FIT 2012-13: Student Survey Results

Prepared by 2012-13 FIT members Michele Jenkins and Kody Lightfoot
February 2013
Data Collection

What: We created a student survey addressing students’ perceptions of faculty-student interaction. We received 165 responses.

When: The surveys were administered November-December 2012.

Where: Rancho Cucamonga Campus

Why: We wanted to get a general sense of how students at Chaffey felt about faculty interaction and to read their actual comments. We wanted to see the thoughts, ideas, attitudes, and opinions expressed from a wide variety of students in a broad sampling of majors/general interest courses. We were curious if the results would compare to the research we had read about faculty-student interaction, and we hoped to get a general idea of the issues students were having and the ways in which these issues could be addressed.

How: Michele gave the survey to 51 of her general education dance students (though the majority were not dance majors and represented a wide range of majors). Additionally, one of her students gathered 13 more surveys from math/science/engineering students. Kody enlisted the help of her ENGL 1A and 1B students who gave the surveys to friends, peers, and club members. They gathered 101 results from students of various majors. We each conducted and analyzed our surveys separately and then compared and compiled the results.
Faculty-Student Interaction:
Variables that affect faculty-student interaction

1 This was compiled based on the following articles: “Faculty Do Matter: The Role of College Faculty in Student Learning and Engagement” (Umbach and Wawrzynski); “Exclusion and Inclusion in Student-Faculty Informal Interaction: A Critical Perspective” (Mook); “Different Patterns of Student-Faculty Interaction in Research Universities: An Analysis of Student Gender, Race, SES, and First-Generation Status” (Kim and Sax); “Faculty and Student Out-Of-Classroom Interaction: Student Perceptions of Quality of Interaction” (Alderman).
Summary of Survey Results

1A. Do you interact with your instructors outside of the classroom?
(“Interaction” can include emails, discussion, conversation before/after class, visiting office hours, etc).

1B. Do you actively seek out time with your instructor(s) out of class?

General findings:

When the question was “do you interact with faculty outside of class,” the majority said yes, but of those, the vast majority specified, “email only.”

When the question was, “do you ACTIVELY seek out of class time with your instructors,” the majority said no.

Some student comments:

1) Yes, I correspond frequently with instructors through email and have some before/after discussions with them.

2) I interact with instructors after class or with email, but only if it’s important such as missing a class or clarification on an assignment. Although, I don’t do it often.

3) Yes, but most of the time it is only through email. Sometimes it is for questions but most of the time it is just to inform them that I won’t be able to make class. Often times I just try to figure out the answers to my questions myself.

4) Yes, I email my teacher if I need to ask a question or if I need help. She responds the days I email her and will answer my questions. If I happen to go to class early I will have short little conversations with my teacher as well.

5) No, in the three semesters I’ve gone to school I’ve never interacted with my instructors. The only time I’ve emailed them was to let them know I wasn’t going to be there.

6) Yes, sometimes only when I need to

7) Yes, in emails

8) Yes, through email and Moodle board discussion and office hours

9) I usually do interact with my professors outside of class time. Whenever I need help from my teacher or when they want to catch up on how my water polo season is coming out.

10) Yes, if I need extra help with anything or if I just need advice, I go to one of the teachers I’m closest to

11) Yes, I do but by email, the ability to communicate your ideas effectively through email is very important tool and an excellent way to communicate with your instructor

12) Yes, I do interact with my professor outside of classrooms. I use emails mostly or I discuss thing after class

13) Yes, I don’t do it as much but I do make time for it

14) Sometimes, but only when I need to
15) Nope, not at all
16) Nope, don’t see the point to
17) No, to me it shows over-eagerness. Or more, I just like to keep to myself and only interact when absolutely necessary
18) Yes, I do interact with my teacher outside by email and conversation after class hours
19) Yes, by email after class
20) When you need to
21) Yes, emails big time
22) Yes, office hours/email
23) Mostly, no

2. If you seek out-of class time with an instructor, is it mainly concerning a component of the course? (ie: getting a question answered, assignments/homework clarification and/or assistance, grades, etc.)

General Findings:

The majority only seek answers to course components, questions about class work, or their grade in class. Although some of the students mentioned, “friendship,” “personal matters,” or “talk about their expertise,” this was only a handful.

Some student comments:

1) Yes, when I seek out of class time with an instructor it is concerning a question about an assignment, or clarification on something spoken about in class
2) Normally when I seek out help it is only when I feel like my question is really important and will help me, but normally I try to solve things on my own
3) Usually if I am contacting my professor outside of class it’s because I don’t quite understand something and might need more clarification. Sometimes my questions are about assignments but mostly to clear up confusion
4) Never done it
5) Mostly for getting questions answered and grades
6) Yes, regarding my grade or specific assignment
7) Homework and clarification
8) Assignment clarification and getting questions answered
9) Yes, I do seek out of class when I do not understand something. First I talk to them in class, to see if they are rude or bothered with one of my concerns I might have and if he/she is not then I go talk to them in their office hours
10) Yes, I just talk to my instructors about my grades or missing assignments
11) Yes, I talk to my instructors about how I stress when I’m taking exams and stuff like that
12) Yes, I usually ask about grades and homework clarification
13) Yes I do that all the time it usually concerns asking questions about homework, grade, and homework clarification
14) Just grades
15) Yea mostly on grades or something I don’t understand
16) Only grades
17) If I do, it be because of my grade
18) Homework, grades, just for a chat
19) Yes, concerns assignments, homework, help on essays, feedback
20) --instructors don’t care about students
21) --wouldn’t discuss personal matters, personally don’t like it
22) --few personal, never leads to friendships or pertaining to emotional topics
23) --have gone back for college, career, or life personal advice

3. When creating a rapport with a faculty member outside of class, what are you hoping to gain from the relationship/bond? A specific question about a component of the course? General interest in subject matter/discipline? Just to create a friendship? College plans/advice? Someone to talk to because of personal problems/emotional hardships/personal advice?

General findings:

Again, the majority specified that “rapport” involved getting information about the course, but far more also circled “friendship,” “personal advice,” and “college plans,” which possibly suggests that even though students aren’t discussing these topics with instructors (see question #2), they would like to. It’s also possible that they don’t even realize they can seek advice about subjects other than course components from their instructors.

1) --professional advice—never go to instructor who is perceived as mean or demeaning
2) --gain wisdom/life lessons/mentor/friend
3) --I don’t build bonds
4) --only email, no bonds
5) to feel comfortable to talk about anything
6) --from Michele Jenkins’ class—realizing it’s time to form relationships with instructors to succeed at Chaffey
7) I have mainly created a rapport with a faculty member outside of class strictly due to dealing with questions about the class, however, it has been on occasion when I have created a friendship with the instructor and kept in touch.
8) When I talk to an instructor outside of class usually it’s pertaining to the class subject, but sometimes I’ll ask for a letter of recommendation
9) I hardly ever communicate with my professors unless it is just to answer a question about an assignment, so it is never to create a real relationship or friendship.
10) When I meet my teachers I am able to see the type of personality they have and I go from there. If they are friendly and inquisitive I enjoy having conversations during the semester. I would look to a professor that I got along with to ask for college advice as well as personal advice.

11) I don’t create rapport with a faculty member

12) I want them to know that I care about the class. A specific question is how I can improve my work in class

13) I usually like becoming friends with my teachers. They are great counselors and give great advice

14) I get a little nervous trying to create a relationship with a professor but I do talk to them on a quick bases but I try to make them know that I do care about the class and that I’m trying in the course

4. What does “quality interaction” between a faculty member and a student outside of class mean to you? What would quality time entail? Define quality.

General Findings:

This student summarized the findings well: “Quality interaction would be any interaction where the student . . . walked away with something, whether it be an answer to a question, some sort of new knowledge, or just walked away feeling like they had a nice conversation like they were talking to someone they knew”

Although some students did mention more personal interactions (friendship, general conversation), for the majority, “quality interaction” simply meant getting their questions about the course answered. For a few, “quality interaction” meant time that actually resulted in better grades/success in the course. A few also mentioned that “quality” meant the teacher was not only taking the time to answer questions but actually seemed to WANT to take the time (as one said, “quality” means an instructor has an “open heart and mind”).

Note: A few students seemed to misinterpret the words, “relationship” and “quality” in relation to instructors, or—at least—seemed uncomfortable with the word choice. As one student wrote, quality interaction would be “kinda weird.” Fifteen or so students made it a point to specify that the relationship should remain “professional.”

1) --individual attention, not rushing
2) --thorough conversation—longer periods of time
3) --totally focused on topics and person
4) --genuine, appropriate, kind
5) --getting to know them personally and their struggles and what they did to overcome them, it’s comforting
6) --having the instructor understand what I want to get out of the course, my goals and progress, getting their opinion
7) --getting to know each other—caring instructor—not just office hours
8) —strengthen students’ understanding and confidence in course
9) —one on one discussions, not surface—knowing each other on a more emotional level—
   if instructors knew students’ life, dreams, and hardships, more enjoyable at school and
   more student/teacher respect, not just a number
10) —honesty and care about my well being, out of class interaction is so important to
    enhance in-class experience, can’t give equal time to every student in class
11) —go above and beyond to help me succeed—matching me in my efforts, meeting me
    halfway, listen fully, understanding each other, no pre-judging, no bias, no preconceived
    notions
12) —supportive, organized, consistent, wouldn’t necessarily need outside of class quality
    time
13) Quality interaction between a faculty member and a student would be more than just
    question and answer conversation but also sharing personal information and
    exchanging familiarities. Quality is something that requires both parties to be present
    and engaged.
14) A faculty to take the time and actually listen with an open heart and mind
15) Spending time unrelated to school, quality worth doing, enjoying, better
16) Quality time: when I’m meeting with my instructor and he tells me where I need to
    improve, and the improvements I should take
17) It shows that the teacher is willing to listen and cares about its students. Quality time to
    me would be professionally one-on-one conversation
18) Quality interactions mean that the professor takes off his time to help a student.
    Quality time entail means that professor are not rushing to speak with you but give you
    time to discuss with him/her
19) Wow! That’s a good question. I see it as a meeting that you’re able to take some
    knowledge or skill opportunity away from it.

5. Is there a particular attitude or behavior(s) or something else that you see in a
   professor that draws you to him/her versus another professor? Conversely, is
   there an attitude that makes you hesitant to contact an instructor? Explain.

General findings:

These comments confirm what we’ve been reading: instructor behavior both in and outside of the
classroom affects whether or not a student will seek help. The students repeatedly commented that
they are more likely to contact professors who are “open” and “funny.” They also repeatedly
mentioned professors who “care about what they do” and seem to actually care about helping the
students both during class and during conferencing. A number of students also mentioned
“intelligence” and instructors with “expertise.”

Conversely, students repeatedly mentioned they are hesitant to contact instructors who are,
“strict,” “mean,” or in a “bad mood.” Many said that they are hesitant around professors who are
“just doing their job” without passion (and they stressed that students can tell when this is the case) or who “shut down” questions or get angry in the classroom.

A number of students mentioned that they will go to professors who “find out who needs help” and who often remind students about office hour times and locations.

1) Yes, instructors that share common ground with their students are easier to talk to. Also, instructors that are overall positive and actually look like they want to help you out, makes it a whole lot easier to go up and talk to them. Instructor, that seem distant or cold towards student make me hesitant to contact them.

2) The way they act. If they actually want to be there and if they’re nice and open with themselves, then we can be too.

3) Draws—Interesting, nice, intelligent. Hesitant—hard grader, scary, strict

4) Only attitude that makes me not want to interact with an instructor is when they seem to be in a bad mood/having a bad day or when they seem boring to me and don’t make class interesting.

5) I enjoy all of my professors. They are very good educators and wonderful human beings.

6) Yes, when the instructor does not show the effort to help every student and just picks on the people in the front.

7) A true love for teaching and a friendly attitude

8) The smile, or the willingness to help

9) One of the things that a professor draws to me is when they are friendly to their students and continue to tell students that they could come to their office at any time, if they have questions, comments or just want to talk about anything to improve.

10) Realistic teachers, teachers that seem to know what they know without looking at the textbook.

B. Teachers that are intimidating; don’t seem to care.

11) No qualities; if I have a question, I ask, not matter what

12) Nice, welcoming/ ignoring, tell me to go to success center when I’m in the office/ keep office locked

13) Intelligence and personality as well as a passion to educate and equip their students for the future

14) I feel more comfortable talking to professor that are down to earth, smart but simple.

15) I’m drawn to warm, interactive teachers who love their job and being as helpful as possible compared to teachers who talk at me rather than to me and avoid teachers who are only there for the money.

16) Humor and willingness to help. We can tell when it’s just a paycheck or if they really enjoy working with others

17) --competence and kindness

18) --truly passionate, not just giving class, the passion and hard work is admirable

19) --confidence and friendliness makes them approachable

20) --goes out of their way to address you personally after class, creates trust

21) --sense of humor, passionate, friendly

22) --always willing to answer questions, reach out when the student isn’t doing well, talkative and encouraging students not to be afraid to seek help
23) --honesty, someone I respect, caring and nurturing, automatically drawn to this 
24) --caring and wants students to pass, not when a professor starts off with “half of you will 
probably fail” no point in taking the class 
25) --doing grade checks, reaching out to students, gives opportunities and mentors them 
26) --don’t help DPS students or take extra time to help them 
27) --not getting angry when students are trying to do their best, not too rigid, make class 
enjoyable, not weird 
28) --passionate, personable, not short or uncaring 
29) --call you by name, recognize you, nice

6. In terms of out-of-class interaction with an instructor, does it matter if they are 
full time or adjunct faculty, or is it based on the individual instructor? Do you 
know which of your instructors is full time or adjunct?

General Findings:

The vast majority (over 90%) stated that it did not matter if the instructor was full time or adjunct, that 
it was based on the individual instructor. Five students said that it did matter, that adjuncts are hard to 
track down and that full time seem more in tune with their students. They also wrote that full time 
faculty are easier to reach and that having a place to meet and talk is very helpful. One student said 
some adjuncts are better than full time faculty. About half said they did not know which of their 
teachers were full time or adjunct.

7. Are you more likely to seek contact with instructors in some disciplines as 
opposed to others? More likely if it is your major? Or is it just by instructor?

About 60% of the students said it really just depended on instructor. 20% said by major. 10% said 
“both,” and the last 10% were either unclear with their response or did not respond at all. Several 
stated they go to instructors of the subjects that interest them, not necessarily their majors; some 
stated they go to instructors of subjects that are harder or that they need extra help with. A handful of 
students said that some disciplines are more conducive for seeking out-of-class contact because they are 
more “personal.”

8. Are you ever hesitant, reluctant, or intimidated when it comes to actively 
seeking out-of-class interaction with an instructor because you feel that you are 
imposing on the instructor? (Even if the instructor clearly states that they are 
available and that they welcome students to come to them?) What else keeps 
you from contacting an instructor?
General findings:

About 50% of the students said they were sometimes reluctant to meet with instructors. Some of the reasons dealt with instructor attitude in and outside of the class. Students again emphasized that they are less likely to contact “rude” instructors or instructors who seem to be bothered by student questions. A small percentage said they weren’t hesitant because they either don’t care or never seek out their professors, period.

Those who are hesitant mentioned that they feel like they are “imposing”—they worry about looking “stupid,” or about taking up too much of the professor’s time. A few mentioned that they felt they weren’t on the “same level” as the instructor. Others mentioned “shyness.”

Sample student comments:

1) --I feel like I’m a bother and am imposing;
2) --It’s unprofessional;
3) --I fear a negative reaction if they are busy;
4) --I have one teacher that is so busy, they only have office hours at 5am, I don’t know anyone who would try to contact that teacher so early in the morning! ;
5) --don’t like to be a bother;
6) --don’t know the boundaries;
7) --don’t want to make them uncomfortable;
8) --some teachers want nothing to do with their students;
9) --there is a line drawn between teacher/student, I might take away some of their authority if we interact outside of class, then might view them as peer, not a superior
10) --not many push that they are available;
11) --I feel like a burden
12) --one was so uncomfortable that I had to go to the dean
13) --don’t know how they’ll treat me as a DPS student;
14) --don’t seem like they want to help
15) --say they are available just because they have to;
16) --feels like I’m showing them that I wasted their time.
17) Sometimes hesitant and never understood why—it’s just how I’ve always been
18) I don’t like to bother people
19) Most instructors don’t want to be disturbed
20) I don’t like to be a burden on anyone’s time if they’re not interested
21) Yes, some instructors make me feel this way
22) Yes, because instructor “have” to put office hours—even if they don’t want to
23) Yes, I generally don’t like talking to others
24) I feel like I offend them by asking stupid questions
25) Some just don’t have time
26) Imposing, a lot of students feel like they are bothering them, even though they are a good teacher
27) If they don’t use their email I most likely won’t talk to them
28) I don’t want to bother them, or I feel like there’s no point because they honestly don’t want to take the time
29) The only time I am hesitant is when they haven’t been responsive in the past
30) If the teacher makes it clear that they are available, then I am usually not hesitant.

9. What are your suggestions for promoting student/faculty out-of-class interaction? (Alternate question on Michele’s surveys: What comments do you want to make about the success or deficiency of out-of-class contact between faculty and students here at Chaffey?)

General findings:

Students emphasized instructor attitude—they suggested instructors be more “open” and to communicate their office hours more frequently.

They also gave advice to other students—urging them to go to office hours. Some suggested that we should make it more clear to students how important office hours are.

Other suggested more out-of-class activities: barbeques, food in general, meet-and-greets.

Still others suggested more office hours, office hours for adjuncts, and extra tutoring sessions (led by the instructor) outside of class.

Sample student comments:

1) --if you don’t feel important, it’s easier to fail, the more you know your professor, the more you’ll succeed
2) --instructors make themselves available, but students don’t take advantage
3) --a lot more contact in certain departments like arts and psychology, more closed off in history and math
4) --feel they are there for me if I need them
5) --no deficiency, but could be improved
6) --believe all of my instructors and counselors are caring and invested in my educational growth, everyone I’ve seen here has been warm and open
7) --they do a great job contacting students outside of class
8) --I feel the majority of students do not care about their education enough to ask questions
9) --would like to see improvement or communication between faculty and students
10) --if you want students to approach professors, then professors need to be approachable—kind, helpful, not overly critical, or strapped for time
11) --some are more welcoming than others, so probably why there isn’t much contact here
12) --students should be encouraged to seek out-of-class interaction when they are given their first orientation at Chaffey, lack of this is because students are scared, like me
13) --faculty make more obvious interest in success of their students, then students will feel more comfortable seeking out of class contact
14) --I’ve had success with the few times I sought professors
15) --didn’t think it was an issue, but now I see that it’s important for students’ success
16) --grade checks or check-ins every few weeks, student appointments, reaching out to a mentor
17) --professors should mention more about out of class contact with faculty to student
18) --professors should experiment with what works best for different personalities, give options—
    on an individual basis—office hours may be great for some, not others
19) --maybe instructors should try to influence out of class contact
20) --students get it if they seek it, teachers are available usually from my experience
21) --instructors don’t encourage it enough, if so, I’d feel more comfortable
22) --if instructors were more open, we are generally shy and unsure of ourselves, if professors
    sought us out—made the first move—need the push, make students feel accepted/wanted on a
    personal level, not just academic level, this would boost student confidence
23) --instructors need to be less intimidating—one English teacher just stared when I asked a
    question—was really critical in criticism
24) --didn’t know it was an issue, I see now that it can make a big impact on student success and
    social skills and networking in general
25) --open offices available to adjunct instructors for office hours, instructors required to use offices
    a few times a week to open communication with students
26) --it’s been great for me so far
27) --students just want to go home after class, are too busy to make time, or don’t acknowledge if
    they are doing poorly
28) --instructors should view their ratings on Rate My Professor and act accordingly. There are
    instructors just going through the motions—should be a seminar/workshop to point this out to
    instructors
29) --it goes both ways—both student and teacher need to be proactive—they both have to care
    about it to be successful. Students need to be taught how to communicate to their teachers—
    some are lazy, don’t want to make the effort. Some teachers need to change their attitude
    about students—if they tell their students they are stupid, it doesn’t work—or don’t want to
    help or are too haughty about it
30) --only be used sparingly and only for student success/increase learning
31) --need more opportunities for out of class connection
32) --didn’t think it was important—I’m shy and work independently. I think this is a case with
    lower-income students who don’t get opportunities to talk to adults. Think it’s probably
    important now
33) --most are passionate and go out of their way
34) The instructors are doing their job—it’s up to the students

**FINAL THOUGHTS AND SUGGESTIONS**

These findings confirm research about variables that affect faculty-student interaction. (See chart on
page 3 and research after this section).

Some students seek interaction and some don’t. Some faculty are really great at promoting interaction,
and others aren’t. The key is to promote a *culture of interaction* across the campus: community,
student, faculty, and staff.
What can WE do to enhance this?

- Focus on becoming (or continuing to be) the kinds of teachers that foster interaction (open, kind, fair, etc) in the classroom and during office hours.
- Teach students to BE students. The findings show that many students don’t know what it means to be a successful student. This includes teaching them the HOPEFUL mindset. Teach them to set goals, find their OWN sense of agency, use support services outside of the classroom (including you).
- Urge counselors, who already provide essential and beneficial student orientation, to include information about student/faculty contact.
- Create a classroom that is open to discussion and collaboration—a student centered classroom. Initial findings show that students WANT a sense of community; they WANT to be part of something, and regardless of what they project to us, they WANT to learn. Students who feel a sense of community are more likely to seek interaction outside of the classroom.
- Teach them the importance of office hours and KEEP REMINDING THEM. (Give them both strategic and deep learning reasons: those who attend office hours in general do better in school and often improve essay grades. On a deeper level, those who attend office hours can engage with the issues on a more thoughtful level and take that critical thinking with them beyond the classroom.)
- Students with lower self concept or who are shy need more nudging. General announcements reminding students that you are there to help them—and are happy to help—assuage the fears of the more timid students. A more direct approach is to ask those students to come to office hours.
- Bring more deep thinking activities and higher order cognitive processes into the classroom (as opposed to focusing solely on surface level or strategic level learning). Foster a joy of learning and discovery. Deep thinkers do better in the long run and are more apt to seek extra advice and discussion with faculty. Research shows that students are more interactive when asked to use higher order cognition in the classroom (such as the type of thinking utilized in a reading apprenticeship classroom).

What can the college do? Create a culture of interaction.

- Institutional structures/policies, faculty/counselor perceptions/attitudes, and student perceptions/attitudes are all part of the equation when investigating and improving student/faculty out-of-class interaction.
- Have meet and greets or orientation where students hear—from faculty and current students—the steps to becoming successful in community college and beyond. This includes reinforcing the HOPEFUL mindset and the importance of faculty/student interaction.
• Pay adjuncts to hold office hours. Not doing so suggests that office hours aren’t really important, and it sets up a confusing environment for students: some professors are accessible and some aren’t. A truly interactive college is one that embraces and reinforces that interactive philosophy with the entire faculty.

• Let faculty know how important their role is in this culture of interaction. Share with faculty the importance of maintaining office hours and being accessible. Share the research with faculty—remind them that faculty-student interaction is a major key to student success now and beyond community college.

• Find ways to create a larger sense of community and to communicate with students about clubs and activities on campus.

• Use the schedule of classes, catalogs, Chaffey home page, and other literature (in addition to syllabi) as valuable sources of information about out-of-class student/faculty interaction.

• Institutional level—create opportunities for out-of-class interaction—set up built in procedures that facilitate student/faculty interaction.

• Hold formal, planned, and scheduled orientation meetings—for instance, Fall Back to School Orientations from each program, led by program full time and adjunct faculty, provide necessary information including ways to contact instructors and the benefits of making connections.

• Elicit continual student feedback via student evaluations for faculty; restructure evaluation form to include questions like, “Is this instructor available during their scheduled office hours?”; “Does this instructor encourage out-of-class contact?”; “Does this instructor offer help or support of class assignments and/or projects outside of class?”; “Does this instructor respond to emails or calls in a timely manner?”
From Faculty Focus “Enhancing Out-of-Class Communication: Students’ Top 10 Suggestions”

--Teachers have the responsibility to encourage, to entice, our students to meet us face-to-face; in-class communication (in-class behavior) sets the stage for out-of-class communication:

1. Be there for office hours, keep appointments, make time
2. Arrive early/stay after (even in a hallway), prime time for student questions
3. Give invitation to visit, give “by appointment” option
4. Tell them you are available to help, tell them you enjoy talking to students, including course-related and discipline-related
5. Use email to connect socially and academically, promptly respond with friendly greetings and closings, send emails to whole class for assistance on assignments or projects
6. Write email and office hours on board regularly, say more times than you think that you welcome questions, comments, and chance to interact
7. Learn names, recognize and greet students when you see them, smile, wave
8. Give specific feedback on assignments/projects, allow revisions before assigning final grade, offer tutorials and invite small groups to attend
9. Schedule midterm consultations, review progress and goal-setting
10. Provide home or cell number for emergencies—students appreciate this caring gesture

From “Race Differences in the Impact of Students’ Out-of-Class Interactions with Faculty”

--“many institutions have embarked upon strategies to encourage more out-of-class interaction between students and faculty such as creating various types of living-learning communities” (Gabelnick, MacGregor, Matthews, & Smith, 1990; Shapiro & Levine, 1999) “and establishing undergraduate research programs” (Kardash, 2000; Strange & Banning, 2001). (pg.102)

--“Evidence further suggests that different types of interactions – such as socializing at a party as compared to discussing course selection in a faculty member’s office –differ in the nature of their impact on students’ college experiences, with interactions that concern academic or intellectual issues having a stronger impact than interactions that are primarily personal or social in nature” (Cabrera et al., 1999; Endo & Harpel, 1982; Kuh & Hu, 2001b; Pascarella & Terenzini, 1977; Pascarella, Terenzini, & Hibel, 1978; Terenzini & Pascarella, 1980; Wilson et al., 1975). (pg. 103)
—“Previous research has shown that gender shapes the association between interactions with faculty and college outcomes” (Bean & Vesper, 1994; Nora et al., 1996; Sax, Bryant, & Harper, 2005). “Specifically, interactions related to academic and career issues appear to be more consequential for male students, while contacts that are less academically-oriented and more social in nature have greater impact on college outcomes for female students” (Bean & Kuh, 1984; Kuh, 1995; Spady, 1971). (pg. 104)

—“Extant research suggests that the extent to which faculty promote active participation by students within the classroom is a precursor to students seeking out further contact with them outside of class” (Berger & Milem, 1999; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005; Wilson, Woods, & Gaff, 1974). (pg. 126)

From “Pedagogical Signals of Faculty Approachability: Factors Shaping Faculty–Student Interaction Outside the Classroom”

—“the frequency and type of out-of-class interactions are a result of faculty members’ in-class behaviors that signal for students the instructors’ ‘psychosocial approachability’” (Wilson et al. 1974, 1975). (pg. 768)

—“The effects of those contacts manifest themselves in a wide array of academic, cognitive, psychosocial, and attitudinal areas. Positive student outcomes linked with faculty–student interaction include grade-point average (Anaya and Cole 2001), persistence (Pascarella and Terenzini 1977), self-reports of learning (Lundberg and Schreiner 2004), plans for graduate study (Hathaway et al. 2002), social integration/adjustment (Schwitzer et al. 1999), and a variety of other educationally valuable activities” (Kuh and Hu 2001). (pg. 768)

—“previous research suggests that student–faculty contact outside the classroom is a relatively rare occurrence. Despite the consistent findings that students’ interactions with faculty members outside the classroom contribute to a number of positive educational outcomes, Pascarella’s (1980) review produced ample evidence that relatively few students report such interactions, and most of the contacts are infrequent. Moreover, this phenomenon appeared common at the majority of academic institutions. Recent evidence indicates that little has changed in the past 50 years and that such interactions remain relatively infrequent” (Chang 2005; Cotten and Wilson 2006; Cox and Orehovec 2007). (pg. 769)

—“Vianden found that many students do not know how—or even why—to interact with faculty members outside the classroom. Data from the National Survey of Student Engagement (2008) suggest that, during their years at college, students may develop an understanding of the purpose and process of contacting faculty members outside of class. First-year students, as well as those who are generally unfamiliar with college norms (e.g., first generation students) or with lower levels of self-confidence or self-efficacy may be especially uncomfortable talking with faculty members.” (pg. 769)

—“faculty members who have a student-centered philosophy of education and believe that teaching is a critical part of their role as professors consistently display higher levels of out-of-class interaction with students (Cotten and Wilson 2006; Einarson and Clarkberg 2004; Golde and Pribenow 2000). So, too, do faculty members with friendly personalities and strong interpersonal skills (Einarson and Clarkberg 2004; Wilson et al. 1974). These characteristics may shape teaching behaviors and styles that signal to students the professors’ interest in and availability to students outside of class.
For example, faculty members’ signals of their “psychosocial accessibility” to students (Wilson et al. 1974, 1975) can take multiple forms, some obvious (e.g., occasionally, but repeatedly, inviting students to ask questions during or after class), others more subtle (e.g., facial expressions, keeping office hours, responding to questions in ways that reflect a genuine interest in helping students learn). These behaviors, in turn, may encourage students to seek such out-of-class contact with instructors” (Cotten and Wilson 2006; Snow 1973). (pg. 769)

“out-of-class interaction is the direct result of professors’ in-class pedagogical behaviors and other professional statuses/activities. These practices are themselves shaped by both instructors’ personal characteristics and institutional environments. The relationship between casual and substantive interaction is a source of uncertainty” (pg. 770)

“it may be that the student side of the faculty–student interaction equation is actually the driving force and that the variability attributable to the faculty members themselves is relatively minor. Perhaps students enter a particular class with a predisposition to either engage with instructors outside of class or to avoid such out-of-class contact.” (pg. 786)

“While we have explored pedagogical practices as potential signals, it may be that students are tuned in to more subtle indicators. Tone of voice, facial expressions, and other nonverbal—often unintentional—signals may be more important than the presentations or assignments given by the professor. So, too, might a professor’s level of preparation for class or the manner in which office hours are listed on the syllabus affect students’ perceptions of faculty openness.” (pg. 786)

From “Student and Faculty Perceptions of Engagement in Engineering” (ideas about student engagement that can springboard to out-of-class interaction)

“Engagement remains a multifaceted phenomenon. For students, engagement is defined by faculty involvement and interest in the material, their involvement in the course, and by their participation in a project or doing additional work for the course. However, almost half of the first-year students and two-thirds of the second year students expect faculty to engage them. Students report that something about the professors’ presence, whether it is their teaching style or their ability to express excitement for the discipline, makes courses engaging. In addition, students cite components of the course in which students play an active role (i.e., the labs, simulations, discussions, projects) as enhancing their engagement. The importance of the faculty member in stimulating engagement supports findings from Gonveau and Dascoli’s (2004) study of pharmaceutical school students in which they found that faculty enthusiasm and genuine interest in student learning contributed to learning. It is important for faculty to recognize that their teaching style and devotion to their discipline are noted and valued by students. Students’ focus on faculty traits and actions represents a departure from much of the research noted previously, which tend to define engagement in terms of students’ behavior and actions. While students view engagement as a commodity supplied by the faculty, faculty define it by students’ actions (i.e., students’ participation in class discussions). Faculty expect students to be engaged and view the subject matter as inherently engaging. It is the interactions and questions in class and the quality of the class presentation that faculty view as a measure of student engagement. It
might be said that faculty see engagement in terms of learning outcomes while students see it in terms of the input provided by faculty.” (pg. 258-259)

--“as Hickey and Granada (2004) state, engagement is achieved within a community—a community that requires sensitivity on the part of the faculty and students to make these opportunities more welcoming for all. This study suggests that there is not a single definition of engagement.” (pg. 259)

1 These are examples but are not necessarily representative of the general findings. For instance, we eliminated duplicate responses (“yes” and “no”). The point was to convey an idea of some of the things that students had to say. We also tried to maintain the students’ original grammar and spelling.