Best Practices in DISTANCE LEARNING--STRATEGIES for STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

Use these methods to combine technology with the classroom setup to encourage student participation when you are conducting a synchronous session:

1. **Set expectations**. Post the session objectives and design—add details to the session information in D2L as a News item.

2. **Establish the classroom communication opportunities and orient students:**
   a. Add card sets at the far site; use them for students to display at their tables; the card can alert you to questions or problems.
   b. Use cards for students to post quick responses to your multiple choice questions.

c. Stress group/team/table participation.

   d. Maintain a communications channel/online discussion in a D2L forum, Top Hat or Skype for Business.
   e. Start class with a microphone-practice session. Insist students use microphones--and model this by always using yours--so remote students can hear discussions.

3. **Ensure your presence.** An instructor is "perceived as 'present'…when visible to the students". Start class from the front of the room with the camera focused on you.
   a. Establish a sense of community with introductions.

b. Respond quickly and frequently.
c. Model attentiveness.

4. **Diversify the structure of your session.**
   a. Switch formats every 20 minutes.
   b. Change up quiz structures: short answer, opinion open-book, take-home, online prior to class.
   c. Integrate multimedia media materials--video, mobile apps or website--to support your content.
   d. Use an iPad and the Doceri™ whiteboard feature to create, display and annotate flipcharts.
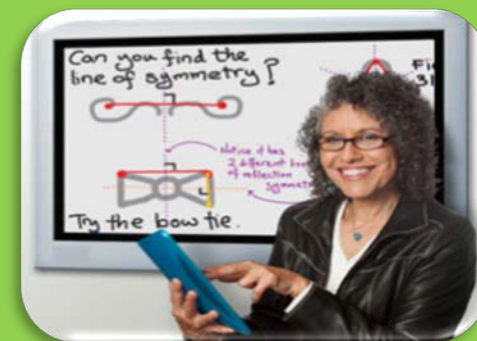
5. **Recognize the value of engagement** ("amount, type and intensity of investment students make in their educational experiences") **by asking for feedback on a regular basis, throughout the session and at the wrap-up.**
   a. Post a 60-second survey to close each session.
   b. Create a FAQ list based on any questions received.