a Mutual Expectations workshop perceived the interaction as **“very helpful”** or **“helpful”**
 - When students were asked, “How helpful was this event to your learning?” all responded that it was **“very helpful”** or **“helpful”**
 - **Faculty** also all agreed that this workshop was either **“very helpful”** or **“helpful”** to their **overall teaching**



Benefits of Mutual Expectations Workshops

For Faculty

- To meet and interact with a group of students who they do not necessarily teach in the classroom.
- To receive beneficial and constructive feedback from students regarding general teaching and learning strategies to be applied in the classroom.
- To engage students in meaningful conversation regarding appropriate classroom behaviors.

For Students

- To interact and see professors in a role outside of their classroom environment in order to make professors more approachable.
- To communicate and share ideas about effective classroom instruction techniques based off of student needs.
- To receive feedback on the shared responsibility of having a successful class environment.



Academic & Student Affairs Partnerships

Out-to-Lunch

- Partnering with First-Year Seminars
 - Marketing at annual professional development event
 - Website for instructors to request tickets for entire class
 - Sample assignments, questions, etc.

Mutual Expectations

- Partnering with the Center for Teaching Excellence
 - Marketing at new faculty orientation; calendar of events
 - Website for management of RSVP and additional information
 - Academic Units (Online classes, residential colleges)



Challenges with Faculty/Student Initiatives

- Fear factor – overcoming the power dynamic between students & faculty
- Faculty buy-in & diversity in recruitment
- Avoiding the soapbox
- Assessing the long-term impact of the initiative



Strategies for Building Effective Partnerships

- Look for strong academic partners – Center for Teaching Excellence
- Build Partnerships around institutional and departmental missions and goal statements
- Clearly define academic partners role and commitment
- Meet early and often
- Leave credit with the academic unit



Recommendations for Implementation

- Support faculty development and instruction
- Market to specific populations (i.e. learning communities, on-line classes)
- Form cross campus partnerships
- Recruit students and faculty members who can serve as workshop facilitators
- Select topics that would interests both groups



Questions?

What are you doing on your campus?

Ways to promote faculty-student interaction?

Ways to motivate faculty?



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