

**USING TRUST GENERATORS AS A FRAMEWORK FOR  
BUILDING TRUST AT DELAWARE TECHNICAL COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE**

by

Michelle L. Keenan

An Education Leadership Portfolio submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education in Educational Leadership

Spring 2025

© 2025 Michelle L. Keenan  
All Rights Reserved

**USING TRUST GENERATORS AS A FRAMEWORK FOR  
BUILDING TRUST AT DELAWARE TECHNICAL COMMUNITY  
COLLEGE**

by

Michelle L. Keenan

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Steven Amendum, Ph.D.  
Director of the School of Education

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Rena Hallam, Ph.D.  
Interim Dean of the College of Education and Human Development

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_  
Louis F. Rossi, Ph.D.  
Vice Provost for Graduate and Professional Education and  
Dean of the Graduate College

I certify that I have read this Education Leadership Portfolio and that in my opinion it meets the academic and professional standard required by the University as an Education Leadership Portfolio for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Signed:

---

Rachel Karchmer-Klein, Ph.D.  
Professor in Charge of Education Leadership Portfolio

I certify that I have read this Education Leadership Portfolio and that in my opinion it meets the academic and professional standard required by the University as an Education Leadership Portfolio for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Signed:

---

Lisa Peel, Ed.D.  
Member of Education Leadership Portfolio Committee

I certify that I have read this Education Leadership Portfolio and that in my opinion it meets the academic and professional standard required by the University as an Education Leadership Portfolio for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Signed:

---

Elizabeth N. Farley-Ripple, Ph.D.  
Member of Education Leadership Portfolio Committee

I certify that I have read this Education Leadership Portfolio and that in my opinion it meets the academic and professional standard required by the University as an Education Leadership Portfolio for the degree of Doctor of Education.

Signed:

---

Elizabeth Soslau, Ph.D.  
Member of Education Leadership Portfolio Committee

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

I would like to start by thanking my advisor, Dr. Rachel Karchmer-Klein, whose counsel, leadership, and friendship over the last several years has made this journey possible. To my committee members, Dr. Elizabeth Soslau, Dr. Elizabeth Farley-Ripple, and Dr. Lisa Peel, thank you for your guidance and the push for excellence.

To my cohort, and especially Courtney Powell, I will forever be grateful that we took this journey together. Courtney, thank you for all of our car rides to Newark, our writing days in the conference room, and the texts and phone calls and emails reminding me that I can make it through this. I'm most grateful for your friendship.

To my LB, I may always be a Howie at heart. I would not be where I am today without you. To Kitt, Misi, Robert, and Starr, your support has kept me going even on the worst days.

To Josh, whenever I present a new dream, you find a way to help me make it come true. You never waver in your support, loyalty, and love, even on the days when I don't feel those things for myself. You are what makes this life possible. I love you, Always.

To my L3, Logan, Lillian, and Leia, you are the reason I do all things and my motivation to push forward. You are all I ever prayed for and my proudest accomplishment. My love for you is ineffable. I hope this stands as a reminder to you that your dreams are important and possible. Go rattle the stars, my minis.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF TABLES .....	vii
LIST OF FIGURES .....	viii
ABSTRACT .....	ix
Chapter	
1. INTRODUCTION .....	1
Document Organization And Description of Artifact Appendices .....	5
2. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM.....	10
Organizational Context.....	10
Organizational Role .....	18
Statement of the Problem .....	20
3. IMPROVEMENT GOAL AND STRATEGIES .....	34
Improvement Goal(s).....	34
Measuring Progress for Attaining the Improvement Goal .....	46
Improvement Strategies.....	35
4. IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY RESULTS.....	48
Results For Improvement Strategy 1 – Identifying Research And Resources .	48
Results For Improvement Strategy 2 – Assessing Instructor Self-Perception .	51
Results For Improvement Strategy 3 – Design And Implementation Of Professional Development.....	53
Results for Improvement Strategy 4 –Evaluation of Professional Development.....	56
5. REFLECTIONS ON IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION....	59

Recommendations for Future Work .....	63
6. REFLECTIONS ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT.....	66
Development as a scholar .....	67
Development as a problem solver .....	69
Development as a partner .....	71
Final thoughts .....	73
REFERENCES .....	75
Appendix	
A ARTIFACT 1 -- LITERATURE REVIEW .....	79
B ARTIFACT 2 -- ANNOTATED TABLE CONNECTING RESEARCH ON CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY TO SKILLS AND STRATEGIES FOR INSTRUCTOR TRUST BUILDING.....	108
C ARTIFACT 3 – CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE STRATEGIES GOOGLE SITE.....	118
D ARTIFACT 4 – INSTRUCTOR SELF-PERCEPTION SURVEY ON CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY PRACTICES .....	121
E ARTIFACT 5 – LET’S TALK ABOUT TRUST PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR SLIDE DECK.....	137
F ARTIFACT 6 – MICRO-CREDENTIAL COURSE PLAN FOR TRUST GENERATORS FOR BUILDING RAPPORT IN HIGHER EDUCATION ..	144
G ARTIFACT 7 – PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION SURVEY.....	155

## LIST OF TABLES

Table 2.1	Student Demographics for Delaware Technical Community College Fall 2021.....	12
Table 2.2	Description of Professional Development Proposal June 2022	22
Table 2.3	Results of Attendee Survey March 2023 Equity Summit.....	27
Table 3.1	Instructor Perceptions of Confidence and Certainty in Building Trust and Rapport Means.....	42
Table 4.1	Trust Generator Assessments for the ADDIE Micro-Credential Course Plan.....	49

## LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 2.1	Course Format Enrollment.....	13
Figure 2.2	Number of Delaware Technical Community College Employees by Occupational Role.....	14
Figure 2.3	Results of Professional Development Attendee Survey June 2022.....	24

## **ABSTRACT**

Research indicates that trust is a foundation of student success. It is therefore crucial for instructors to use trust building strategies to promote student retention and success. However, anecdotal and institutional evidence indicates that instructors at Delaware Tech do not feel equipped with communication strategies to build rapport and connect with students. To address that challenge, I pursued the following improvement goal: to design professional development sessions for Delaware Tech instructors on strategies to build rapport and connect to students through Hammond's (2015) trust generators (concern, selective vulnerability, familiarity, similarity of interests, and competence) as the foundation for a culturally responsive pedagogical (CRP) perspective.

My first improvement strategy consisted of identifying and compiling research through a literature review and annotated table to better understand communication and trust building at the community college level. The research showed that getting to know students and building empathy enhances student success. Furthermore, a survey assessing Delaware Tech instructor self-perceptions of culturally responsive practice implementation was sent to all Delaware Tech full-time faculty. Survey results indicated that Delaware Tech instructors felt most concerned about culturally responsive practices that focused on awareness of students' home lives and cultures.

Based on those results, professional development was needed to provide instructors strategies on getting to know students and building learning partnerships through trust. Therefore, I designed and implemented professional learning focused on Hammond's (2015) trust generators. First, I designed a *Google Site* compiling multimodal resources on CRP and trust-building practices. Next, I designed and implemented a professional development seminar on the importance of trust building and strategies to implement Hammond's (2015) trust generators. Next, I built a curriculum plan and course design matrix for a micro-credential course on learning partnerships and trust generators to be offered through Delaware Tech's Center for Creative Instruction and Technology.

The final improvement strategy featured an evaluation survey of professional learning. The survey results from the professional development seminar indicated a positive experience, and further professional development offerings based on this research were requested by leadership.

Future steps in providing strategies for instructors on trust building should include more research on the connection between communication and rapport building, in-depth conversations with instructors (including adjunct instructors) about areas of needed support, leveraging Delaware Tech's Professional Learning Community (PLC) groups for ongoing professional learning, and implementation of a micro-credential course on trust generators.

## **Chapter 1**

### **INTRODUCTION**

Delaware Technical Community College's (2023) mission is to move the institution toward being student-centered by "empowering students to change their lives through comprehensive educational opportunities and holistic support services that promote equitable outcomes" (para. 1).

Throughout my time as an English instructor and as the chair for the English Department on Delaware Tech's Owens Campus, I have been interested in the role that building relationships plays in student retention and success. As an instructor, I have sought positive relationships and effective communication with my students. As department chair, I have strived to lead by example to show how these factors can contribute to student success. However, as noted in the research literature and by Delaware Tech instructors, building relationships can be seen as subjective and abstract, with instructors often feeling they are successful at it while students feel it is lacking (Shank et al., 1995).

Discussions with instructors and administrators led me to focus my Educational Learning Portfolio on the following problem: Anecdotal and institutional evidence indicate that instructors at Delaware Tech do not feel equipped with

communication strategies to build rapport and connect with students. Cavanaugh et al. (2018) indicate that trust is paramount to building relationships, which is directly tied to student success. After diving into the research literature and talking with instructors collegewide, I determined the most appropriate improvement goal would be to focus on building trust and learning partnerships between instructors and students. Therefore, I designed professional development sessions for Delaware Tech instructors framed by instructor-student partnerships and trust building to lay the foundation for preparing instructors to engage in culturally responsive practices.

Micah Hoffman (2018) shows that building student-teacher relationships is a pillar of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP). CRP, also known throughout literature as culturally responsive teaching, is broadly defined as “a set of considerations, attitudes, self-awareness, and teaching decisions that help teachers bring more academic benefit to students of cultural backgrounds different from their own” (Hoffman, 2018, p. 23). It is not something we do to students. Rather, it is how we engage them in the learning process “and recognize culture as a source of strength” (Hoffman, 2018, p. 26).

In 2018, Hoffman conducted a review of CRP scholars’ work practices in diverse classrooms. Among several important topics analyzed in the literature (Emdin, 2016; Ladson- Billings, 2009; Delpit, 2012; Hammond & Jackson, 2015), she identified student-teacher relationships as a critical component of successful CRP. The four texts identified the student-teacher relationship as a critical component of

successful CRP. Relationships were described in the following ways by Hoffman (2018):

- Teachers have high expectations of their students. High expectations are not simply about setting rules. They are about assuming a child is capable. Asset-based instruction avoids dwelling on deficits.
- Teachers consider their role as warm demanders, people who “expect a great deal of their students, convince them of their own brilliance, and help them reach their potential in a disciplined and structured environment.” (Delpit, 2012, p. 77).
- Relationships are about caring, building connections, and rapport
- “at the core of the positive relationship is trust” (Hammond, 2015, p. 73).

This research shows that building trust is a prerequisite to establishing culturally responsive practices among instructors. Therefore, this ELP will focus on this preliminary stage of introducing learning partnerships and trust to build the foundation for further CRP growth in the Delaware Tech faculty.

This ELP addresses the following questions:

- (1) In what areas do Delaware Tech instructors feel a lack of confidence in their ability to employ practices to build trust and rapport with students?
- (2) What professional development can be offered for Delaware Tech instructors to mitigate this lack of confidence and help instructors

implement trust-building strategies within and outside of the classroom?

To fulfill my improvement goal of designing professional development sessions, I was guided by Hammond's (2015) work on Learning Partnerships. Hammond (2015) states that "at the core of positive relationships is trust" (p. 73) and her research indicates that building these partnerships helps to enable instructors to subsequently implement culturally responsive practices. I framed my PD by what Hammond has termed trust generators (p. 79), research-based practices that can be used to develop trust between people. These include the following five dispositions:

1. *Selective Vulnerability* - People respect and connect with others who share their own vulnerable moments.
2. *Familiarity* - People develop a sense of familiarity with someone who they see often in a particular setting.
3. *Similarity of Interests* - People create a bond with others who share similar likes, dislikes, and hobbies.
4. *Concern* - People connect when someone shows concern for those issues and events important to another.
5. *Competence* - People tend to trust others who demonstrate they have the skill and knowledge, as well as the will, to help and support them.

## **Document Organization and Description of Artifact Appendices**

This ELP begins with a discussion of my organizational context and my role within the organization. This is followed by an in-depth description of my problem in practice as well as my improvement strategies. The ELP appendices focus on seven artifacts that identify the problem and provide improvement strategies.

### *Artifacts*

- 1) **Literature Review.** This literature review provides an overview of a problem of practice: the current gap between student expectations and instructor practice in terms of communication, a broad component of relationship building. It focuses on community colleges and non-traditional students to better understand communication practices in a local context. The purpose of this literature review was to understand how instructor communication practices affect students' sense of belonging, leading to better student outcomes. This review established research questions about several aspects of instructor-to-student communication. This review provides the reader context for communication barriers at the community college level (Appendix A, Artifact 1).
- 2) **Annotated Table.** This table connects research on trust building and learning partnerships to skills and strategies for instructor communication and relationship building, specifically linking research with the trust generators established by Hammond (2015). The purpose of this table was to help narrow my research from

a broad view of the importance of effective communication to looking at learning partnerships through trust as a foundation for a future CRP framework for professional learning for Delaware Tech instructors. This table further narrows the scope of instructor rapport building to conceptualize how Delaware Tech instructors can use strategies to build learning partnerships through trust. As trust is paramount to building a culturally responsive learning partnership (Hammond, 2015), research included in this table begins with a summary of Hammond's learning partnerships and trust generators and then includes research defining trust to tie directly to effective design of professional development and providing strategies for trust building in higher education for Delaware Tech instructors (Appendix B, Artifact 2).

- 3) **Google Site Resource Page.** This resource page was designed for Delaware Tech instructors to access preliminary resources on the importance of integrating culturally responsive practices into their courses. The initial goal of building this adaptable page of multimodal resources was to deepen my own understanding while eventually becoming a resource for Delaware Tech instructors. While this site focuses more broadly on the importance of culturally responsive pedagogy and not specifically on trust generators, it provides instructors with a foundation of the CRP framework to understand the importance of trust building. This site is an initial step in building buy-in to the importance of CRP practices inside and outside the classroom. Resources are organized by category, including *TEDtalks*,

Podcasts, Articles, Blogs, and Guides in order to ease use for instructors to find resources to fit their preferred modality of learning. Each resource is annotated and linked for instructor access (Appendix C, Artifact 3).

- 4) **Instructor Self-Perception Survey on Culturally Responsive Trust Building Practices and Infographic.** The purpose of this survey was to understand how Delaware Tech instructors viewed their abilities to implement CRP practices with their students and their feelings on these practices ties to student outcomes. The survey was adapted from Culturally Responsive Teaching Outcome Expectancy (CRTOE) Scale and Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale (CRTSE) Scale created by Kamau Siwatu (2007) at Texas Tech. Adaptations made the survey applicable to community college instructors as the original focused on K-12 teachers. This artifact provides the survey protocol, survey questions, and the results of the survey. Included in Part I are the survey summary, methodology, and IRB protocol. Part II is an infographic, visually depicting the results from the survey questions. This infographic was designed to provide a quick overview of the survey results in an easy-to-read format. Results were shared with administration, leadership, and instructors to provide a foundation for professional development (Appendix D, Artifact 4).
- 5) **Professional Development Training and Discussion.** This training began with a presentation of the slide deck on best practices and strategies for trust building through the Hammond's (2015) trust generators, followed by instructor discussion

to determine departmental and individual instructor goals for building connection and trust with students. The session ended with a proposed follow-up for individual instructors interested in furthering their work on building their strategies. This professional development incorporated strategies recommended in the research from Appendix B: Artifact 2 and Hammond's (2015) trust generators. The purpose of this professional development was to introduce research on the importance of trust, provide results from the institutional survey, and present strategies instructors could use inside and outside of the classroom, utilizing each of Hammond's (2015) trust generators, with the goal of increasing instructor trust-building practices (Appendix E, Artifact 5).

6) **Curriculum Plan and Course Design Matrix for A Micro-Credential Course.**

This micro-credential course and design matrix focused on building learning partnerships and generating trust. This curriculum plan relied on the ADDIE framework and focused on specific strategies for instructors to engage in each trust generator as defined by Hammond (2015). This curriculum plan was the foundation for the Course Design Matrix, a required component to building a micro-credential course for Delaware Tech's CCIT Department. This matrix includes an overview of the course objectives, learning materials, and assessments included in the course. The course has six modules based on learning partnerships and Hammond's (2015) trust generators: selective vulnerability, similarity of interests, concern, familiarity, and competence. This course provides instructors

with multimodal resources, articles, reflection practices, and learning activities to enhance their self-paced learning on using trust generators to build learning partnerships (Appendix F, Artifact 6).

- 7) **Professional Development Evaluation Plan.** This plan acknowledges the need for reflection and adaptation throughout the process of professional learning. Based on the institution's professional development evaluation survey, the professional development evaluation plan allows professional development participants to reflect on the likelihood of implementation of provided strategies in their own instructional practice, recommend edits to the professional development opportunity, and request follow up or make suggestions for further professional development opportunities on building learning partnerships. Survey results were used to analyze and make changes to the professional development training seminar in the future (Appendix G, Artifact 7).

These artifacts were designed to establish research-based practices to offer Delaware Tech instructors professional learning with a goal of equipping instructors with communication strategies to build trust and rapport. Initial artifacts framed the research process, connecting research literature and survey results to professional learning offerings. Once professional learning was offered, an evaluation was provided to participants to establish researcher reflection and adaptation based on results.

## **Chapter 2**

### **STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM**

#### **Organizational Context**

The context of this ELP was Delaware Technical Community College (“Delaware Tech”). As the only community college in the state of Delaware, Delaware Tech has four campuses in Delaware: The Owens Campus in Georgetown in Sussex County; the Terry Campus in Dover in Kent County; and two campuses in New Castle County—the George Campus in Wilmington and the Stanton Campus. Delaware Tech offers more than 100 certificate and associate degree programs as well as two baccalaureate degrees. While some programs are campus-specific, students can register for and take classes at all four campuses. Along with these degree programs, the College has over 200 program-to-program connected degrees where associate degree graduates can transfer in as juniors to degree programs at other colleges and universities across the United States. Courses are offered in multiple formats, including a) Hyflex, where courses are simultaneously taught in-person, synchronously online, and asynchronously online b) asynchronous online, c) synchronous online, d) hybrid (both asynchronous and synchronous sessions), and e)

fully on-ground. Courses are offered in one-week, seven-week, 10-week, 11-week, and 15-week sessions.

***Delaware Tech Student and Instructional Faculty Demographics***

According to the National Center for Educational Statistics’ (n.d.) data for the Fall 2022 semester, Delaware Tech enrolled 13,231 students. Table 2.1 presents key demographic characteristics for the Delaware Tech student population. Understanding student demographics tied to retention and graduation rates helps to showcase the importance of the implementation of trust building strategies as a foundation for culturally responsive practices as a way to overcome these gaps.

**Table 2.1**

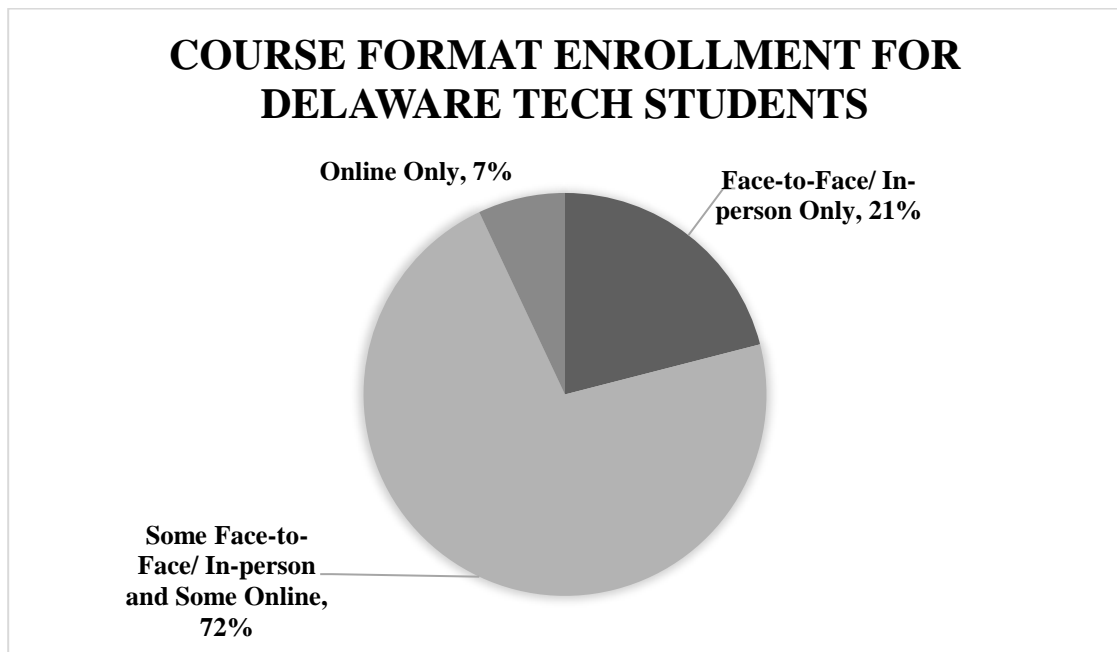
*Student Demographics for Delaware Technical Community College Fall 2022*

<b>Enrollment Status</b>	Full-Time	Part-Time				
	30%	70%				
<b>Race/ Ethnicity</b>	White	Black/ African American	Hispanic/ Latino	Asian	Two or More Races	Unidentified
	43%	27%	18%	3%	5%	3%
<b>Sex</b>	Female	Male				
	68%	32%				
<b>Age</b>	24 or Under	25 or Older	Age Unknown			
	65%	31%	3%			

Figure 2.1 shows the enrollment for course format for Fall 2022, including: Face-to-Face/ In-person Only, Some Face-to-Face/ In-person and Some Online, and Online Only. While the majority of students take classes both online and in-person, it is necessary to acknowledge that 7% of the student population is completely online; therefore, trust-building strategies must go beyond what instructors are offering in the physical classroom and include ways to build this learning partnership with students in a virtual setting.

**Figure 2.1**

*Course Format Enrollment for Delaware Tech Students*

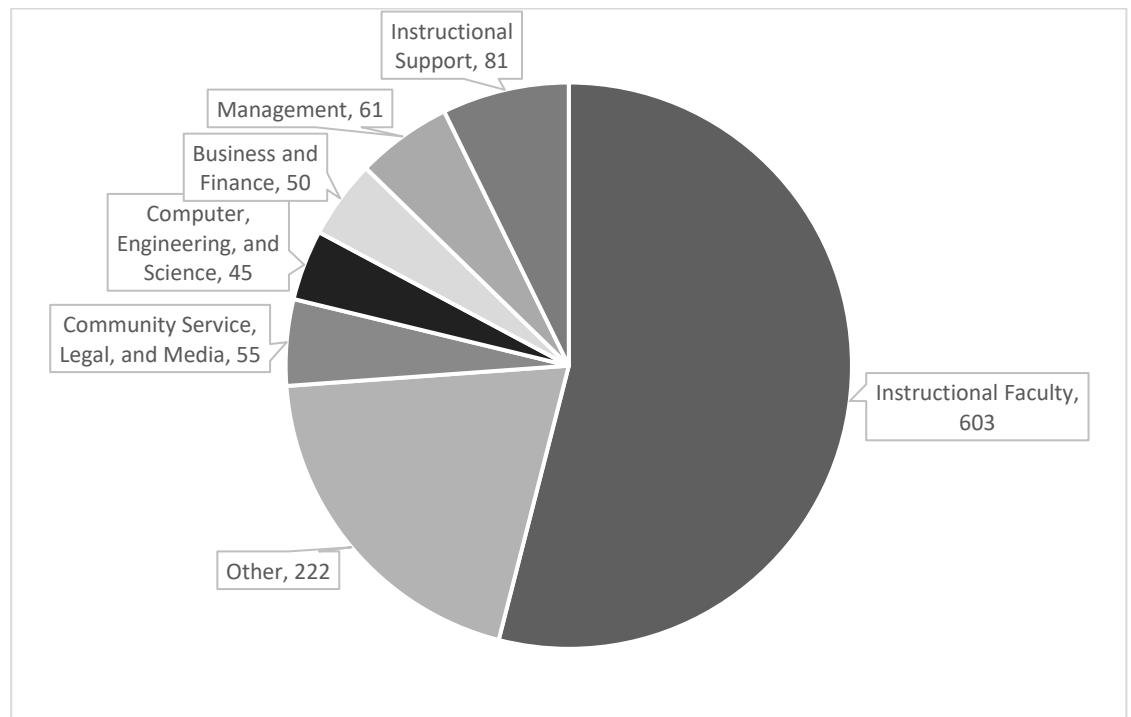


It is important to understand employee demographics in order to build effective professional development. Figure 2.1 describes Delaware Tech’s 1036 total employees

by their occupational roles, with instructional faculty the largest at 603 employees (Institute of Education Sciences [IES], 2022). While creating a sense of belonging and building rapport with students is a collegewide mission across roles, instructors are the largest student-facing employee group at Delaware Tech, so providing professional development focusing on this group increases the likelihood of student impact.

**Figure 2.2**

*Number of Delaware Technical Community College Employees by Occupational Role*



***Delaware Tech Mission, Vision Statement, and Values***

Delaware Tech has been a member of the Achieving the Dream (ATD) network since 2017. Achieving the Dream is “a national reform network of more than

220 colleges in 41 states dedicated to helping more community college students, particularly low-income students and students of color, stay in school and earn a college certificate, diploma, or degree” (Delaware Technical Community College [DTCC], n.d.-a, para. 1). This network guides Delaware Tech’s mission, goals, and strategic vision. As noted earlier, Delaware Tech’s mission begins with the statement: “Students are at the center of everything we do.” Delaware Tech has worked to embed this tagline within the College culture so that everyone-- faculty, staff, administration, students, visitors, and community-- understands that Delaware Tech’s focus is on students. This understanding permeates the mission goals, vision statement, and values statement of the College. One particular aspect of those goals centers on building learning partnerships and rapport with students. Delaware Tech’s mission goals state that it will “[c]ultivate learning, equitable outcomes, and student success through programs and holistic services,” (DTCC, 2023, para. 2) indicating that Delaware Tech acknowledges (a) the role of holistic services as a need for student learning and (b) the need for appropriate partnerships to realize equitable outcomes. Another mission goal states that Delaware Tech will “[p]romote an inclusive culture that advances diversity and equity,” (DTCC, 2023, para. 2) which ties directly to CRP, trust, building learning partnerships, and with and creating a culture of caring for students. The Delaware Tech vision statement states that the institution is “driven by a culture of inquiry and innovative, accessible data analysis to inform decision making”” (DTCC, 2023, para. 3). The mission, mission goals, and vision all support the values statement of

Delaware Tech: “We believe that student success is paramount; that open, honest, and respectful communication is essential” (para. 5). An important instructional component in placing students at the center of everything we do is building rapport and creating a culture of caring, which cannot be done without appropriate instructor-to-student communication and trust building.

Along with guiding the mission and values of the College, ATD is supportive in its members’ focus on CRP, offering a *Resource Hub* on using CRP for teaching and learning to its members. ATD provides instructors with a strategy guide titled “Putting Equity into Practice; Culturally Responsive Teaching and Learning Strategy Guide,” which includes an adapted Hammond Framework with a focus on building learning partnerships. In addition, Delaware Tech has adopted Hammond’s framework for institutional practice and learning, including it as the basis for professional development and student education relevant to culturally responsive pedagogy. While this ELP focuses on only one of the four aspects of Hammond’s framework, Building Learning Partnerships, the goal is to provide a foundation for instructors to build on to implement CRP practices.

### ***Current Professional Development Opportunities***

Currently, Delaware Technical Community College offers instructors multiple formats of professional learning to facilitate ongoing learning. The foundation of Delaware Tech’s employee professional learning, which includes professional learning

for instructors, is “variety, choice, and voice” (Delaware Technical Community College [DTCC], n.d.-a., para. 1). Professional learning opportunities are provided in the following formats:

- Micro-credential courses through the Center for Creative Instruction and Technology (CCIT). These courses are self-paced courses designed for instructors. Each course is designed to provide information in short chunks of essential information on the topic. Each course is three to four units. Delaware Tech instructors earn badges for each unit and a certification of completion for the course (Center for Creative Instruction and Design [CCIT], n.d.-b)
- Instructional Design and Technology (IDT) credit courses through CCIT. CCIT offers an IDT Certificate Program to “prepare educators to design, develop, deliver, and evaluate engaging educational opportunities and experiences to promote student success” (Center for Creative Instruction and Technology [CCIT], n.d.-a). This IDT Certificate Program is comprised of 11 three credit courses available to both Delaware Tech instructors and outside educators. Delaware Tech instructors can take these courses at no cost and are eligible for a salary lane change once the instructor has earned 15 credits. New Delaware Tech instructors are required to take IDT courses as a component of the New Faculty Development Program (CCIT, n.d.-a).

- Weekly employee learning and professional development seminars. Delaware Tech's Professional Learning Advisory Committee and CCIT offer frequent professional learning opportunities based on current educational practices and research. Sessions are updated frequently and posted on the professional development and CCIT calendars. Instructors are encouraged to participate in frequent professional development opportunities as professional development goals are a required component of instructor evaluations.
- Professional learning days organized by the administrative intern for professional learning development and the Professional Learning Advisory Committee (PLAC) during Reading Week. During Reading Week (the midpoint of the fall semester), the PLAC hosts a day of professional development. The agenda is established through a call for proposals from faculty and staff with a PLAC reviewing and determining the sessions. Instructors can choose the sessions they prefer for individualized professional development.
- The bi-annual Equity Summit led by the Professional Learning Advisory Committee and the Equity Committee provided spring semester. Every other spring semester, Delaware Tech hosts an Equity Summit. This professional learning day offers multiple professional development opportunities focusing on fostering equity and closing equity gaps for

students. Instructors are encouraged to choose sessions that fit their personal learning needs.

Delaware Tech's FY24 Professional Development Goals are designed to focus on institutionalizing equity and diversity, being flexible to meet employees' unique professional growth needs, educating staff and faculty of holistic resources for students (e.g., tutoring and writing, technology, mental health, and financial resources) and promoting these resources to better understand and meet students' needs (DTCC, n.d.-b), as noted in the strategic goals established by Delaware Tech's Achieving the Dream Core Team.

### **Organizational Role**

I have been a full-time English instructor with Delaware Technical Community College since 2010. In my position as an instructor, I teach courses in multiple formats and session lengths. I have taught all English courses, ranging from developmental courses to upper-level research courses. I have also worked in the College's Writing Center, and I am a mentor for adjunct instructors, helping them acclimate to their courses and providing guidance on course materials and policies throughout the semester.

In addition to my teaching responsibilities, I have worked on redesign committees for several English courses. I have worked with the English Department across all four campuses to design and align curriculum based on data-driven analysis

that fosters student success. I have spent the last six years (2019 – 2025) working with the English Department and CCIT to build accessible, easily-navigable courses for our students. Members of the English Redesign team meet in biweekly PLC meetings to discuss course concerns, student feedback, course policies, survey responses, and student outcomes data.

Most recently, in July 2024, I was promoted to department chair for the English Department at Owens Campus. While this role is still instructional, I serve as the direct supervisor to all full-time and adjunct faculty for my department. As of January 2025, the department employed nine full-time faculty members in addition to me as well as 12 adjunct instructors. I oversee scheduling, professional development goals, and evaluations of the Owens English Department faculty. I also act as the liaison between the Office of Instruction and my department. This promotion significantly changed my sphere of influence, as I am now a 12-month employee who meets monthly with the Office of Instruction in addition to weekly meetings, as well as weekly with my collegewide English chair counterparts on the other three campuses. I also meet monthly with our redesign team leader and our Instructional Collaboration Group dean. As a department chair, I work with my collegewide counterparts to streamline redesign, develop collegewide department meeting agendas, and choose appropriate professional development for our collegewide meetings.

Throughout my years at the College, I have served on several College committees, including the taskforce for the creation of the collegewide Instructional

Innovation Network, which used research-based practices to design and implement professional learning across all four campuses. I served as a member of this network and the Owens Campus Instructional Innovation Committee, which leveraged collegewide professional learning to develop campus initiatives. I have since continued to create professional development by facilitating sessions consistently throughout the years, thereby gaining first-hand experience in seeing the professional learning needs of Delaware Tech instructors.

### **Statement of the Problem**

Anecdotal and institutional evidence indicate that instructors at Delaware Tech do not feel equipped with communication strategies to build rapport and connect with students.

### **Identifying the Problem**

I have studied strategies to improve student success at Delaware Tech since beginning my doctoral studies at the University of Delaware. Through communication about my ELP and academic research, I learned that trust building practices are important to not only instructors, but the administration at Delaware Tech. Below, I briefly share how I came to identify the problem and improvement goal, which are the foci of this ELP.

*Fall 2021:*

During Fall 2021, in *EDUC846: Collection and Analysis of Data for Decision Making*, I studied the problem of practice of student attrition in second-level English courses. To examine the issue, I conducted interviews with a small focus group of full-time instructors. One finding was that these instructors felt challenged to engage with students and effectively communicate in ways that built connections and, in turn, fostered student success.

During the focus group one instructor stated:

...if you look at research on, especially probably, I don't know if it's true at the College level, but back in the K 12 system, about the impact that the teacher had on student performance. And I took all of that to heart when I was training to be a teacher, and I still believe that because I feel like it's so much harder now in this type of virtual teaching world, so it's like "What tools do I have"... I tell them, I invite them like in their feedback comments and like please reach out to me if I can help you, like it's kind of half mom have cheerleader. And, like I said, I think it's just for me that's like part of my style. It's this like invitation, like let me invite you to talk to me and try to not be intimidating., And I feel like that was my strategy.

Followed by another instructor who stated:

So I like to nag as well with the emails. But I try to I try to come up with a plan. Let's come up with a plan, let's break down what you need to do, you can you can do this, it's never too late to pass, let's sit down and come up with a plan.... Doesn't always work, but yeah.

A third instructor in the group commented:

I always hear this coming from students and usually they're from when they're frustrated. When they're not frustrated, they'll say, I have teachers that don't give a crap about me, I don't give a crap about them versus I love this teacher this teacher was just so authentic and just wanted me to be successful. It's a life strategy, maybe, but I think all of us here do that, and I've heard comments from students who have had these other instructors say that they do care, they're authentic, they're real.

While outreach and methods of communication strategies were discussed among members of the focus group, analysis of the conversations showed that instructors were interested in learning strategies that would help them build connections and rapport with students.

*June 2022:*

After the research from Fall 2021, I was approached by the Delaware Tech Professional Learning Advisory Committee to submit a proposal for the professional development in June 2022. I had previously provided professional learning and was known to be researching effective communication strategies. The proposal was accepted, and I partnered with an instructional designer from Delaware Tech's Center for Creative Instruction and Technology (CCIT) to present. Table 2.2 is a description of the accepted session:

**Table 2.2**

*Description of Professional Development Proposal June 2022*

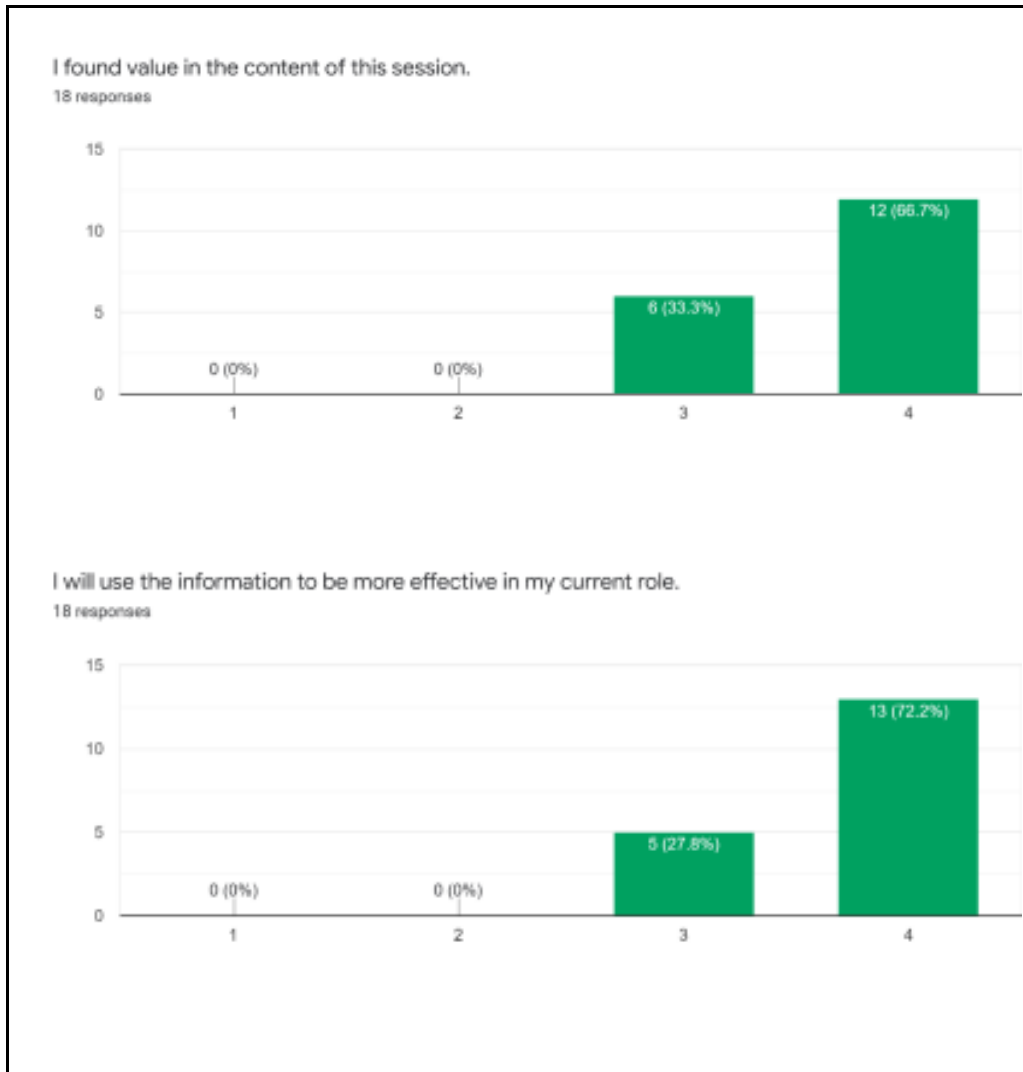
<b>Working Title of Proposed Presentation</b>	<b>Proposed Learning Objectives</b>	<b>Presentation Description</b>

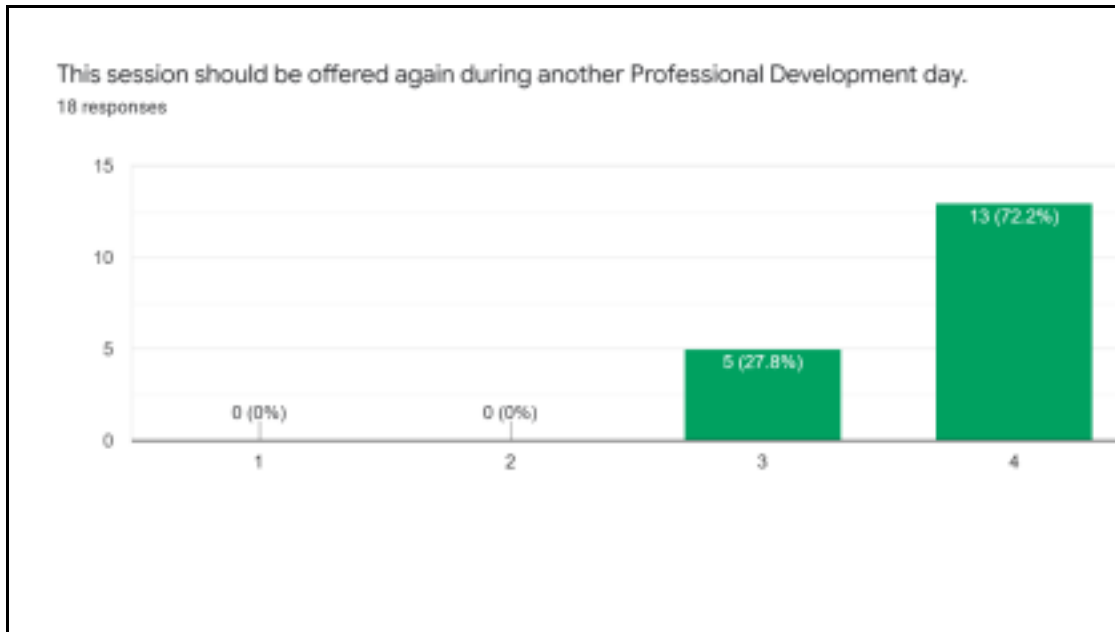
<p>Making Communication Work-- How to Create Meaningful Instructor-to Student Communication Without Getting Overwhelmed</p>	<p>Determining Course Touch Points, Navigating D2L Communication Tools, Structuring Meaningful Interactions. Strategies include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Using modes of technology for communication</li> <li>• Navigating D2L communication resources</li> <li>• Identifying critical points during the course to reach out to students</li> </ul>	<p>Do you ever feel as if you are reaching out to your students over and over again with no positive results? Do you often feel overwhelmed with thinking about creating meaningful interactions that help your students stay on track and be successful? Please join us to discuss how to create positive communication using D2L tools in order to maximize success for your students.</p>
---	--	--

A brief survey was provided to all attendees of the professional development seminar to give them the opportunity to evaluate the usefulness of the sessions they attended and provide the presenters with feedback. The results of the feedback from my seminar are in Figure 2.3:

**Figure 2.3**

*Results of Professional Development Attendee Survey June 2022*





Additionally, there was space for attendees to include open-ended comments. One person praised, “Great ideas and suggestions that can be immediately used” and another “really enjoyed this presentation and found the advice and tips to be very helpful for my future classes.”

#### *Fall 2022*

The June 2022 professional development presentation was posted on the Delaware Tech PD website and throughout the summer and fall of 2022, Delaware Tech instructors continued to ask questions about communication strategies. During this time, I worked on the literature review to build my knowledge of instructor-student communication strategies as well as narrow my problem statement. At this point in the process, based on information from an earlier instructor focus group and

requests for professional development on this topic from PLAC and colleagues, I concentrated on the gaps between instructor practice and student expectations in order to better understand the importance of effective communication in student success.

*Spring 2023*

In February 2023, I contacted the director of Delaware Tech's Center for Creative Instruction and Technology (CCIT) to discuss opening a development shell in the learning management system so that I could build a micro-credential course on communication strategies, which would serve as capstone assignments for both *EDUC650: Technology and Cognition* and *EDUC897: Curriculum Planning and Design*. The director of CCIT provided the shell and agreed that this information met an institutional need, asking if I would be willing to publish the course once completed.

In March 2023, the Equity Committee asked me to present at the Equity Summit. The purpose of this summit is to provide faculty and staff with space to discuss equity and social justice issues that affect student success. My seminar concentrated on effective communication strategies derived from my research on building connections with students. Strategies provided in the seminar included:

- Building Templates
- Creating a List of Greetings
- Using Intelligent Agents in D2L
- Building Consistency
- Building Personal Empathy
- Identifying Critical Checkpoints
- Managing Frequent Check-Ins

Participants completed a short survey at the end of the professional development seminar. The results are in Table 2.3:

**Table 2.3**

*Results of Attendee Survey March 2023 Equity Summit*

Survey Question	Response
How much of this session did you attend?	100%
I found value in the content of this session	4.48/ 5
I will use the information to be more effective in my current role	4.44/ 5
This session should be offered again during another professional development day	4.28/ 5

In addition, in March 2023, I met with the Owens Campus Dean of Instruction to discuss the focus of my ELP and the steps needed to secure institutional approval. After our meeting, the following was approved and sent to the Associate Vice President for Academic Affairs and Director of Planning and Institutional Effectiveness.

My proposed end goal is to create a set of resources for instructors focusing on how to use communication strategies to be more student-centered and bridge equity gaps.

To determine this, I am proposing research through CCSSE data review regarding student perception of communication and holistic resources and a primary research survey of instructors regarding current communication practices, beliefs, and challenges.

*Fall 2023*

In August 2023, prior to starting ELP I and solidifying my problem in practice, I met with the associate vice president of academic affairs and the director of planning and institutional effectiveness for Delaware Tech to discuss how my ELP problem statement and improvement strategies could benefit the college. During the meeting, we discussed the research, both empirical and institutional, that supported the need for the focus of the ELP, with the research recommendations tying my research to institutional goals. These early recommendations suggested the need to meet students where they are while maintaining expectations and academic integrity and to evaluate collegewide course policies to determine if they are following best practices. Potential sources of data that were recommended included historical Community College Survey of Student Success Engagement data, RISC survey data, and possible surveys and focus groups of student and instructors to determine mismatches in expectations of communication and rapport building. Recommended improvement strategies included analysis of the data and professional development. As this was early in my ELP discussions with administrators, goals were focused around communication practices to build rapport and provide a sense of belonging to students. There wasn't

yet a decision to use Hammond's (2015) framework to review trust building and learning partnerships; however, discussion included reviewing best practices, maintaining rigor, and focusing on professional development as the cornerstone of the improvement strategies.

In September 2023, I was invited by the Professional Learning Advisory Committee to repeat the seminar offered during the Spring 2023 Equity Summit. Scores in the Fall 2023 session were once again high in regard to finding value in the content and using the information to be more effective, with typical comments praising "strategies that are useful and actionable" and "helpful tips backed by research."

#### *Spring 2024*

In January 2024, I concluded that the undertaking of researching both student and instructor expectations as well as building professional development based on communication practices was too broad of a focus and wasn't grounded in an overarching framework. After careful review of the global and institutional research along with a discussion with my administration, I determined that the communication strategies I had been researching were essentially about developing a student-centered culture of caring and building rapport. To build instructor strategies in this area, it was imperative to address the needs of the instructors and institution in my research. During a conversation with the vice president of academic affairs, we discussed the importance of building a foundation for culturally responsive pedagogy, a framework

that was being introduced collegewide. To limit the scope of the improvement strategies, I focused my subsequent research on the preliminary stage of CRP of trust-building, specifically through Hammond's (2015) learning partnerships and trust generators, and institutional data that supported the college's focus on building a culture of caring.

### ***Institutional Data***

The problem statement that instructors at Delaware Tech do not feel equipped with communication strategies to build rapport and connect with students is supported on an institutional level. In the College's Strategic Directions (2021 – 2025), the Values Statement is "Delaware Technical Community College values the One College philosophy, our collective commitment by all employees to create a consistent student experience throughout the entire College, across all locations - an experience that reflects our proud legacy of providing Delawareans with access, opportunity, excellence, and hope to achieve their dreams through education. ***We believe that student success is paramount; that open, honest and respectful communication is essential; and that a strong sense of team spirit is the key to "getting it right" for the communities we serve.***" The Values Statement of the College is based on its Strategic Directions, which are founded on responding to factors that impact student success and the success of Delaware Tech. Part of the Strategic Directions of Delaware Tech acknowledges the learning transformation of students, indicating that "Changing

student expectations, varied learning demand, and equitable access will require higher education institutions to expand and sustain ongoing development to support students and employees in a more flexible, diverse, automated, and skills-oriented educational environment,” a goal directly related to my quest for professional development to help instructors develop strategies to build trust and learning partnerships with students through Hammond’s (2015) framework.

During the Middle States Self-Study Report, published in February 2022, the College included a section on communication, which claims that the College relies heavily on communication to not only provide information, but also to provide support, build connections, and develop policies and practices that engage students inside and outside the classroom, thereby underscoring the need for Delaware Tech instructors to build strategies in these areas, which includes trust building. In fact, Priority Goal 3 is “Foster a sense of belonging and a culture of caring and respect for all members of the College community.” Under this priority goal are the following key strategies:

- Expand opportunities for faculty and staff to be involved in student success work
- Infuse an intentional culture of being student centered

As well as its commitment to creating a culture of caring as a response to the Covid-19 pandemic, Delaware Tech states in the *Middle States Self-Study Chapter 1: Mission and Goals* that a commitment for institutional improvement and innovation is

expanding the College’s professional development goals to support being student centered. In *Chapter 2: Ethics and Integrity*, data from the College’s Committee on Diversity and Inclusion’s climate survey indicates that “attitudes of faculty and frontline staff” scored below an 86% satisfaction rate. Building trust relies on students’ perceptions of instructors’ attitudes of caring (Payne et al., 2022). This survey also indicates that students and faculty want to engage in “meaningful conversations and work related to equity.” In that spirit, the College has committed to the following:

- Invest in professional development infrastructure to expand and enhance opportunities and offerings in all areas including equity. (IP)
- Promote holistic online student supports, increase faculty and student engagement, and expand the use of data to improve pass rates in distance education courses.

Finally, in Chapter 4: Support of the Student Experience, 92% of students surveyed in 2020 indicated that the college provides a welcoming atmosphere that supports diversity, but this is down from 94% in 2018. As such, Delaware Tech has committed to “Redesign policies, procedures, and processes that impact persistence or success in order to improve graduation rate. Building learning partnerships and trust has been shown to (IP)” and “Improve outreach strategies to increase student enrollment, engagement, and success.” Delaware Tech’s mission is to move the institution toward a clear vision of student-centered practices that focus on building connections that lead

to increased student outcomes. This institutional data, along with the views of administrators and feedback from instructors, shows that instructors at Delaware Tech do not feel equipped with strategies to build rapport and connect with students and that professional development offerings focusing on student-centered practices in these areas will help to achieve the College's mission and strategic goals.

Tied in with this institutional data, conversations with instructors and administration along with feedback on professional development seminars over the last two years directed my problem statement toward a focus on the instructor need for strategies to build trust and learning partnerships to lay the foundation for future work on implementing CRP practices.

## Chapter 3

### IMPROVEMENT GOAL AND STRATEGIES

#### Improvement Goal(s)

As an educational leader, my improvement goal was to design professional development sessions for Delaware Tech instructors on strategies to build rapport and connect to students through Hammond's (2015) trust generators to lay a foundation for a culturally responsive pedagogical (CRP) perspective:

1. *Selective Vulnerability* - People respect and connect with others who share their own vulnerable moments.
2. *Familiarity* - People develop a sense of familiarity with someone who they see often in a particular setting.
3. *Similarity of Interests* - People create a bond with others who share similar likes, dislikes, hobbies.
4. *Concern* - People connect when someone shows concern for those issues and events important to another.
5. *Competence* - People tend to trust others who demonstrate they have the skill and knowledge, as well as the will, to help and support them.

While fully implementing a culturally responsive framework for trust requires work well beyond the scope of this ELP, my proposal set out to provide a basic understanding of trust through a culturally responsive lens as well as introducing preliminary changes and strategies that instructors could easily implement in their classrooms.

Achieving the improvement goal of this ELP required work with administration, professional development leaders, and instructors at Delaware Tech. Discussion with administrators and colleagues helped me to narrow my focus to specific aspects of communication and trust that the institution felt, at both the administration and instructional levels, would best serve our instructors. These conversations helped to develop a CRP lens for trust building that was consistent with Delaware Tech's mission of being student centered. Working with the DTCC professional development team and leaders in Delaware Tech's CCIT provided the formats to present my research and strategies to instructors. Together, these strategies worked to provide and evaluate professional development focusing on Hammond's (2015) trust generators to build trust and rapport in the classroom.

### **Improvement Strategies**

My improvement goal strategies focused on four elements that incorporated each artifact as a path toward goal attainment:

- 1) identifying and compiling research and resources to better understand communication and trust at the community college level
- 2) assessing Delaware Tech instructor perceptions of self-efficacy in implementing culturally responsive practices
- 3) designing and implementing professional learning on learning partnerships and trust generators
- 4) evaluating professional development.

Delaware Tech administration and leadership were involved throughout the process, monitoring and supporting the implementation of the improvement strategies.

## **Identifying and Compiling Research and Resources to Better Understand Communication and Trust at the Community College Level**

### ***Literature Review***

My first improvement goal strategy centered on understanding the existing research. The initial focus on communication practices helped to shape a broad vision of gaps that exist at the community college level. Identification of relevant research began with a literature review (Appendix A, Artifact 1), concentrating on the following questions:

- What are students' expectations for instructor-to-student communication?

- What do instructors perceive as student expectations for instructor-to-student communication?
- How do instructors' communication practices meet or fall short of student expectations?
- What are current working trends in instructor-to-student communication?
- What are the current gaps and implications for future research in instructor-to-student communication?

The literature review began in Fall 2022 as an assignment for EDUC828. This assignment included an article critique that focused on articles employing various methods of research, including quantitative methods, survey or questionnaire data, qualitative methods, and mixed or parallel methods. Search terms included phrases focused on my research questions and problem of practice and included *Instructor Communication Practices*, *Communication in Higher Education*, *Methods of Communication in Higher Education*, *Student Expectations for Communication in Higher Education*, *Building Rapport in Higher Education*. Inclusion/ Exclusion criteria included peer-reviewed articles published in English on or after 1995.

Literature review drafts included an article analysis based on the CRAAP method, a high-level outline with references and article summaries, and a second-level outline building transitions.

The literature review was revised throughout ELP I, ELP II, and ELP III based on additional research and instructor feedback. This review extended my knowledge of factors concerning instructor-to-student communication such as methods of communication, timeliness of communication, and communication perception. While the literature provided a broad context of communication practices and expectations, I needed a narrower view to focus my ELP.

### ***Annotated Bibliography Table***

Once I narrowed my scope of research to building trust and rapport as a preliminary step to introducing culturally responsive approaches, I continued my research to target trust building as a foundation for CRP in higher education as it allowed my focus to move from an extremely broad conversation on communication to one defined within the scope of building learning partnerships. A framework using Hammond's trust generators was chosen based on institutional goals and current use with ATD. A tighter research focus allowed me to find applicable resources for introducing trust-building practices to Delaware Tech instructors (Appendix B, Artifact 2). Search terms included *Building Trust in Higher Education*, *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in Higher Education*, *Rapport in Higher Education*, *Trust Generators*. Inclusion/ exclusion criteria included peer-reviewed articles published in English on or after 1990. I targeted articles pertaining specifically to CRP in higher education. For this, I confined my framework to strategies to build trust and rapport

through culturally responsive practices, particularly through Hammond's (2015) trust generators and how these could be tied directly to trust-building strategies for Delaware Tech instructors (Appendix B, Artifact 2). That perspective helped focus my broader scope of communication practices and refine my professional development plan to help instructors build communication strategies specifically within the framework of trust and rapport. I began by summarizing Hammond's (2015) discussion of the importance of trust and trust generators, extending research on trust-building practices through research on trust and rapport building in higher education. The annotated bibliography table helped me to structure a pathway from the literature directly to the needs of Delaware Tech instructors and professional development that could be provided to meet those needs. The pathway includes a summary of the article with the tie from the article to trust generators, a connection to professional development activities provided in the professional development seminar (Appendix E: Artifact 5) and the micro-credential course (Appendix F: Artifact 6), and strategies that instructors will be able to implement after professional development. Literature indicates the necessity of building strategies for instructors in higher education that developed trust and rapport in the college classroom because those factors are often the basis for success and motivation for retention (Cavanaugh et al., 2018).

## **Assessing Delaware Tech Instructor Perceptions of Self-Efficacy in Implementing Culturally Responsive Practices**

My next improvement strategy was a survey given to full-time Delaware Tech faculty (Appendix D, Artifact 4). Developing practices for trust building strategies can be an extensive undertaking because the field is vast and the CRP framework is broad. Therefore, my goal was to determine the specific needs of Delaware Tech instructors in relation to this framework, hoping to receive data from across all four campuses and in all programs to analyze elements of CRP that tied to building relationships. This data collection was completed using a self-perception survey in which all full-time faculty were invited to self-assess their ability to implement culturally responsive pedagogical practices and to determine how important they felt these practices were for building trust with students and increasing student success. For this, I adapted, with permission, the Culturally Responsive Teaching Outcome Expectancy (CRTOE) Scale and Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale (CRTSE) Scale created by Dr. Kamau Siwatu (2007) (Appendix D, Artifact 4). As the original survey was designed for K-12 teachers, small adaptations were made to adjust for the differences in practice for community college instructors. For instance, vocabulary relating to parents and guardians were adapted to family or home life, and some questions pertaining to K-12 practices were removed. All Delaware Tech full-time faculty were emailed the Instructor Perceptions of Confidence and Certainty in Building Trust and Rapport survey in Fall 2024. The survey was open for two weeks, with two email

reminders sent to instructors. This survey asked Delaware Tech instructors to rate themselves on their ability to use CRP practices in the classroom and how important they felt these practices were to student success. While this survey did not focus on trust-building practices, it provided an overview of where instructors felt they excelled or were challenged in practices important to CRP. This data was analyzed to determine the specific professional development needs of Delaware Tech instructors based on self-assessment factors.

## **Designing and Implementing Professional Learning on CRP Learning**

### **Partnerships and Trust Generators**

The first two improvement strategies formed the plan for the third strategy, the design and implementation of professional development offerings for Delaware Tech instructors (Appendix C, Artifact 3; Appendix E, Artifact 5; and Appendix F, Artifact 6). Once this data was analyzed, professional development was created to provide Delaware Tech instructors strategies to build trust and rapport with their students, focusing on home life and culture, which is the category on the CRTSE that instructors scored themselves the lowest. Professional development was designed in three ways—

### ***Google Site***

The first component of the professional learning plan was to design and publish a *Google Site* that held a set of readily accessible resources for Delaware Tech

instructors to build their knowledge of the importance of culturally responsive practices in higher education (Appendix C, Artifact 3). The purpose was to serve as a resource guide to introduce instructors to the basics and importance of culturally responsive pedagogy. Resources were found through an online search of and chosen based on credibility of the author and source, based on author background and source reliability, and a focus on introducing CRP in an accessible way. Resources include content from researchers in the field, including Zaretta Hammond, instructors implementing these practices in their classrooms, educational news resources, and recommendations from universities that have embraced CRP in their teaching and learning. The site has five categories: *TEDTalks*, Podcasts, Articles, Blogs, and Guides. Each category has two or three linked resources with a short description and visual depicting the contents of the resource. The content of the resources ranges from an introduction to culturally responsive pedagogy to implementation strategies for instructors to build knowledge from where they are. Multi-modal resources were chosen and organized by format so that Delaware Tech instructors would be able to access resources in their preferred learning style. This site was built to be adaptable so that, as new resources are located, it is easily editable, but the URL will not change for instructors.

### ***Collegewide Professional Development Seminar: Let's Talk About Trust***

Next, a collegewide professional development seminar on the importance of trust building and using trust generators was offered to all faculty (Appendix E, Artifact 5). Initially, the plan was to design training that could be provided at department meetings, individualizing content for specific programs. However, this proved to be impossible due to already structured department meeting agendas and time constraints. Instead, I designed a collegewide professional development that allowed for full group discussion as well as small group breakout rooms. The slide deck, focusing on the importance of trust and implementable trust-building strategies framed by Hammond's (2015) trust generators, first went to the associate vice president of academic affairs for approval. Once approval was granted, the slide deck was sent to the administrative intern for professional development as a proposal for a professional development offering in the professional development calendar. The administrative intern for professional development approved the training.

### ***Micro-Credential Course Plan and Design Matrix***

Thirdly, I developed a curriculum plan to build a micro-credential course on using trust generators to be offered through Delaware Tech's CCIT (Appendix F, Artifact 6). A significant component in developing a micro-credential course is determining the format of course design. According to InstructionalDesign.org, Rogers & Frieberg (1994) stress that true learning requires the application of new

knowledge. Rogers (1969) notes the importance of a positive climate for learning as well as clear purposes, allowing the learner to participate in the process and apply the learning to their situation. This guided the development of the course. The micro-credential course on trust generators allows instructors to develop and apply trust-building strategies with their students.

For this course, the Inclusive-ADDIE model was chosen based on this design format's recommendation for small groups, higher education, and course development. The Inclusive-ADDIE design was created by Chris Gamrat, Sonia Tiwari, and Saliha Ozkan Bekiroglu to adapt the popular ADDIE model. The Inclusive element was added to support DEI goals for instruction building (Gamrat et al., 2022). According to Gamrat et al., (2022), course design should focus on making sure all students know they belong--that is the first step in developing a course that is inclusive of all learners, an important component in reaching the diverse needs of Delaware Tech instructors.

Once the course plan was developed, I completed Delaware Tech's Course Design matrix. This matrix includes a map of each module in the course, including its corresponding measurable performance objectives, learning activities, learning materials, and assessments. The design component of the instructional plan included learning and assessment. This course was based on Hammond's (2015) trust generators, so each unit was comprised of resources on the research behind the trust generator (learning) and ended with an instructor task to implement that specific trust

generator into their pedagogy (assessment). Learning materials and assessments were chosen based on connections of learning partnerships and trust generators in higher education. While Hammond (2015) provides examples of how to implement trust generators in K-12, some adaptations are needed for higher education instructors. The following are the assessments designed for each unit.

**Table 3.1**

*Trust Generator Assessments for the ADDIE Micro-credential Course Plan*

<b>Trust Generator</b>	<b>Assessment</b>
Selective Vulnerability	Through a journal entry, instructors will reflect on their own process of learning, including personal strengths and weaknesses. Instructors will identify appropriate instances of vulnerability in their own lives and learn to share with students.
Familiarity	Instructors will build a semester calendar of institutional and community events that they can attend in order to engage with students outside of the classroom.
Similarity of Interests	Instructors will create a collage to share with students on the first day to tell students about themselves, including family, hobbies, and interests. Instructors will develop an icebreaker that allows students to share this information with the class.

Concern	Instructors will develop a list of holistic resources for students who reveal they are struggling with situations outside of the classroom.
Competence	The instructor will build a lesson or slide deck based on a concept or lecture that students often find confusing, making sure to focus on overcoming challenging aspects for students

### **Measuring Progress for Attaining the Improvement Goal**

Attaining my improvement goal was measured in two ways: faculty responses to professional development evaluation and institutional request to continue professional development offerings. The first measurement, a professional development evaluation survey developed to be provided to faculty and staff who attended the professional development seminar and/or participated in the micro-credential course, was established to formally review improvement goal attainment from the perspective of the faculty and staff who participated in the professional development. Given in Fall 2024 after the “Let’s Talk About Trust” professional development, this survey was sent to participants requesting their opinions on the value of the seminar (Appendix G, Artifact 7). While more informally assessed, the second measurement of attainment goals was institutional, measured through conversations with institutional leadership and their requests for continued

professional development offerings, gauging their opinions and plans for future implementation of professional development focusing on trust building.

## **Chapter 4**

### **IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY RESULTS**

Evaluating and analyzing my improvement strategy results was an on-going process throughout my ELP. After my proposal defense, significant consideration was taken to reframe my literature and artifacts around building a preliminary foundation to a culturally responsive framework through trust building to make the work more focused and meaningful for instructors. Analysis of Delaware Tech instructor self-perception was used to determine necessary strategies to enhance trust building. Professional development was designed and implemented, leading to positive instructor response on the evaluation along with an invitation from Delaware Tech's professional development committee to present an advanced session in Spring 2025. I was also invited to speak at Delaware Tech's CCIT Lunch and Learn series.

#### **Results for Improvement Strategy 1 – Identifying Research and Resources**

##### **Literature Review**

The literature indicated that there was a gap between instructor practice and student expectations when considering timeliness of contact, methods of contact, and

expected outcomes of contact. The literature also showed that this gap led to students feeling a lack of rapport and trust with instructors, which led to attrition and student success challenges. In turn, the literature showed that rapport-building measures led to an increase in student success. Glazier & Harris (2022) found that high rapport-building can result in a 25% increase in the likelihood of being successful in courses; moreover, the implementation of rapport-building features (e.g., instructor introduction, explanation of course materials and assignments, prompt responses to emails, etc.) can increase student's retention in a course by 14%. In fact, the researchers determined that even a small exposure to rapport-building measures in week one had a significant impact on how students viewed instructor presence and improved how students viewed the course materials and assignments (Glazier & Harris, 2022). While trust and rapport building were a portion of the literature review (Appendix A, Artifact 1), an analysis of the literature review found a culturally responsive pedagogical framework underlying the main themes, but the application was ambiguous and imprecise.

### **Annotated Bibliography Table**

Further research by means of an annotated table (Appendix B, Artifact 2) was conducted to directly tie trust and rapport building research to professional learning opportunities to inform Delaware Tech instructor practice. Framed by Hammond's (2015) trust generators, this provided a lens that highlighted instructor needs in a

community college setting to develop a professional learning plan for Delaware Tech instructors. Table headings followed a path from article to desired instructor capabilities and included:

- Article
  - This section provided an APA reference for the article reviewed
- Article Summary
  - The article summaries include the elements from the article that tie directly to communication practices, culturally responsive pedagogy, and student trust and rapport building.
- Professional Development Activities
  - The professional development activities are activities that instructors will participate in through either the professional development seminar (Appendix E: Artifact 5) or the micro-credential course (Appendix F: Artifact 6). These activities include discussion points, articles to read, and resources to view.
- Expected Professional Development Outcomes
  - The expected professional development outcomes are strategies that Delaware Tech instructors will be able to complete once they have participated in the professional development activities. These outcomes are focused on developing strategies

that instructors can use to implement Hammond's (2015) trust generators.

Both the literature review and annotated literature table summarized the relevant research for helping instructors to build trust and rapport with students to increase student engagement, retention, and course success.

### **Results for Improvement Strategy 2 – Assessing Instructor Self-Perception**

The second improvement strategy included a survey to assess Delaware Tech instructors' perceptions of their abilities to implement culturally responsive trust building strategies in the classroom and their views on whether these practices lead to improved student outcomes (Appendix D, Artifact 4). Out of the 450 faculty members who received the survey, 80 replied, resulting in an 18% response rate.

Demographically, respondents were primarily white (80%) and female (73%), from Owens Campus (46%), and teaching in General Education (41%). Most of the instructors who participated taught more than 15 credits (34%), followed closely by those who taught 12 -15 credits (33%). The number of years teaching at Delaware Tech varied greatly by respondents. The following table provides survey averages for each section:

- 1) Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: Student Academic Needs
- 2) Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: Learning Community
- 3) Culturally Responsive Self- Efficacy Scale: Student Culture

4) Culturally Responsive Self- Efficacy Scale: Instructor- Student Relationships

Culturally Responsive Self- Efficacy Scale: Classroom Management

5) Culturally Responsive Self- Efficacy Scale: Behavior and Student Outcomes

For sections one through four, instructors were asked to rate themselves on a scale of 1 to 10 in their ability to effectively implement categorical strategies in their classroom. In addition, instructors were asked in the last section, Culturally Responsive Self- Efficacy Scale: Behavior and Student Outcomes, to rate the level at which they felt those strategies affected student behavior and outcomes.

**Table 4.1**

*Instructor Perceptions of Confidence and Certainty in Building Trust and Rapport*

*Means*

Category	Mean
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: Student Academic Needs	8.17
Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: Learning Community	8.32
Culturally Responsive Self- Efficacy Scale: Student Culture	6.5
Culturally Responsive Self- Efficacy Scale: Instructor- Student Relationships	8.78
Culturally Responsive Self- Efficacy Scale: Classroom Management	8.74
Culturally Responsive Self- Efficacy Scale: Behavior and Student Outcomes	8.8

The results indicate that while instructors believe that culturally responsive pedagogy enhances student behaviors and outcomes, shown by the highest overall section mean of 8.8 out 10, and that they are capable of implementing this pedagogy in their classrooms, they are not confident of their abilities to implement strategies promoting student culture and home life (this was the lowest scoring section at a mean of 6.5 out of 10). While the connection between understanding a student's home life and culture and student success may not be seen as straightforward in higher education as at the K-12 level, research shows that meaningful individual attention builds trust and rapport with students at all levels (Thomas, 2012). This indicates that professional learning should emphasize that using culturally responsive practices first requires implementing trust building strategies to understand the students as unique and respected persons.

### **Results for Improvement Strategy 3 – Design and Implementation of Professional Development**

After research was completed, the process of designing, implementing, and evaluating professional development began. Professional development was designed in three formats: a) a *Google Site* mapping out various multi-modal resources defining and outlining the importance of culturally responsive pedagogy in higher education (Appendix C, Artifact 3) b) a professional development seminar open to faculty, staff, and administration collegewide (Appendix E, Artifact 5), and c) a curriculum plan and

course matrix for a micro-credential course based on the ADDIE design format (Appendix F, Artifact 6).

### **Culturally Responsive Pedagogy Resources Google Site**

The *Google Site* was provided to instructors during the professional development seminar and will be included in the micro-credential course. As resource collection focused on multi-modal resources, the site provides instructors with various ways to learn the importance of implementing learning partnerships and culturally responsive practices. While the site provides these resources, consideration should be taken to determine if the structure gives instructors a guided framework to understand what each resource provides and to decide which resources would boost their personal learning.

### **“Let’s Talk About Trust” Professional Development Training and Discussion**

The professional development training (Appendix E, Artifact 5) was titled “Let’s Talk About Trust” and was offered as a collegewide Zoom session in Fall 2024. The Zoom session was offered to administrators, faculty, and staff. The Zoom had 12 participants, including several instructors, the Owens Campus dean of student affairs, the administrative intern for professional development, and two members from CCIT. The professional development seminar focused on research-based strategies for

instructors to implement using practical applications of Hammond's trust generators.

Topics included:

- What is Trust?
- Why is Trust Important?
- How do Delaware Tech Instructors Feel?
- Trust Generators
- Trust-building Strategies in Action
- Time to Talk

The topics moved from a description of the research on trust to how to use this knowledge in the classroom. During the hour-long session, members were engaged in discussion, utilizing Zoom's chat feature and participating in small group discussions. Members discussed challenges to building trust as well as some of the successful practices that they used in their own classrooms. The diverse roles of the participants helped open the conversations about different avenues of building trust with students, including the importance of building trust at multiple student touch points throughout the college.

### **Micro-Credential Course Plan for Trust Generators for Building Rapport in Higher Education**

While our micro-credential courses are not a required component of faculty development programs, instructors can choose courses germane to their personal

professional development goals as well as meeting professional development goals for their annual evaluation. The courses are designed in a way that meets the institution's mission as well as being of interest to the instructors. Instructors can choose micro-credential courses based on their specific professional development needs.

The Micro-Credential Course Plan for Trust Generators for Building Rapport in Higher Education was sent to the director of CCIT for review for potential implementation in Spring 2025.

#### **Results for Improvement Strategy 4 –Evaluation of Professional Development**

##### **“Let’s Talk About Trust” Professional Development Evaluation Survey**

The survey was sent to respondents after the professional development; it asked participants to rate how strongly they agreed or disagreed with statements about the value and usefulness of the material provided. After, participants were asked to provide short-answer responses to what they considered the key takeaways as well as any needs for improvement. Finally, the participants were invited to work individually on the strategies. Of the 12 participants for the “Let’s Talk About Trust” professional development, four participants provided responses to the survey.

For Likert scale questions, all survey participants either “agreed” or strongly agreed” with the statements. The highest scoring options (75% strongly agreed) were that the seminar provided valuable content, helped support Delaware Tech’s mission,

and should be offered again. At 50% “strongly agree” and 50% “agree” were the statements indicating individual usefulness of the content in the current role, application to professional development goals, a focus on teaching and learning in courses, and helpfulness in building trust and communication with students.

Below are comments from the short-answer survey question “In one or two sentences, please provide the content of the "Let's Talk About Trust" session that you found the most valuable.”

- **Instructor 1:** “The basic concepts of student awareness are important to effective instruction”
- **Instructor 4:** “It underscored the importance of building trust in the classroom”

The next question “In one or two sentences, please provide details on your key take-aways that you will use with your students” was answered with the following comments:

- **Instructor 2:** “Really getting to know my students. This can be scary but is important.”
- **Instructor 3:** “Recognizing that their experiences within the classroom may be very different from what I intend, working harder to align the two.”

Comments showed that for respondents, the professional development session was successful in meeting the goals of establishing the importance of building trust with students.

## **Review by Leadership and Administration**

Once the professional development session had been completed, I was contacted by the administrative intern for professional development and a member of CCIT. The administrative intern for professional development requested the recording of my session be posted to the Delaware Tech professional development website and also requested that I once again present the “Let’s Talk About Trust” session as well as creating and presenting a session designed for instructors who understand culturally responsive pedagogy but want more in-depth research and advanced trust-building strategies. The advanced sessions was offered through the professional development calendar and presented on March 14, 2025 Further presentations are scheduled for upcoming professional learning days in May 2025.

A representative from CCIT reached out to me directly after the session to invite me to be a guest speaker for their Lunch-and-Learn series in April 2025. This would involve presenting a short description of my research and designing a question-and-answer session for attendees.

As well as these invitations for presentation, the dean of student affairs shared my research with colleagues, and I was contacted by Delaware Association for Adult and Community Education to share my research as a possible keynote speaker for their annual Literacy Summit.

## Chapter 5

### REFLECTIONS ON IMPROVEMENT STRATEGY IMPLEMENTATION

Improvement strategies focused primarily on understanding trust-building practices at the community college level, particularly at Delaware Tech, and implementing strategies to support Delaware Tech instructors in using trust generators effectively.

Developing this work over the last few years has been both extremely challenging and very rewarding. The shift in perspective to a narrower framework focused on trust building ultimately led to stronger improvement strategy implementation, but there were challenges in integrating preliminary work on communication and being able to see the deeper need, which was supporting Delaware Tech instructors in developing relationships and partnerships and ultimately earning trust from their students, which in turn leads to improved outcomes. While communication is the method in which this trust-building is completed, it was necessary for me to take a step back and focus on the actual goal.

Starting with an extremely broad focus for my literature review (Appendix A, Artifact 1) was both advantageous and disadvantageous for my improvement goals. Advantages included understanding what research suggested about student

perspectives on communication and rapport building. However, this broad focus made it impossible to build effective professional development without a structured framework. While I ultimately decided not to focus on student perspectives, this knowledge helped me focus on trust generators as the lens for designing the professional learning plan. Further research was required to see how to adapt the research of Hammond (2015) on learning partnerships and trust generators to these practices in higher education. It is ultimately this research (Appendix B, Artifact 2) that allowed me to understand the importance of trust and relationship building at the community college level and then frame my professional learning strategies.

A significant change in my role occurred nearing the end of my doctoral education. In July 2024, I was promoted to the chair of the English Department at the Owens Campus. This provided more recognition throughout the College, including instructors and faculty on other campuses and in other departments. As such, this was likely a contributing factor to increased participation in the Instructor Perceptions Survey (Appendix D, Artifact 4). While increased participation benefitted the research, it was not without its limitations. For instance, the majority of the respondents were from my program (General Education) and my campus. This limited the context in which I was receiving responses because many of these educators have a similar background and/or likely had attended my prior professional development sessions and knew of my research. A follow-up research plan for interviews or a focus group with members outside of these cohorts, including leveraging my access to

English faculty in PLCs, would have benefited my understanding of the responses greatly. Along with this, the focus of the survey was on the broader view of CRP so it did not specifically question instructors about trust and learning partnerships. I could have looked directly at this framework to determine if instructors felt comfortable implementing recommended strategies or where they felt their greatest challenges lie in building trust with students.

In addition, the Delaware Tech instructor reach for the professional development session (Appendix E, Artifact 5) was not as strong as I had hoped. As this session had been built into the professional development calendar at the end of the semester, this likely limited the attendance. Future presentations will occur during established collegewide professional development days, increasing the likelihood of instructor attendance. I also hope that my presentation of advanced strategies will increase interest and apply to more Delaware Tech instructors.

Another possible explanation for low attendance is the acknowledgement that instructors may already believe that they are consistently building trust with their students and that they do not need of professional development in this area, as shown by their high self-assessment scores from the given survey (Appendix D; Artifact 4). To counter this, I would like to work on reaching out to departments to collaboratively build professional development that best fits their needs.

Despite these challenges, based on attendee engagement during the “Let’s Talk about Trust” professional development session (Appendix E, Artifact 5) and the

responses in the evaluation plan that show instructors who attended this professional development plan to use the strategies with their students (Appendix G, Artifact 7), the approach was successful in moving toward the improvement goal. Instructors were often engaged in discussion throughout the session and appeared comfortable in sharing their obstacles as well as successes in regard to building trust with their students. It was clear through the interactions that beginning the professional development discussing the research on trust and the results of the survey allowed participants an understanding of the importance of the strategies provided.

Institutionally, the improvement goals were well received. Administrators and leaders were involved and supportive throughout the process. Goal attainment was shown institutionally through requests to repeat the professional development session (Appendix E, Artifact 5) and future discussions for implementation of the micro-credential course (Appendix F, Artifact 6).

Additionally, this ELP does not contain a method for assessing the impact on student success. While the evaluation plan (Appendix G, Artifact 7) does ask if and how instructors plan to implement material into their courses, I would be interested to use logic model mapping to determine if the student experience is improved and whether an increase in retention could be traced to implementation.

## **Recommendations for Future Work**

Selected future work and implementation of research is already in progress. However, there are several recommendations that can be considered, starting with further research. The literature review indicated that lack of rapport could lower student success (Glazier & Harris, 2022). As our institution moves toward its mission of equitable education, it would be beneficial to understand how students view these gaps. Determining their significance through a student lens, particularly in terms of opportunity gaps for minority students and students of color, could provide a significant buy-in for instructors and be more impactful in bridging equity gaps, a focus of the institution's strategic planning goals.

In the future, I want to provide a more in-depth analysis of the knowledge and self-perceptions of instructors on a larger scale, including attempting to attract instructors outside of the General Education program, who were the majority of the original respondents. Future work into gauging the differences, if any, between the self-efficacy beliefs of general education instructors and program instructors would benefit individualized or department-based professional development opportunities. Reaching a broader population of instructors will help to design professional development sessions that meet the needs of instructors with varying backgrounds and connections.

Next, surveying adjunct instructors would be an important step in understanding the self-perceptions of culturally responsive pedagogy strategies for

instructors at all employment levels. Adjunct instructors make up a significant portion of Delaware Tech's instructional faculty but were not included in the original survey respondents. Surveying this population will provide an opportunity for professional development sessions to be offered that cater to part-time instructors

In terms of professional learning, implementation of the micro-credential course on Trust Generators would be a future step to allow instructors to design their own trust building strategies tailored for their strengths and student needs. This course would be provided free of charge to both full-time and adjunct instructors through CCIT.

As all students attending Delaware Tech must take at least one math course and two English courses, developing professional learning for these two PLC groups would significantly impact student outreach. During a recent PLC data meeting, we reviewed retention and success rates for students enrolled in math and English courses. Data showed that while we were making strides in increasing these rates for White and Black students, the same gains were not being made to overcome the opportunity gaps for our Hispanic and Latin-X students. As survey data (Appendix D: Artifact 4) showed, instructors rated their self-efficacy lowest in the category of student culture. I would like to work with our administrative intern for Achieving the Dream to build professional development for our math and English PLC groups that focus on bridging these gaps, including focusing on asset-based thinking and how understanding the role of student culture and homelife facilitates trust building.

Another opportunity for future work through my role as department chair for the Owens English Department is my ability to view and analyze pass rate data and course evaluations to open up dialogue with individual instructors regarding trust building practices with their students. While these conversations are happening on the surface in our collegewide department meetings, being able to hold conversations discussing personal obstacles will allow me to target coaching toward individual instructor needs.

Finally, working collegewide through department Professional Learning Communities (PLCs) would provide individualized context to the professional learning, allowing the discussion to involve goals, strategies, and obstacles faced by department provides instructors an opportunity for trust building strategies specific to their context.

## **Chapter 6**

### **REFLECTIONS ON LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT**

I was fortunate to begin my graduate coursework with the University of Delaware in 2018 in the M.Ed. Teacher Leadership program. At that time, I had been in my position with the English Department on Owens Campus at Delaware Tech since 2010, and I had previously earned a Masters of Education with a focus on elementary education in 2006. I felt that continuing my education was imperative to my growth as an instructor at Delaware Tech. Returning to formal education after 15 years required quite a bit of adaptation. I re-learned how to be a successful student, which in turn reminded me how to be a successful instructor. Throughout the M.Ed. program, I managed being a full-time instructor, parent, and student, preparing me for the next step in my educational journey.

I completed my Master of Teacher Leadership at University of Delaware in December 2020, and I then applied to the Ed.D. program to deepen my understanding of teacher education and coaching. I began my Doctor of Educational Leadership program at the University of Delaware in Summer 2021.

During my time in the Ed.D. Program, I was promoted from a 10-month instructor position to a 12-month Department Chair position, a move I credit to my

experiences in the Ed.D. program. This promotion has broadened my scope of practice and allowed me to further develop my leadership skills.

### **Development as a Scholar**

The coursework throughout the program was crucial in my development as a scholar. Beginning my courses with EDUC839: Education Policy and Governance helped to shape me early as a scholar. As my background in policy and governance was limited before the course, EDUC839 was a learning process in two aspects. First, the course content focused on education bureaucracy and the importance of acknowledging the needs of various stakeholders and decision makers. Prior to this course, my work with educational policy was on a department level. EDUC839 taught me to understand policy on a larger scale and see how those decisions ultimately affect teaching and learning. This was especially important as I became a decision maker on a more significant scale as a new department chair. It was necessary for me to be aware of the needs of multiple stakeholders. Second, EDUC839 introduced me to the process of being a doctoral student, how to look outside of my original thinking and embrace the challenges of learning new material, including providing myself the time and motivation to review and use feedback for resubmissions of course work. In short, I learned to focus on learning as an on-going journey as opposed to earning a score and moving on. This proved to be invaluable throughout the program as I often needed to make connections between materials in various courses and adapt my thinking when presented with new information.

In Fall 2021, I took EDUC846: Collection and Analysis of Data for Decision Making, which introduced me to my cohort and the use of qualitative research in developing a problem and improvement goal. Throughout this course, I was challenged to understand how research is necessary to identify and define a problem as well as setting measurable and actionable goals for possible solutions. Course instruction included the importance of CITI training, how to ethically design and conduct qualitative research, and how to analyze that research from multiple perspectives, including working through my own limitations. I found myself returning to this material repeatedly over the process of the program, particularly throughout the ELP courses and building, implementing, and analyzing my survey. For example, learning the proper components of an IRB protocol, understanding how to section a survey for user accessibility, and triangulating data were all skills I learned in this course. The research concepts were initially challenging, but this course content provided me a scholarly vocabulary and various ways to present my ideas and findings.

Along with the need for a foundation of research concepts, my coursework developed me as a scholarly writer. EDUC828: Research in Educational Decision Making honed my writing skills by developing my literature review (Appendix A, Artifact 1). As a research-writing instructor, I was most surprised at my on-going development in this regard. This course taught me how to organize my thoughts concisely to explain my analysis of a problem and then propose solutions. These skills

were developed further in ELP I, ELP II, and ELP III where my artifacts were finished, and my writing skills were further developed throughout the writing and revision of my portfolio through the process of incorporating multiple sources of feedback over several months.

Along with the coursework, the frequent meetings with my advisor, Dr. Karchmer-Klein, helped my development as a scholar. Reviewing my learning process, choosing courses, and discussing my research showed me the value in collaboration and guidance as a scholar.

Overall, this program taught me that learning is not static; it is an on-going process that requires adaptation and advisement. This was initially a difficult concept for me, and as I struggled throughout the ELP process, I had to pivot and keep going, not originally a strength of mine as a student. As a scholar, I learned the importance of confidence in my own ability to understand and articulate my learning through reflection and revision and to show myself the grace that I always strive to provide to others.

### **Development as a Problem Solver**

Problem solving should be a collaborative and cyclical effort, with each step in the process followed by evaluation, reflection, and adaptation. When I first began my courses, I focused on retention of students who were failing or withdrawing (officially or unofficially) from second- or third- level English courses after they had

successfully completed Composition I. Organizationally, over the last few years, Delaware Tech has been a member of Achieving the Dream, working through a complete redesign of our math and English curriculums. As noted, ATD guides our strategic plan and goals toward a more equitable learning experience for all students. Throughout this process and combined with conversations with students and instructors, I narrowed my focus to how instructor interaction with students led to attrition or retention. After my initial proposal, this was narrowed even further to looking at building trust to structure a foundation for further understanding of implementing culturally responsive practices and what Delaware Tech instructors could do to implement trust-building strategies for their students.

My progress as a problem solver has been significant. One of the key components that I learned to focus on was how important it is to frame the problem with research, both globally and institutionally. Originally, I was looking at my problem of instructor communication and student expectations through a global lens, focusing on a broad issue occurring across many colleges, as opposed to focusing on how the problem could be framed at my institution. Through research and committee discussions, I reviewed my problem and adapted it to a local issue, supported by a survey of Delaware Tech instructors. With this, I was able to frame the problem and methods of improvement around specific issues identified by the faculty at my institution.

Once the initial improvement professional development was implemented (Appendix E, Artifact 5), I was able to review the evaluation of attendants (Appendix G, Artifact 7) and suggestions from leadership to make recommendations for future steps. This cycle of determining a research-based problem, reviewing and implementing solutions, evaluating the outcomes, and reflecting on future needs accelerated my growth as a problem solver.

A main aspect of my growth in problem solving has been overcoming my reluctance to move from merely implementing solutions determined by others to a leader who is able to identify problems and work with administrators and colleagues to create and implement solutions. Now I am confident in following institutional procedures to identify needs and challenges and to strive to address these problems on a wider scale as opposed to only addressing them within my department or classroom. For instance, I am currently the lead for the English Department collegewide, allowing me the opportunity to work with our ICG dean and the administrative intern for Achieving the Dream to support the English Department collegewide.

### **Development as a Partner**

Development as a partner has been my most meaningful achievement throughout this process. During the Ed.D. Program, I first learned to identify and recognize the importance of including all stakeholders in the problem-solving process. In education, the stakeholders often include students, colleagues, administrators, and

the community. In both my problem-solving and daily work, it is important to understand how my actions and decisions affect all stakeholders and to incorporate all perspectives in that decision making.

A main goal of Delaware Tech is equitable experiences for students across the multi-campus system. As we move toward alignment, building partnerships across campuses and departments is integral in reaching this goal. My progress throughout the Ed.D. program allowed me to work on building these partnerships and sharing information in collegewide events. During my research, I felt confident in reaching out to leadership, administrators, and colleagues to build my understanding. In turn, this allowed me to be seen as an educator with expertise. There is a symbiotic relationship between partnership building and learning. My confidence in building my network has increased throughout my education, which has led to further learning.

My development as a partner increased significantly in July 2024, when I was named English Department Chair of Owens Campus. With this role, not only did my sphere of influence change, but my network in identifying and solving problems also increased. During my transition into the chair position, it was noted by administration that I take my responsibility as a leader very seriously and that I have a strong focus on institutional growth. I attribute this to my participation in the Ed.D. Program and all that I have learned.

As a department chair, I am now often the voice for the English instructors on Owens Campus. My doctoral studies prepared me for this role by teaching me how to

be both a transactional and a servant leader. As instructors, we are always tasked with urgent goals and challenges to better serve our students. I have learned throughout this process that I can both identify and communicate the importance of reaching these goals while simultaneously inspiring the growth and development of my team. For instance, I understand the necessity of learning and leveraging team member strengths and personal goals to meet the needs of the department and institution. Although the foundation of these leadership styles was taught in my first summer session, it is my work throughout this journey that has taught me how to be the leader needed for my department and my institution.

### **Final Thoughts**

I was not prepared for the significant change in myself as a scholar, problem solver, partner, and leader that I gained throughout UD's Ed.D. program. This was certainly not an easy journey, and there were times when I struggled significantly, particularly in the framing of my ELP. Overcoming these challenges took determination and grit.

I have always been an enthusiastic and eager student, a true lifelong learner. However, the personal and professional growth that I have achieved throughout this process far exceeded my expectations. The coursework built on my desire to learn and understand and pushed me to higher levels of thinking. I was taught to reframe my thinking in ways that I had never considered, such as being confident in identifying the

challenges that instructors are facing while simultaneously centering the student in the educational process. This has led to considerable change in how I approach both problem-solving and my everyday work. I have grown as a scholar and researcher, allowing research to frame the way that I approach problem solving. Along with this adaptation in thinking, I was encouraged to review how I presented my learning and information and to be confident in my expertise. I am not afraid to ask questions or provide answers. I am grateful for the opportunity to grow and learn in these ways, providing me the avenue to become a more valuable member of my institution as well as an asset to education in Delaware.

## REFERENCES

- Cavanaugh, A. J., Chen, X., Bathgate, M., Frederick, J., Hanauer, D. I., & Graham, M. J. (2018). Trust, growth mindset, and student commitment to active learning in a college science course. *CBE—Life Sciences Education*, 17(1), 1 – 4.  
<https://doi.org/10.1187/cbe.17-06-0107>
- Center for Creative Instruction and Technology. (n.d.-a). *Instruction Design and Technology Program*. <https://ccit.dtcc.edu/facultystaff/idt-courses/>
- Center for Creative Instruction and Technology. (n.d.-b). *Micro-credential courses*. <https://ccit.dtcc.edu/facultystaff/micro-credential-courses/>
- Delaware Technical Community College. (2023, July 1). *Mission, vision, strategic directions, and values statement*. <https://www.dtcc.edu/about/mission-vision-and-strategic-directions>
- Delaware Technical Community College. (n.d.-a). *Achieving the Dream*. <https://www.dtcc.edu/atd>
- Delaware Technical Community College. (n.d.-b.). *Employee professional learning*. <https://www.dtcc.edu/about/employment/professional-development#goals>
- Emdin, C. (2017). *For White folks who teach in the hood ... and the rest of y'all too: Reality pedagogy and urban education*. Beacon Press.

- Gamrat, C, Tiwari, S., & Bekiroglu, S. O. (2022, March 10). *INCLUSIVE ADDIE: Initial considerations for DEI pedagogy*. Educause Review.  
<https://er.educause.edu/articles/2022/3/inclusive-addie-initial-considerations-for-dei-pedagogy>
- Hammond, Z. (2015). *Culturally responsive teaching and the brain: Promoting authentic engagement and rigor among linguistically diverse students*. Corwin.
- Glazier, R. A., & Harris, H. S. (2022). How teaching with rapport can improve online student success and retention: Data from two empirical studies. *The Quarterly Review of Distance Education*, 21(4), 1 -17.
- Hammond, Z., & Jackson, Y. (2015). *Culturally responsive teaching and the brain: Promoting authentic engagement and rigor among culturally and linguistically diverse students*. Corwin.
- Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). *The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children*. Jossey-Bass
- Hoffman, M. (2018a, October). Culturally responsive teaching– part 1: Acknowledging culture and self-cultivation. *Communique*, 47(2), p. 1, 23-26.  
<https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1192157>

- Hoffman, M. (2018b, November). Culturally responsive teaching– part 2: Pedagogical considerations and teacher-student relationships. *Communique*, 47(3), 12, 14 - 15.
- <https://eric.ed.gov/?q=Jackson+AND+parts&id=EJ1195883>
- Institute of Education Sciences. (2022). *IPEDS data feedback report 2021: Delaware Technical Community College- Terry*.
- <https://nces.ed.gov/ipeds/dfr/2022/ReportPDF.aspx?unitId=130907>
- Kokotsaki, D., Menzies, V., & Wiggins, A. (2016, November). Project-based learning: A review of the literature. *Improving Schools*, 19(3), 267 – 277.
- <https://doi.org.udel.idm.oclc.org/10.1177/1365480216659733>
- National Center for Education Statistics. (n.d.). *Delaware Technical Community College*. College Navigator.
- <https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/?s=DE&id=130907#general>
- Rogers, C.R. (1969). *Freedom to learn*. Merrill.
- Rogers, C.R. & Freiberg, H.J. (1994). *Freedom to learn* (3rd Ed). Merrill/Macmillan.
- Shank, M. D., Walker, M., & Hayes, T. (1995). Understanding professional service expectations: Do we know what our students expect in quality education? *Journal of Professional Services Marketing*, 13(1), 71 - 89.
- Siwatu, K. O. (2007). Preservice teachers’ culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy and outcome expectancy beliefs. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, 23(7), 1086 – 1101. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2006.07.011>

Thomas, L. (2012, July). *Building student engagement and belonging in higher education at a time of change: Final report from the What Works? Student Retention and Success programme*. Paul Hamlyn Foundation.  
<https://www.phf.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/10/What-Works-report-final.pdf>

Tormey, R. (2021). Rethinking student-teacher relationships in higher education: A multidimensional approach. *Higher Education*, 82, 993 -1101.  
<https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-021-00711-w>

## **Appendix A**

### **ARTIFACT 1-- LITERATURE REVIEW: STUDENTS' EXPECTATIONS AND INSTRUCTOR PRACTICE FOR COMMUNICATION IN THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**

This literature review provides an overview of a preliminary problem of practice: the gap between student expectations and instructor practice in terms of communication, a broad component of relationship building. It focuses on community colleges and non-traditional students to analyze communication practices in a local context. The purpose of this literature review was to understand how instructor communication practices affect students' sense of belonging, leading to better student outcomes. This review established research questions regarding instructor-to-student communication, with special attention to student expectations, current instructor practices, current working trends, and gaps in the literature. This review provides the reader the contexts of communication barriers at community colleges.

#### **Literature Review: Students' Expectations and Instructor Practice for Communication in The Twenty-First Century**

Defining and understanding student expectations for instructor-to-student communication in higher education is crucial for closing the gaps between student expectations and instructor practices. Research indicates that students' expectations

for instructor-to-student communication are often not fully understood by faculty, which leads to instructors perceiving themselves to be communicating effectively while students believe instructors often fall short. To understand these gaps, it is necessary to review literature on student expectations for instructor-led communication, instructor beliefs about what constitutes meaningful and appropriate communication, the current trends in higher education instructor-led communication, and the opportunities for future research.

### **Research Questions**

- What are students' expectations for instructor-to-student communication?
- What do instructors perceive as student expectations for instructor-to-student communication?
- How do instructors' communication practices meet or fall short of student expectations?
- What are current working trends in instructor-to-student communication?
- What are the current gaps in the research on instructor-to-student communication?

### **Organizational Information**

Delaware Technical Community College is the only public community college in the state of Delaware. Delaware Tech offers certificate and degree programs,

including two-year associate degrees and four-year bachelor degrees. Class formats are offered in Hyflex, asynchronous online, synchronous web-conferencing, hybrid, and face-to-face. Sessions are offered in one-week, seven-week, 11-week, and 15-week timeframes. The College has four campuses spanning the state: one in Sussex County, one in Kent County, and two in New Castle County. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (n.d.), for the Fall 2021 semester, enrollment was 11,726 students. Out of those students 67% are part time, with 33% enrolled full time. Sixty-eight percent of students are female. Forty-five percent of the students are White; 26% are Black or African-American; 16% are Hispanic/ Latino; 4% are two or more races; 4% are Asian, and 3% are unidentified. Non-US residents make up 1% of students. Students are predominantly 24 or under (65%) with the remaining 35% aged 25 or older. Forty-three percent of students are enrolled in some form of distance learning, with 7% of those enrolled only in online courses. The great majority of students, 97%, are in-state (NCES, n.d.). Delaware Technical Community College students and faculty resemble the census of most community colleges in the country. Community college students and faculty have challenges and strengths unlike the typical college or university, including more first-generation students, a higher number of students who qualify for PELL grants, lower graduation rates, smaller teacher-to-student ratios, a more diverse student population, and greater flexibility of course times and modalities. Due to these differences, it is important to review research that focuses on those specific populations.

## **Importance of Building Rapport**

Rapport building is a student expectation for communication and a strategy to increase student retention and success. Glazier & Harris's 2022 research article, "How Teaching with Rapport Can Improve Online Student Success and Retention: Data from Two Empirical Studies" discussed how to build rapport with online students in order to boost retention and success. In their research, Glazier and Harris (2022) found that after controlling for the moderating factor of GPA, rapport was still a predictive factor in student success. A student in a course with a high rapport-building score will be 25% more likely to be successful in the course than those in a course with a low rapport-building score. In fact, the researchers determined that even a small exposure to rapport-building measures, those implemented in week one, had a significant impact on how students viewed instructor presence and improved how students viewed the materials and assignments in the course. Implementing rapport-building features, such as instructor introduction, an explanation of how the course fits into the program and career, a clear explanation of materials and assignments, and prompt instructor responses to emails, increased the students' probability of remaining in a course by 14% (Glazier & Harris, 2022). As this research is looking at the connection and disparities in communication standards for instructors and students, this study not only explains what students consider positive rapport building, but also shows what good instructors must implement in online courses to engage students and build rapport.

### **Student Expectations:**

Students have high expectations of their instructors in terms of knowledge, both of course content and college navigation and policies. According to Shank et al. (1995), a study of 668 students indicated that students expect their instructors to be a “one-stop shop” for information regarding the college experience. The student expectations of instructor knowledge and engagement does not start and end with course content. Students expect instructors to understand and be available to discuss college policies, scheduling, program information, and more (Shank et al., 1995). Over the last 30 years, with the advent of virtual meetings and communication, the learning environment has changed, making student expectations of instructor knowledge and communication even more significant.

### *Students as Consumers*

Along with the shift in technology resources to allow more consistent communication and contact, a dramatic shift in the nature of higher education has taken place over the last several decades. As tuition increased sharply and higher education degrees have become required for more entry-level jobs, a commercialization of higher education has occurred, framing students as consumers and institutions of higher education as service providers. According to Jones (2006), director of the student affairs office at Kingston University,

“As students now have to pay more for their education, they are becoming more demanding in their expectations about what universities should provide. In recent years, the relations between institutions and students have shifted

from the traditional academic relationship to a more contractual type of relationship taken from a consumer's perspective" (as cited by Paricio Royo, 2017, p. 138).

Paricio Royo's (2017) summary below indicates the eight characteristics of academic institutions as service providers to student consumers, including students who demand what they need, consider a degree an investment, prioritize student-consumer satisfaction, and put the responsibility for success on the institution more than the student.

**Summary of the characteristics of the academic offer in terms of educational performance in a student–customer and university–provider scenario.**

***Main Academic Traits Characterising a University Model in Which the Student is Conceived as a Customer***

- 1) Students as customers who demand what they think they need: value for money.
- 2) An academic degree as an investment in a social brand that will provide payoff through a better professional future.
- 3) High tuition fees justified by the future personal economic value of the investment.
- 4) The higher education system as a market in which institutions compete for student–customers and resources.
- 5) Student–customer satisfaction and loyalty as an institutional strategic goal: quality as equivalent to satisfaction.
- 6) Satisfaction as a brand: reputation and selectivity as strategic advantages for attracting customers. The brand is seen as a valuable qualification for the student–customer.
- 7) The institution as a provider (of the product that best satisfies the customer): curriculum is conceived as preparation for professional success.
- 8) Role of the student as a recipient. Responsibility for the results is transferred to the institution. Relationship between the student and the institution (including the teaching staff) is of a contractual nature. (Paricio Royo, 2017, p. 145)

Paricio Royo (2017) suggests that while this may lead instructors to focus more on student satisfaction than student learning, it requires institutions to place the student at the center of decision making, which can have positive effects on student enrollment and learning.

Anft (2021) supports this view by stating that since students in the US and the UK pay more for their education, they expect more from their institutions. Students not only expect colleges and universities to provide educational opportunities, but to also provide opportunities for students to focus on their well-being. Students in the US and UK prioritized well-being higher than students in other countries (Anft, 2021).

Paricio Royo (2017) and Anft (2021) agree that education has become contractual; students are spending money to earn a degree, and institutions are required to work to provide that service. As students are viewing higher education as transactional, they are increasing their demands of institutions and their instructors, including demands for quick access and clear communication.

The rise of digital learning brings higher expectations from students regarding instructor communication. Current student expectations of communication primarily focus on methods of communication, timeliness of communication, and outcomes of communication.

***Technology Use and Methods of Communication:***

The students we now know as digital natives began attending college in 2013. So, from this point forward, traditional and most returning incoming higher education

students are and will be digital natives. Technology use and methods of communication have changed significantly over the last two decades. Beginning with the emergence of email as the standard method of communication for students and instructors to the uninterrupted access to communication with the ever-present cell phones, communication has adapted through technology. As such, research shows that students' expectations of and preferences for communication are now predominantly online.

In their article, "An Examination of Gen Z Learners Attending a Minority University," Buzzetto-Hollywood & Ayodele (2018) surveyed Gen-Z college students, the first digital natives, on technology use, background, needs, interests, career goals, and professional expectations. The authors begin by discussing prior research on Gen-Z technology use for communication. According to the literature, in 2015, a report by Lenhart for the Pew Research Center found that teenagers texted up to 30 times a day. Texting subsequently increased exponentially as mobile devices have become more accessible and almost compulsory for daily life and communication. In fact, a study done by Claveria in 2017 found the biggest stressor of Gen Z is phone separation anxiety (as cited by Buzzetto-Hollywood & Ayodele, 2018). The authors extended this research by surveying Gen-Z, first-generation college students to determine comfort level with the use of technology. It is no surprise that incoming college students are comfortable communicating with technology. For example, 93% of students surveyed agreed or strongly agreed that email was familiar to them, and 94% indicated the same

about smartphone use (Buzzetto-Hollywood & Ayodele, 2018). As this research was completed at a minority university and surveyed first-generation college students, Buzzetto-Hollywood & Ayodele (2018) acknowledge that they focused on students who are often challenged by the digital divide. While further research is required to compare these results to a broader population, it does specifically pertain to the comparable population of community college students at Delaware Technical Community College.

Furthering the discussion student preferences of instructor communication, Chang, Hurst, & McLean (2015) focused on student expectations and preferred ways to receive course communication from their online instructors. In a survey of 213 Midwest university students, 97% answered agree or strongly agree to preferring email for communication. This was followed by 77% of students who agreed or strongly agreed that a preferred method of communication was posting course announcements. This contrasts with the survey results concerning multimodal communication, such as instructor videos and video conferencing, which were preferred methods of communication for less than half the students surveyed (45%). Communication through social media rarely excited students, with 70% of students disagreeing or strongly disagreeing that Tweets were a preferred method of communication. (Chang et al., 2015). However, Chang et al. recognized the limitations of this research as technology is constantly changing. Since this article was published in 2015, other methods of communication have become available, which leads to the

question of whether instructors are basing best practices on prior learning and thinking as opposed to updated methods that digital natives may now prefer.

In the 2018 article “Increasing Interpersonal Interactions in an Online Course: Does Increased Instructor Email Activity and Voluntary Meeting Time in A Physical Classroom Facilitate Student Learning?”, authors Cung, Xu, & Eichhorn determined that students who participated in online courses with high interaction through email communication and voluntary meeting time scored consistently and considerably higher on assessments in the course than students who were in an online class with low interaction rates. An important distinction that Cung et al. (2018) made was that instead of posting announcements and reminders in a course learning management system (LMS), instructors who also emailed this information saw increased achievement. This echoes the research from Chang et al. (2015) who found that 97% of students preferred email correspondence compared to 77% who preferred course announcements. Along with this, Cung et al. (2018) completed a data analysis on a control condition course “online with low interactivity” and treatment condition course “online with high interactivity.” In the control condition, instructors were available through in-person and online office hours, answered emails, and sent course-wide emails (Cung et al., 2018). The treatment condition included the same but also included a weekly voluntary in-person meeting time. Students were encouraged to email questions before the meeting, and the instructor reviewed and answered questions. The authors found that the weekly meeting in the treatment group had an

approximately 25% attendance, much higher than office hour attendance. The outcome was a higher final exam sub-score for students who were offered the online high interactivity course with the optional discussion (Cung et al., 2018). The research indicates that while email communication and office hour options are popular for many students, in-person, whole-class discussions based on student-driven questions can increase student success.

***Timeliness:***

One of the most important and impactful student expectations in communication is the perceived timeliness of communication and feedback. As online communication, including email and text messaging, has emerged as the most prevalent form of communication between instructors and students, student expectations of being in contact have changed. Whereas students previously may have had to wait until class or attended office hours to solicit feedback from their instructors, technology has created unfettered access to instructor-student communication. As this has changed, so have students' expectations of the length of time between initial contact and response.

Zimmerman et al. (2014), specified this through their study of "Narrowing the Gap Between Expectations: A Study of Expectations," in which 39% of students surveyed indicated that if they were the instructor they would "provide timely and consistent feedback, modification, and clearer explanation of grading system" in order to increase student motivation. (p. 12).

Furthering this research, Wilkie & Rosendale (2021) in “Undergraduates’ Email Response Expectations and Instructor Responsiveness” stated that students have high response expectations of instructors. If students reach out to an instructor, they expect a return response within eight to 24 hours—regardless of course modality. Specifically, 42% of students expect an email response within eight hours or fewer, and 28% expect an email response within 24 hours. This included when faculty was out-of-town and over the weekend (Wilkie & Rosendale, 2021). Prior research cited by Wilkie and Rosendale (2021) supports these findings.

Gen Y and Z expect a quick response from instructors (Frاند, 2000; Wilkie, 2016), a considerable amount of student-faculty contact (Bradford et al., 2006–2007), and that student course satisfaction is affected by how fast the instructor responds to communications (Jensen et al., 2005). The present study also confirms that students expect email to be answered and assignments returned quickly in an online course (Carswell et al., 2000; Elbeck & Song, 2011; Wilkie, 2016; Zhang et al. 2016). (p. 39)

Along with student expectations, the research from Wilkie and Rosendale found that instructors perceive themselves as more accessible than students believe them to be; this was even more prevalent for online students. Wilkie and Rosendale (2021) reported that 78% of instructors responded to general messages within 24 hours. Despite this, one quarter to one third of students were “dissatisfied with instructor response rates” (p. 46), especially for weekend responses, which had a 60%

– 63% dissatisfaction rate from students. Wilkie and Rosendale (2021) therefore suggested further research on the students’ and instructors’ definitions of “timely.” This is an important consideration as research on instructor perception of students’ expectations of communication timelines is limited. It is important to note that students’ expectations of what constitutes a timely response from instructor varies but usually falls within a 24-hour response window regardless of the contents of the original message or when the message was sent. A recommendation made by Wilkie & Rosendale (2021) was to provide students with a communication plan at the beginning of the course that states a reasonable timeline to expect communication and feedback from instructors. This is a requirement of Delaware Technical Community College instructors and it is incorporated in the course audits and performance expectations each semester.

***Outcomes of Communication:***

Another important aspect when discussing students’ expectations regarding communication is the desired outcomes of communication. Communication outcomes may be as functional as information about an assignment or feedback about a specific grade, but research indicates that communication is also used to build intangible, but meaningful, outcomes as well, such as rapport with students, trust, respect, and an atmosphere of caring.

In 2013, Booth, Cooper, Karandjeff, Large, Pellegrin, Purnell, Rodriguez-Kiino, D& Willet wrote the report “Using Student Voices to Redefine Support” for the

Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges. The report was commissioned to determine what California's community colleges could do to increase student completion and graduation. This report focused on student perception of what support measures are important and meet their needs. The researchers surveyed 900 community college students and found that the six main factors of student success are: directed, focused, nurtured, engaged, connected and valued. In terms of students' expectations of communication outcomes, 67% indicated that having someone at the college who cares about their success was a main factor in student persistence. Feeling nurtured was the second-most common factor students contributed to their success in college. This was particularly true for African American and first-gen students (Booth et al., 2013). As stated by Buzzetto-Hollywood and Ayodele (2018), this student population faces the most adversity in terms of the digital divide, so it is important for instructors to recognize these challenges and work to support and nurture them. Booth et al. (2013) provided several recommendations for fostering student success. The authors suggest that instructors "provide regular, constructive feedback on students' performance and progress" (p. 36) and show students they care through the simple acts of knowing their names and engaging them in conversations about their lives. Students felt that understanding the student as a whole was a common expectation. (Booth et al., 2013).

Zimmerman et al. (2014) further iterated these concepts of being nurturing and engaging in communication through their recommendation of a student-centered

approach. The mission of Delaware Technical Community College (2019) states that “Students are at center of everything we do,” so the recommended student-centered approach ties directly to the College’s mission. Throughout their two-year study of Midwestern university students, Zimmerman et al. (2014) noted that students’ expectations of communication outcomes were tied directly to increasing motivation. In the research, 69% to 94% of students indicated that participating in a course evaluation where the instructor actively discussed responses and made changes based on student feedback improved student-instructor communication (Zimmerman et al., 2014). Zimmerman et al. (2014) also suggested that inviting student feedback about a course, sharing the results with students, and discussing the results with them improves the instructor student working relationship, the students’ engagement, and their awareness of how they think and learn. Students respect the instructors’ desire and ability to adapt to student feedback. As a result of their study of class discussion based on student feedback through surveys, Zimmerman et al. (2014) determined that 40% to 67% of students felt more engaged in the course. One student response stated that survey discussion “helps to level the learning environment in the sense that the teacher isn’t like a hawk sitting up on top of the classroom anymore, but makes it more seem like you’re all peers and you’re just trying to get the best education you can” (Zimmerman et al., 2014, p. 13). Further, students in the second-year focus group indicated that having clear communication and engaging instructors were motivating factors, and that instructors should be “relatable, open, supportive, respectful, non-

judgmental, and create a personal connection to the students” in order to foster engagement (Zimmerman et al., 2014, p. 12). A recommendation from the research indicates that instructors need to understand and work to overcome the gap between students’ expectations for communication and current instructor practice.

### **Instructor Communication Practices**

A common theme found in research on student expectations was that they did not correlate with instructor perceptions of their own practices. In short, instructors believed that they were meeting the expectations of students regarding timeliness, methods of communication, and depth of communication, but students did not share this belief.

As stated in Zimmerman et al. (2021), instructors need to work to overcome the gap between their habits and the students’ expectations for communication. In order to do this, it is necessary to understand current instructor perceptions of student needs and practices.

Lindecker & Cramer (2021) in their article “Self-Disclosure and Faculty Compassion in Online Classrooms,” looked at the instructor view of student self-disclosure of personal information and how that impacts their experiences as well as how instructors respond to the disclosure. It is important to know if there is a disconnect between what students feel needs to be disclosed and how instructors handle that information. Lindecker & Cramer (2021) surveyed 238 college faculty members who taught online courses. Survey respondents were chosen through

professional network connections of the researchers and then a snowball sampling recruited a broader array of respondents. There were two significant focuses in this research: whether students disclosed personal information to online instructors, followed by how instructors responded to these disclosures. The research showed that 96% of surveyed faculty experienced at least one disclosure of personal information from students, ranging from typical family and employment challenges to the severity of suicide ideation and risks (Lindecker & Cramer, 2021). In response to these self-disclosures, the faculty members indicated that they responded to students in three ways: emotional support, resource referral, and short-term, class-based assistance (Lindecker & Cramer, 2021). However, there were contrasts even within these three approaches. For instance, in the category of emotional support, one respondent stated that while they provided sympathy, they attempted to “steer them back to the task at hand” (p. 48). Another faculty member responded in the same category that they tell the student that school is second and they are to take care of themselves and family first. This suggests that even when instructors are focusing on the same type of support, the support they are providing can differ starkly.

Researchers Stone & Springer (2019) asked instructors and staff from two Australian universities about strategies used to increase engagement and retention of students online in their article “Interactivity, Connectedness, and ‘Teacher Presence’: Engaging and Retaining Students Online.” The study of 151 college and university faculty throughout Australia tallied best practices for implementing policies for

improving student outcomes. Stone and Springer (2019) identified faculty members by reaching out to universities for recommendations and then doing a snowball sample. Professional titles ranged from executive academic leaders through teaching and support faculty. The most significant finding was that instructors determined “teacher presence” to be vital to the success of students, including creating an online presence and making sure students felt cared for. One instructor felt it was crucial to “have an impression of there being someone on the other end of the system listening to them. So, communication and feedback, communication and feedback, communication ... you can’t communicate enough with online students” (Stone & Springer, 2019, p. 153). An important factor relevant to this research was the acknowledgement that this style of feedback and communication is time consuming and requires top-down support with time, resources, and training (Springer & Stone, 2019). While this research was conducted in Australia, Stone & Springer (2019) indicated similar challenges for the population of students being instructed, including challenges of technology, expectations, and external factors that affect academic success. As such, it is likely that the engagement factors they discussed are comparable to those in American community college populations.

### **The Gap Between Student Expectations and Instructor Practice:**

Research indicates that there is a gap between student expectations of instructor communication and instructor practice. According to the Community College Research Center (2013), there is a clear gap between students’ expectations

and instructor practice concerning the timeliness of communication. Student survey data indicated that students expected a quick turn-around time on emails, with many indicating that they expected faster responses than stated in the instructor communication policy, which usually stipulated a response to email within 48 hours and not over the weekend. Students explained their frustration with this policy, indicating that they were doing most of their work on the weekend and needed to have questions answered while they were working (CCRC, 2013). While instructors acknowledged this expectation, many felt it was unreasonable, stating that students were expecting to have their own lives while instructors were not (CCRC, 2013).

However, a study by Shank et al. (1995) shows that students expect more from their instructors than instructors may even understand. Students and instructors were surveyed on 49 items on a 1 (not at all essential) to 7 (absolutely essential) scale. Shank et al. (1995), shows the gap between student expectations and what professors think students expect from instructors. Significant gaps are shown by the following mean gap scores:

- whether professors should always be willing to help students (.66),
- students' dealings with professors should be pleasant (.92),
- professors should be knowledgeable about academic programs and requirements (1.21),
- professors should help students schedule classes (1.49),

- professors should be knowledgeable about academic policies and procedures (1.94),
- professors should be knowledgeable about extracurricular activities that affect their students (1.14) (Shank et al., 1995).

These statistics show there is a significant gap between what students expect of their instructors in regard to communication and what instructors believe students expect. Shank et al. (1995) indicate there are two ways to overcome this gap. The first is to address expectations that are not feasible through freshmen orientation and clear discussion of expectations during the first course session (Shank et al., 1995). The second is to address these gaps through instructor training on adapting their knowledge and practice regarding student expectations. Shank et al. (1995) acknowledge this raises requirements for faculty and would likely be met with resistance from faculty.

This gap in student expectations and instructor perception is supported by Collier and Morgan (2008), whose study showed that instructors, first-generation college students, and non-first-generation college students all believe that instructor-student communication needed improvement, but there was a gap in whose responsibility it was to initiate communication and for what reasons. Students felt that they should reach out to instructors to introduce themselves, but instructors felt that student communication should be based around problems in the course. Instructors

also noted the tendency for students to not take advantage of student hours even when the instructor noted explicitly these were available (Collier & Morgan, 2008).

Another gap noted by Collier and Morgan (2008) was the purpose behind student communication and the perception of instructors of what student communication should be for. Where instructors felt that communication should be built around course content and problem-solving, students envisioned communication as relationship building.

The gap between what instructors perceive to be necessary factors to success and what students perceive to be factors to success is supported by Gaytan (2015), whose study shows that instructors ranked student self-discipline and faculty and student interactions as the two more significant factors to students' success in an online course, where students felt that the two most significant factors were increased faculty instruction and meaningful feedback. This indicates that instructors place the onus of student success on the students, whereas students feel that it is instructor practice that has a more significant impact on their success.

### ***Communication and First-Generation Students***

Approximately 64% of students enrolled in public 2-year colleges are first-generation students (Center for First-Generation Student Success [CFGSS], 2018). It is important to note that first-generation students differ demographically from students whose parents have earned a bachelor's degree or above. According to the CFGSS (2018), first-generation students are more likely to be older, female, and have

dependents than traditional college students. They are also more likely to be veterans and attend college part-time. As such, first-generation students have their own strengths and challenges in regard to communication practices. In their study of communication apprehension, Francis and Miller (2008) identified that first-generation students score high in communication apprehension, particularly oral communication. Collier and Morgan (2008) indicate that along with this apprehension, first-generation college students have difficulty with two specific aspects of instructor communication: overuse of college jargon and an elevated vocabulary that led to student misunderstandings. This misunderstanding leads to confusion in expectations and a less successful experience for first-generation college students (Collier & Morgan, 2008). This data shows a clear gap in student expectations and instructor practice for first-generation college students.

Despite those gaps in students' expectations and instructor practice, research has shown that there are effective reforms in higher education to improve instructor-to-student communication. These practices include building rapport and trust with students, focusing on student protective factors, using student feedback to adjust course communication, and offering and encouraging both online and in-person communication.

### **Gaps and Disagreements in Current Research**

While there are some findings that are well-supported, such as students' expectations for communication and preferred formats, there are other instances when

the research does not support the proposed hypotheses that instructors are not meeting student expectations and that effective communication and rapport building are important to student success.

Martin, Galentino, & Townsend, L. (2014) published a qualitative study of community college students, faculty, and staff members focusing on personal protective factors, such as motivation and self-empowerment, that increase student retention. Their data revealed that students' success is most significantly tied to students' personal protective factors, such as "clear goals, strong motivation, the ability to manage external demands, and self-empowerment" (Martin et al., 2014, p. 229). Significantly, the researchers spoke with graduates as opposed to first- and second- year students, who are generally the primary respondents for research. This indicates that the students interviewed had successfully navigated their college years. Contrary to prior research, Martin et al. (2014) report that even though the students interviewed were aware of academic resources available to them, they were reluctant to use them. Instead, the interviewees stated that it was important that the college provided these services, but they did not need them. In terms of future research, it is important to focus on students who have successfully graduated to determine if their expectations mirror those of first- or second- year students and how and why those may diverge or overlap.

Another finding that nullified the expected hypothesis was the Romsa, Bremer, & Lewis's study of "The Evolution of Student-Faculty Interactions: What Matters to

Millennial College Students” (2017) because the data in this analysis did not correlate with the commonly-held belief that instructor interaction mirrored student satisfaction. For example, none of the course-related interaction or out-of-class interaction variables predicted student retention. The researchers suggested that this may be due to changing needs of Millennial college students, which may be either compounded or offset by the introduction of Gen-Z and digital native students. Because an important component of my research examines what instructors believe is appropriate interaction and what students believe is appropriate interaction, it is important to understand that as technology changes, so do students’ expectations, and instructors will have to adapt to with rapidly changing expectations.

Another research study that challenged prior research is “Attendance Policies, Instructor Communication, Student Attendance, And Learning” by Snyder & Frank (2016). They examined how attendance policies and instructor communication, particularly dynamism and verbal aggressiveness, affected student attendance, achievement, and learning. The hypothesis that instructor dynamism would improve attendance and learning was not supported. While prior research indicates that rapport-building correlates with student success and retention, building rapport may not need to focus on dynamism and engagement. Instead, the research indicates that students’ expectations focus more on communication that fosters feelings of compassion and respect, such as responding in a timely fashion, understanding the student as a person, and engaging in communication in a way that is convenient for the student.

### **Impacts on Future Research**

There is limited qualitative research available that looks at student expectations, but the research on faculty perceptions of students' expectations and their own practice is very limited. Providing opportunities for students to discuss this in more depth is an opportunity for further research. Other avenues are looking at how these expectations may have changed since COVID-19 impacted students' expectations due to colleges and universities moving significant portions of education online and the required removal of communication timeframes and timelines to better support student success during the pandemic. Another area of research that was touched on in a very limited manner and could use further research was how gender plays a role in students' expectations.

## References

- Anft, M. (2021, June 23). *Connected student report: Insights into global higher education trends from over 2,000 students and staff* [Second edition]. Salesforce. <https://www.salesforce.org/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/connected-student-report-second-edition-06-23-21.pdf>
- Booth, K., Cooper, D., Karandjeff, K., Large, M., Pellegrin, N., Purnell, R., Rodriguez- Kiino, D., Sciorring, E., & Willet, T. (2013, January). *Using student voices to redefine support*. The Research and Planning Group for California Community Colleges. <https://rpgroup.org/Portals/0/Documents/Archive/StudentPerspectivesResearchReportJan2013.pdf>
- Bork, R. H., & Rucks-Ahidiana, Z. (2013, October). *Role ambiguity in online courses: An analysis of student and instructor expectations*. Community College Research Center. <https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/role-ambiguity-in-online-courses.pdf>
- Collier, P. J., & Morgan, D. L. (2008). "Is that paper really due today?": Differences in first-generation and traditional college students' understandings of faculty expectations. *Higher Education*, 55, 425-446. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10734-007-9065-5>

- Community College Research Center. (2013, March). *Creating an effective online environment*. <https://ccrc.tc.columbia.edu/media/k2/attachments/creating-effective-online-environment.pdf>
- Chang, C. & Hurst, B. & McLean, A. (2015). You've got mail: Student preferences of instructor communication in online courses in an age of advancing technologies. *Journal of Educational Technology Development and Exchange*, 8(1), 39-48.
- Cung, B., Xu, D., & Eichhorn, S. (2018). Increasing interpersonal interactions in an online course: Does increased instructor email activity and voluntary meeting time in a physical classroom facilitate student learning? *Online Learning*, 22(3), 175-197. <https://doi.org/10.24059/olj.v22i3.1322>
- Delaware Technical Community College. (2019, July 1). *Mission, vision, strategic directions, and values statement*. <https://www.dtcc.edu/about/mission-vision-and-strategic-directions>
- Gaytan, J. (2015). Comparing faculty and student perceptions regarding factors that affect student retention in online education. *American Journal of Distance Education*, 29(1), 56 – 66. <https://doi.org/10.1080/08923647.2015.994365>
- Gobel, P. & Kano, M. (2013). *Student and teacher use of technology at the university level*. Proceedings of IADIS International Conference of Exploratory Learning in Digital Age, 17 - 24.

- Glazier, R. A., & Harris, H. S. (2022). How teaching with rapport can improve online student success and retention: Data from two empirical studies. *The Quarterly Review of Distance Education*, 21(4), 1 -17.
- Lindecker, C. A., & Cramer, J. D. (2021). Self-disclosure and faculty compassion in online classrooms. *Online Learning*, 25(3), 144 – 156.  
<https://doi.org/10.24059/olj.v25i3.2347>
- Martin, K., Galentino, R., & Townsend, L. (2014). Community college student success: The role of motivation and self-empowerment. *Community College Review*, 42(3), 221 – 241. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0091552114528972>
- National Center for Education Statistics. (n.d.). *Delaware Technical Community College*. College Navigator.  
<https://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/?s=DE&id=130907>
- Paricio, J. (2017). Students as customers: A paradigm shift in higher education. *DEBATS- Annual Review*, 2, 137 – 149. <https://doi.org/10.28939/iam.debats-en.2017-11>
- Romsa, K., Bremer, K. L., & Lewis, J. (2017). The evolution of student-faculty interactions: What matters to Millennial college students. *College Student Affairs Journal*, 35(2), 85 – 99.
- Shank, M. D., Walker, M., Hayes, T. (1995). Understanding professional service expectations: Do we know what our students expect in quality education? *Journal of Professional Services Marketing*, 13(1), 71 - 89.

- Stone, C., & Springer, M. (2019). Interactivity, connectedness, and ‘teacher presence’: Engaging and retaining students online. *Australian Journal of Adult Learning*, 59(2), 146 – 169.
- Snyder, J., & Frank, L. A. C. (2016). Attendance policies, instructor communication, student attendance, and learning. *Journal of Education for Business*, 91(2), 108 – 116. <http://dx.doi.org/10.1080/08832323.2015.1128383>
- Wilkie, L., & Rosendale, J. A. (2021). Undergraduates email response expectations and instructor responsiveness. *Distance Learning*, 18(1), 37 -50.
- Zimmerman, T., Schmidt, L., Becker, J., Peterson, J., Nyland, R., Surdick, R. (2014, March). Narrowing the gap between students and instructors: A study of expectations. *Transformative Dialogues: Teaching and Learning Journal*, 7(1), 1 – 18.

## Appendix B

### **ARTIFACT 2: ANNOTATED TABLE CONNECTING RESEARCH ON CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY TO SKILLS AND STRATEGIES FOR INSTRUCTOR TRUST BUILDING**

This table connects research on relationship building in higher education to learning partnerships and trust generators established by Hammond (2015). Research was completed online through databases and search engines for scholarly articles pertaining to culturally responsive pedagogy in higher education. Search terms included: *Building Trust in Higher Education, Culturally Responsive Pedagogy in Higher Education, Rapport in Higher Education, Trust Generators* Inclusion/exclusion criteria included peer-reviewed, scholarly articles or trade publications published in English on or after 1990. I targeted articles and chapters pertaining specifically to CRP in higher education. Texts were excluded if content did not discuss building rapport or trust with students and did not have a culturally responsive pedagogical focus.

The purpose of this table was to help guide my research from a broad view of the importance of effective communication to a narrower examination of learning partnerships and trust and how this can be used in professional learning for Delaware Tech instructors. This table further narrows the scope of instructor relationship building to tie directly to trust and builds a foundation to conceptualize what Delaware Tech instructors need to understand to use culturally responsive practices in order to

build trust and better communicate with students. As trust is paramount to building a culturally responsive learning partnership (Hammond, 2015), research included in this table begins with a summary of Hammond's learning partnerships and trust generators and furthers this research through articles discussing CRP in higher education to provide a framework for design of effective professional development for Delaware Tech instructors.

***Summary of Hammond's Learning Partnerships and Trust Generators:***

Hammond (2015) discusses the "need for a different kind of relationship" (p. 74) in her chapter *Building the Foundation of Learning Partnerships*. In this chapter, she notes that trust and fear are inversely related. Whereas fear takes up cognitive space, trust allows students more cognitive focus on learning, as they are not operating in fear. Due to this, student learning is improved when students trust their instructor. Hammond (2015) recognizes that trust is built over time and with intentional practice. In this regard, she offers five trust generators to help instructors build rapport and learning partnerships with their students.

- **Concern:** The actions of the instructor that show they care about their students as people. They take time and effort to know their students and show that their experiences and lives are important.
- **Selective Vulnerability:** Instructors should take time to allow students to see that even instructors have difficult and vulnerable moments. Instructors can tie this directly to the learning by discussing challenges in their own learning.
- **Familiarity:** Instructors need to be present for students outside of the classroom and learning experiences. These could include community events or places or during student leisure time.
- **Similarity of Interests:** Instructors should work to find similarities with their students, which creates a bond. This shows students that connections go beyond differences. This also allows students and instructors to understand one another as people outside of classroom.
- **Competence:** It should be clear to students that instructors are competent in their skills and knowledge of their subject area. Teaching effectively and being aware of how to make material more accessible shows competence.

Article	Article Summary	Professional Development Activities	Expected Professional Development Outcomes. Instructors will be able to:
<p>Johnson, A. (2022). Culturally responsive teaching in higher education. <i>International Journal of Equity and Social Justice in Higher Education</i>, 1. <a href="https://cornerstone.lib.mnsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1008&amp;context=esjh">https://cornerstone.lib.mnsu.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1008&amp;context=esjh</a></p>	<p>Johnson (2022) states that “culturally responsive teaching consists of three interconnecting elements: (a) high academic standards that focus on students’ total intellectual growth, (b) cultural competence and inclusion, and (c) critical or sociopolitical consciousness. These elements are interdependent” (p.26). Johnson (2022) asserts that relationships are built on authenticity and congruence and that instructors need students to see them as humans. Instructors can develop this by sharing parts of their lives and appropriate emotions. Instructors should move away from the typical power structure to create a collaborative learning environment, which becomes more meaningful. This is done by creating a shared sense of values and respect (Johnson, 2022).</p>	<p>Professional Development will provide strategies for building concern and selective vulnerability.</p> <p><b>(Appendix E: Artifact 5: Professional Development Seminar)</b></p> <p>In Breakout Rooms, Instructors will determine ways they can develop and participate in ice breakers and choose stories to show concern and selective vulnerability.</p> <p><b>(Appendix F: Artifact 6: Micro-credential Course).</b></p> <p>Instructors will:</p> <p>Watch <a href="#">“What Makes a Good Teacher Great?”</a>; Read <a href="#">“The ‘How’ of Building Deeper Relationships with Students”</a> and complete the guided notes</p> <p>Read <a href="#">“Teacher Characteristics for Culturally Responsive Pedagogy.”</a>; Read <a href="#">“Concrete Strategies for Building Community”</a>; Watch <a href="#">“Build Relationships with Your Students”</a> and complete the guided notes</p>	<p>Complete a journal entry defining the concept of “concern” as a trust generator and explaining the impact “concern” can have on student learning (Concern)</p> <p>Develop three strategies to implement throughout the semester-- beginning, middle, and end of semester-- to get to know your students. Complete chart on what you learned about each student. Check in with each student about what they shared at least once each quarter. (Concern)</p> <p>Complete a journal entry defining the concept of “selective vulnerability” as a trust generator and explaining the impact “selective vulnerability” can have on student learning. (Selective Vulnerability)</p> <p>Review course materials and identify “checkpoints” where students often find difficulties. Create a plan to share a time when you also struggled with a</p>

			concept but persevered (Selective Vulnerability)
Lynch, J. (2024). Do I fit in: Cultivating belonging, mattering, and community In Lynch, J., & Rush, C. B. <i>Developing culturally responsive learning environments in postsecondary education</i> (pp. 389-405). Information Age Publishing.	Lynch (2024) in his chapter “Do I Fit In” states that “Another barrier to belonging within the classroom is frequent encounters with microaggressions, or the subtle daily slights or indignities perpetuated against marginalized social groups (Sue et al., 2007)...these daily insults, intentional or unintentional, serve to remind marginalized students that they are different and do not truly belong within the classroom community” (p. 393). Wojdak & Lynch (2022) show that “Evidence suggests that student relationships with faculty are a key component of student academic success, particularly when students believe faculty try to get to know them” (as cited by Lynch, 2024, p. 396). Practices that were found to have positive impacts on students’ sense of belonging: putting relationships first and showing interest (concern), humanizing yourself (selective vulnerability & similarity of interest), and being cognizant of how and why you provide feedback (competence) (Lynch, 2024, pp 395 - 398)	<p>Professional Development will provide strategies for building concern, selective vulnerability, similarity of interest, and competence.</p> <p><b>(Appendix E: Artifact 5: Professional Development Seminar)</b></p> <p>In Breakout Rooms, Instructors will determine ways they can develop and participate in ice breakers and choose stories to show concern and selective vulnerability. Instructors will discuss midcourse surveys and questions they can ask to further student learning</p> <p><b>(Appendix F: Artifact 6: Micro-credential Course).</b></p> <p>Instructors will:</p> <p>Watch <a href="#">“What Makes a Good Teacher Great?”</a>; Read <a href="#">“The ‘How’ of Building Deeper Relationships with Students”</a> and complete the guided notes</p> <p>Review <a href="#">“Establishing Alliance in the Learning Partnership”</a> and read <a href="#">“Creating a Cycle of Student Feedback”</a> and complete guided notes.</p> <p>Read <a href="#">“Teacher Characteristics for Culturally Responsive Pedagogy.”</a>;</p>	<p>Complete a journal entry defining the concept of “concern” as a trust generator and explaining the impact “concern” can have on student learning (Concern)</p> <p>Develop three strategies to implement throughout the semester-- beginning, middle, and end of semester-- to get to know your students. Complete chart on what you learned about each student. Check in with each student about what they shared at least once each quarter. (Concern)</p> <p>Complete a journal entry defining the concept of “competence” as a trust generator and explaining the impact “competence” can have on student learning. (Competence)</p> <p>Create a learning “pact” with each student. (Competence)</p> <p>Develop a midcourse survey to assess student learning and confidence (Competence)</p> <p>Complete a journal entry defining the concept of “selective vulnerability” as a trust generator and explaining the impact</p>

		<p>Read <a href="#">“Concrete Strategies for Building Community”</a>; Watch <a href="#">“Build Relationships with Your Students”</a> and complete the guided notes</p> <p>Read <a href="#">“Getting Started with Culturally Responsive Teaching”</a>; Read <a href="#">“Exploring Shared Interests”</a>; Read <a href="#">“Building Connections Through Shared Interests”</a> and complete the guided notes</p>	<p>“selective vulnerability” can have on student learning. (Selective Vulnerability)</p> <p>Review course materials and identify “checkpoints” where students often find difficulties. Create a plan to share a time when you also struggled with a concept but persevered (Selective Vulnerability)</p> <p>Complete a journal entry defining the concept of “similarity of interests” as a trust generator and explaining the impact “similarity of interests” can have on student learning. (Similarity of Interest)</p> <p>Choose one strategy for showing similarity of interests from the reading materials to implement at the beginning or end of a course session. Adapt the activity to reflect on learning materials for that session. Write a five-step plan to implement the activity into class</p>
<p>Payne, A. L., Stone, C., &amp; Bennett, R. (2022, January 24). Conceptualizing and building trust to enhance the engagement and achievement of underserved students. <i>The Journal of</i></p>	<p>Payne et al. (2022) assert that trust building is foundational to the success of underserved students in higher education, defined as students those in which marginalization is a product of the institution and not the student. The authors begin by discussing the changing demographics of the student population in higher</p>	<p>Professional Development will establish the importance of trust building and the need for learning partnerships to reach underserved students.</p> <p><b>(Appendix E: Artifact 5: Professional Development Seminar)</b></p>	<p>Complete a journal entry defining learning partnerships as defined by Hammond (Learning Partnerships)</p> <p>Complete the <a href="#">My Points of Connection Chart</a> (Learning Partnerships)</p>

<p><i>Continuing Higher Education</i>, 71(12), 134 – 151.  <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/07377363.2021.2005759">https://doi.org/10.1080/07377363.2021.2005759</a></p>	<p>education institutes in Australia, noting the increase in students who are Indigenous, female, older, and those with disabilities or in a lower socioeconomic status. They follow this by stating that these populations also have the highest rates of attrition and lowest rates of satisfaction and engagement, and that these can be overcome by relationship building and trust (Payne et al., 2022). Payne et al. (2022) use McAllister’s (1995) two-part definition of “(1) cognitive-based trust, which is grounded in students’ belief in their instructors’ aptitude and reliability, and (2) affective-based trust, grounded in students’ perceptions and experiences of their instructors’ interpersonal care and concern” (p 140). Payne et al. (2022) describe five attributes to trust:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Competence—Mastery of one’s field; Demonstrated by instructors knowing their content and willingness to provide this knowledge clearly and respectfully (p. 142)</li> <li>• Openness— Validating students through instructor vulnerability. Being agreeable to change one’s mind and engage in discussion, sharing personal experiences, doubts, and uncertainties (pp 142 – 143).</li> <li>• Congeniality—Creating a supportive and friendly environment. Instructors can reduce power balances by showing friendship and respecting all views (p.143).</li> </ul>	<p>PD will begin with the following: Think about a colleague, supervisor, or educator you trust. Who is it? What does it mean to you that you trust them?</p> <p>In the chat, instructors are invited to answer: Think about the importance of trust in your relationships. Is it important to you? Why?</p> <p>Instructors will visit the concept of the Warm Demander-- Let's take a minute to review this chart, thinking of how we interact with our students. Where do we fall?</p> <p><b>(Appendix F: Artifact 6: Micro-credential Course).</b></p> <p>Read <a href="#">“What is Culturally Responsive Teaching”</a>; Watch <a href="#">“What is Culturally Responsive Teaching”</a>; Watch <a href="#">“TrilledU: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy”</a>; Watch <a href="#">S2, E3: Culturally Responsive Instructor with Zaretta Hammond (Rules 1 and 2)</a> and complete the guided notes</p> <p>Professional Development will provide strategies for building competence, selective vulnerability, and concern.</p>	<p>Complete a journal entry defining the concept of “concern” as a trust generator and explaining the impact “concern” can have on student learning (Concern)</p> <p>Develop three strategies to implement throughout the semester-- beginning, middle, and end of semester-- to get to know your students. Complete chart on what you learned about each student. Check in with each student about what they shared at least once each quarter. (Concern)</p> <p>Complete a journal entry defining the concept of “competence” as a trust generator and explaining the impact “competence” can have on student learning. (Competence)</p> <p>Create a learning “pact” with each student. (Competence)</p> <p>Develop a midcourse survey to assess student learning and confidence (Competence)</p> <p>Complete a journal entry defining the concept of “selective vulnerability” as a trust generator and explaining the impact “selective vulnerability” can have on student</p>
--	--	--	--

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sincerity—Truth-telling. Instructors need to be genuine and follow through with their actions. They need to take an interest in student learning (p. 143).</li> <li>• Integrity—Being ethical despite its lack of benefit. Instructors need to continue respectful, ethical practices (pp. 143 – 144).</li> </ul> <p>Payne et al. (2022) conclude by stating that HEIs should provide ongoing professional development based on the five trust factors and the importance of relationship building.</p>	<p><b>(Appendix E: Artifact 5: Professional Development Seminar)</b></p> <p>In Breakout Rooms, Instructors will determine ways they can develop and participate in ice breakers and choose stories to show concern and selective vulnerability. Instructors will discuss midcourse surveys and questions they can ask to further student learning</p> <p><b>(Appendix F: Artifact 6: Micro-credential Course).</b></p> <p>Instructors will:</p> <p>Review <a href="#">“Establishing Alliance in the Learning Partnership”</a> and read <a href="#">“Creating a Cycle of Student Feedback”</a> and complete guided notes.</p> <p>Read <a href="#">“Teacher Characteristics for Culturally Responsive Pedagogy.”</a>; Read <a href="#">“Concrete Strategies for Building Community”</a>; Watch <a href="#">“Build Relationships with Your Students”</a> and complete the guided notes</p> <p>Watch <a href="#">“What Makes a Good Teacher Great?”</a>; Read <a href="#">“The ‘How’ of Building Deeper Relationships with Students”</a> and complete the guided notes</p>	<p>learning. (Selective Vulnerability)</p> <p>Review course materials and identify “checkpoints” where students often find difficulties. Create a plan to share a time when you also struggled with a concept but persevered (Selective Vulnerability)</p>
<p>Rendon, L. (1994, Fall). Validating culturally diverse students: Toward a new model</p>	<p>In the article, “Validating Culturally Diverse Students: Toward A New Model of Learning and Student</p>	<p>Professional Development will provide strategies for building familiarity and concern.</p>	<p>Complete a journal entry defining the concept of “concern” as a trust generator and explaining</p>

<p>of learning and student development. <i>Innovative Higher Education</i>, 19(1), 33 – 51.  <a href="https://www.csuchico.edu/freespeech/assets/documents/pedagogy/rendon,-l.-1994---validation-theory.pdf">https://www.csuchico.edu/freespeech/ assets /documents/pedagogy/ rendon,-l.-1994--- validation-theory.pdf</a></p>	<p>Development,” Rendon (1994) focuses on developing a framework that directly ties validation of student culture to learning. Rendon (1994) suggests that as the student demography changes, colleges have remained consistently Euro-centric and male-centered, requiring women and minority students to adjust their “attitudes, beliefs, and values” in order to avoid feeling alienated (p. 34). Rendon’s (1994) original study purpose focused on how learning was affected by student involvement inside and outside of the classroom; however, she indicates that change occurred during the course of the study to look at how faculty and staff influence could help students to believe in their own capacity for learning, stating “Even the most vulnerable nontraditional students can be transformed into powerful learners through in- and out-of-class academic and/ or interpersonal validation” (p .37). At the college level, Rendon (1994) suggests that faculty and staff meet with students at sporting events, at the library, and in the cafeteria. These are out-of-class locations that can help to build familiarity with students. Secondly, Rendon (1994) focuses on showing concern and connectedness for students.</p>	<p><b>(Appendix E: Artifact 5: Professional Development Seminar)</b></p> <p>In Breakout Rooms, Instructors will determine ways they can develop and participate in ice breakers and choose ways to share their personal interests</p> <p><b>(Appendix F: Artifact 6: Micro-credential Course)</b></p> <p>Read <a href="#">“Teacher Characteristics for Culturally Responsive Pedagogy.”</a>;  Read <a href="#">“Concrete Strategies for Building Community”</a>;  Watch <a href="#">“Build Relationships with Your Students”</a> and complete the guided notes</p> <p>Read and Watch <a href="#">“The Power of Instructor Presence” for online courses</a>; Read <a href="#">“Student Engagement Starts Outside the Classroom”</a>;  Read <a href="#">“The Teacher is Approachable to Students Outside the Classroom”</a> and complete the guided notes</p>	<p>the impact “concern” can have on student learning (Concern)</p> <p>Develop three strategies to implement throughout the semester-- beginning, middle, and end of semester-- to get to know your students. Complete chart on what you learned about each student. Check in with each student about what they shared at least once each quarter. (Concern)</p> <p>Complete a journal entry defining the concept of “familiarity” as a trust generator and explaining the impact “familiarity” can have on student learning. (Familiarity)</p> <p>Develop a calendar with campus events that are being offered that you can share with students. Schedule time to attend three campus events outside of class time (Familiarity).</p>
<p>Taneri, P. O., &amp; Ozbek, O. Y. (2023). Promoting diversity and culturally responsive pedagogy in higher education. <i>International Journal</i></p>	<p>In their study, Taneri &amp; Ozbeck (2023) identified that “although most of the instructors stated that they had limited knowledge about the teaching strategies required for culturally responsive teaching in higher education, instructors</p>	<p>Professional Development will establish the importance of trust building and the need for learning partnerships to reach underserved students.</p>	<p>Complete a journal entry defining learning partnerships as defined by Hammond (Learning Partnerships)</p>

<p><i>of Turkish Educational Studies</i>, 11(21), 765 – 813.  <a href="https://doi.org/10.46778/goputeb.1333036">https://doi.org/10.46778/goputeb.1333036</a></p>	<p>stated that they “paid attention to getting to know the students, group work, dialogue, arranging the curriculum according to the needs of the students, and creating a democratic classroom environment” (p. 774). This indicates that the instructors had a background of understanding the importance of these concepts but may lack a framework to fully implement CRP in the classroom. CRP can be built upon by building the correct framework and vocabulary and leveraging what instructors are already doing. Taneri &amp; Ozbeck (2023) discuss that “trust is an often-overlooked element for the effective functioning of the classroom. Educators who build trust can help their students believe that their activities are worthwhile and have confidence in themselves” (p. 769).</p>	<p><b>(Appendix E: Artifact 5: Professional Development Seminar)</b></p> <p>PD will begin with the following: Think about a colleague, supervisor, or educator you trust. Who is it? What does it mean to you that you trust them?</p> <p>In the chat, instructors are invited to answer: Think about the importance of trust in your relationships. Is it important to you? Why?</p> <p>Instructors will visit the concept of the Warm Demander-- Let's take a minute to review this chart, thinking of how we interact with our students. Where do we fall?</p> <p><b>(Appendix F: Artifact 6: Micro-credential Course).</b></p> <p>Read <a href="#">“What is Culturally Responsive Teaching”</a>; Watch <a href="#">“What is Culturally Responsive Teaching”</a>; Watch <a href="#">“TrilledU: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy”</a>; Watch <a href="#">S2, E3: Culturally Responsive Instructor with Zaretta Hammond (Rules 1 and 2)</a> and complete the guided notes</p>	<p>Complete the <a href="#">Warm Demander Chart Self-Assessment</a> (Learning Partnerships)</p>
<p>Wlodkowski, R. J., &amp; Gingsberg, M. B. (1995, January). A framework for culturally responsive teaching. <i>Educational</i></p>	<p>Wlodkowski &amp; Gingsberg (1995) discuss motivation tied to culturally responsive teaching and student success. They establish that both secondary and higher education are founded on</p>	<p>Professional Development will provide strategies for building competence.</p>	<p>Complete a journal entry defining the concept of “competence” as a trust generator and explaining the impact “competence”</p>

<p><i>Leadership</i>, 53(1), 17 – 21.  <a href="https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234654518_A_Framework_for_Culturally_Responsive_Teaching">https://www.researchgate.net/publication/234654518_A_Framework_for_Culturally_Responsive_Teaching</a></p>	<p>principles of extrinsic motivation, stating “both levels tend to follow the precepts of extrinsic reinforcement. Teaching and testing practices, competitive assessment procedures, grades, grade point averages, and eligibility for select vocations and colleges form an interrelated system (Wlodkowski &amp; Gingsberg, 1995, p. 18). With this, Wlodkowski and Gingsberg (1995) further posit that it is intrinsic motivation that leads to learning with the “student perspective as central to teaching” (p. 18). An intrinsic motivational framework includes culturally responsive teaching practices, including establishing inclusion. Wlodkowski &amp; Gingsberg’s (1995) framework indicates four conditions necessary for establishing culturally responsive teaching: Establishing inclusion, developing a positive attitude, enhancing meaning, and engendering competence. Under the condition of Developing a Positive Attitude, defined by Wlodkowski &amp; Gingsberg (1995) as creating a learning environment enjoyable to students due to relevance and choice (p. 3) They state that instructors should encourage students to make “choices in content and assessment methods based on their experiences, values, needs, and strengths” (p. 4). A shared procedure indicated by both Wlodkowski &amp; Gingsberg (1995) and Hammond (2105) to show competence and develop a positive attitude is to use a learning contract, which</p>	<p><b>(Appendix E: Artifact 5: Professional Development Seminar)</b></p> <p>In Breakout Rooms, Instructors will discuss midcourse surveys and questions they can ask to further student learning.</p> <p><b>(Appendix F: Artifact 6: Micro-credential Course)</b></p> <p>Review “<a href="#">Establishing Alliance in the Learning Partnership</a>” and read “<a href="#">Creating a Cycle of Student Feedback</a>” and complete guided notes.</p>	<p>can have on student learning. (Competence)</p> <p>Create a learning “pact” with each student. (Competence)</p> <p>Develop a midcourse survey to assess student learning and confidence (Competence)</p>
--	--	--	--

	allows student ownership and makes the learning less confusing.		
--	---	--	--

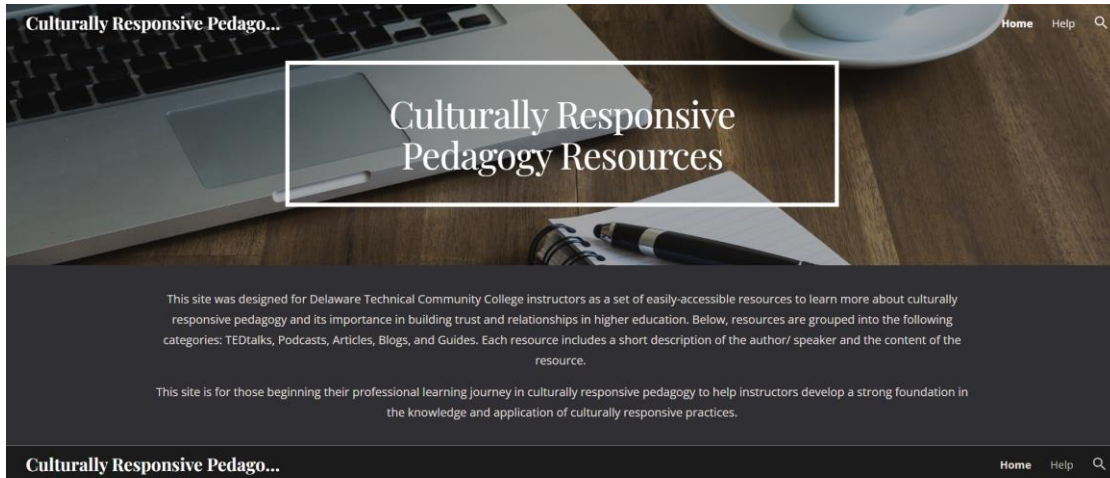
## Appendix C

### ARTIFACT 3 – CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE STRATEGIES GOOGLE SITE

This resource page was designed for Delaware Tech instructors to access resources on the importance of integrating culturally responsive practices into their courses. The initial goal of building this adaptable page of multimodal resources was to guide my own understanding and knowledge of experts in the field while eventually becoming a resource for Delaware Tech instructors. While this site focuses more broadly on the importance of culturally responsive pedagogy and not specifically on trust generators, it provides instructors with a broad view of CRP. As an introductory guide to CRP as well as resources for what is being integrated at other colleges and universities around the country, this site is an initial step in building buy-in to the importance of CRP practices in and outside of the classroom. Resources are organized by category, including *TEDtalks*, Podcasts, Articles, Blogs, and Guides in order to ease use for instructors to find resources to fit their preferred modality of learning. Each resource is annotated and linked for instructor access.

***Site URL***

### Site Page Image



### Resources

This section displays two resource cards. The first card, titled "TEDTalk", features a background image of a keyboard and a mouse. The second card, titled "TrillEDU: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy...", includes a photo of a man in a white suit speaking at a TEDx event at New Jersey University. The third card, titled "Trust: Student Engagement and Inclusiveness", features a photo of a man in a brown suit speaking. Each card contains a short paragraph of text describing the resource.

This section displays four resource cards. The first card, titled "Podcasts", features a background image of a microphone. The second card, titled "The 180 Podcast: Zaretta Hammond: What is Culturally-Responsive Teaching?", includes a photo of Zaretta Hammond and a "180" graphic. The third card, titled "Culturally-Responsive Online Teaching, with Courtney Plotts - Teaching in Higher Ed", includes a quote from Courtney Plotts and a photo of her. The fourth card, titled "Culturally Responsive Teaching: 4 Misconceptions", features a background image of a globe and a person. Each card contains a short paragraph of text.



## Articles



### What Is Culturally Responsive Teaching?

Here's what it means to be a culturally responsive teacher and where critical race theory ties in—or not.



### Five Essential Strategies to Embrace Culturally Responsive Teaching

The following practices provide five essential strategies for how educators can make their learning environments more culturally responsive.



## Blog



### Blog - Culturally Responsive Teaching & the Brain



### Eduporium Weekly | Culturally Responsive Teaching

Culturally responsive teaching is crucial to fostering classroom inclusion.



## Guide



[www.uwlax.edu/catl/guides/ie/](http://www.uwlax.edu/catl/guides/ie/)

For many instructors, seeing evidence that certain groups of students don't do as well in their courses as other groups do poses a problem without offering a solution. The Instructor's Guide to Inclusive Excellence (IGIE) website aims to help instructors

- understand what research on teaching and learning tells us about systematic inequities.
- develop their own base of knowledge on diversity and inclusion in higher education.
- explore the theory and practice of pedagogies aimed at inclusion,



### Culturally Responsive Teaching Guide (+10 Examples) – University of San Diego - Professional & Continuing Education

Culturally Responsive Teaching Guide (+10 Examples). Advance your career with professional and continuing education from the University of San Diego.

## Appendix D

### ARTIFACT 4 – INSTRUCTOR SELF-PERCEPTION SURVEY ON CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PEDAGOGY PRACTICES

The Instructor Self-Perception Survey on Culturally Responsive Trust Building Practices was adapted to understand how Delaware Tech instructors viewed their abilities to implement CRP practices with their students and their feelings on whether these practices tie to student outcomes. The corresponding infographic provides a brief analysis of these results to share with the college community. The survey was adapted from Culturally Responsive Teaching Outcome Expectancy (CRTOE) Scale and Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy Scale (CRTSE) Scale, created by Kamau Siwatu at Texas Tech (Siwatu, 2007). Adaptations focused on making the survey applicable to community college instructors as the original focused on K-12 teachers. This artifact provides the survey protocol, survey questions, and the results of the survey. Included in Part I are the survey summary, methodology, and IRB protocol. Part II is an infographic, visually depicting the survey results. This infographic was designed to provide a quick overview of the survey results in an easy-to-read format. Results were shared with administration, leadership, and instructors to provide a foundation for professional development.

#### *Survey Protocol*

**Project Title:**

Instructor Self-Perception Survey on Culturally Responsive Trust-Building Practices

**Target Participating Group:**

Full-time Instructors at Delaware Technical Community College during Fall 2024

**Key Questions:**

The purpose of this survey is to determine instructor self-perceptions and practices of relationship- and trust-building strategies through a lens of culturally responsive pedagogy.

- How confident are Delaware Technical Community College instructors in their ability to successfully accomplish culturally responsive pedagogy tasks in the domain of trust and community building?
- What is the degree of certainty that Delaware Technical Community College instructors have that culturally responsive pedagogy trust and community-building behaviors will lead to desired outcomes.
- How confident are Delaware Technical Community College instructors in their ability to successfully accomplish culturally responsive classroom management tasks in the domain of trust and community building.

**Research Approach:**

The key population for this survey is Delaware Technical Community College instructors who are employed in the Fall 2024 semester. All full-time instructors will be invited to participate through an email with the linked survey. Contact information will be provided by Delaware Technical Community College's Office of Research and Analytics through an email list provided to the researcher. I expect a response rate of 30% from emailed instructors.

**Recruitment Email:**

Dear Delaware Tech Instructor:

I would like to invite you to participate in a research study about instructor perceptions of confidence and certainty in building trust and rapport with students using culturally responsive pedagogical practices in the domains of tasks, behavioral outcomes, and classroom management. My goal is to help build professional development by learning from your self-assessment. Participation is not required. You are not required to answer the questions. You may pass on any question that makes you feel uncomfortable and are free to exit the survey at any time. There is no penalty for discontinuing participation. Your name will not be associated with any part of the report of the research. All of your information and survey responses will be kept confidential. Any names of people and/or places will be anonymized.

Your participation would consist of completing a survey in Fall 2024. The survey is expected to take around 20 minutes to complete.

When we report findings of this study, your responses will be aggregated, and any individual responses will be anonymized and any identifying information will be removed.

If you have any questions about this study or feel you were harmed as a result of study participation, you may contact the researcher. Michelle Keenan is the person in charge of this research study and can be reached at 302-259-6474 or [michelle.keenan@dtcc.edu](mailto:michelle.keenan@dtcc.edu). You can also contact the University of Delaware Institutional Review Board (IRB) office at (302) 831-2137.

If you would like documentation about this research study, please email your request to Michelle Keenan, the principal investigator, at [michelle.keenan@dtcc.edu](mailto:michelle.keenan@dtcc.edu).

If you wish to participate in this study, please access the survey linked below.

Thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Michelle Keenan  
School of Education  
University of Delaware

**Consent to Be Provided in the Survey:**

Important aspects of the study you should know about:

*Purpose:*

The purpose of the study is to better understand instructor perceptions of confidence and certainty in building trust and rapport with students using culturally responsive pedagogical practices in the domains of tasks, behavioral outcomes, and classroom management.

*Procedures:*

If you choose to participate, you will be asked to participate in a survey that discusses the following:

- Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy
- Culturally Responsive Teaching Outcomes
- Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Self-Efficacy

*Duration:*

It will take about 20 minutes of your time to complete the survey.

*Risks:*

I anticipate that participation in this study involves minimal risk. Your name will not be collected as part of the survey. Findings will be presented without identification.

*Benefits:*

There are no direct benefits from participating in this study. There may be an indirect benefit. Your responses are intended to better understand how professional development at Delaware Technical Community College can better meet the needs of instructors in the domain of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy for building trust and rapport with students.

*Participation:*

Taking part or not in this research study is your decision. You can decide to participate and then change your mind at any point. I will only view finalized and submitted surveys. Surveys that are started but not submitted will be deleted without being viewed. There is no penalty for withdrawing.

Do you consent to participate in the following survey?

- Yes, please take me to the survey.
- No

***IRB Consent Form***

**CONSENT TO PARTICIPATE IN A RESEARCH STUDY**

**Title of Study:** Instructor Self-Perception Survey on Culturally Responsive Trust-Building Practices

**Principal Investigator(s):** Michelle Keenan

Important aspects of the study you should know about:

- **Purpose:** The purpose of the study is to better understand instructor perceptions of confidence and certainty in building trust and rapport with students using culturally responsive pedagogical practices in the domains of tasks, behavioral outcomes, and classroom management
- **Procedures:** If you choose to participate, you will be asked to participate in a survey ranking your capability and beliefs regarding
  - Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy
  - Culturally Responsive Teaching Outcomes
  - Culturally Responsive Classroom Management Self-Efficacy
- **Duration:** This will take 20 minutes.
- **Risks:** The main risk or discomfort from this research is minimal. Your name will not be collected as part of the survey. Findings will be presented without identification.

- **Benefits:** There are no direct benefits from participating in this study. There may be an indirect benefit. Your responses are intended to better understand how professional development at Delaware Technical Community College can better meet the needs of instructors in the domain of Culturally Responsive Pedagogy for building trust and rapport with students.
- **Costs and Compensation:** None
- **Participation:** Taking part or not in this research study is your decision. You can decide to participate and then change your mind at any point. I will only view finalized and submitted surveys. Surveys that are started but not submitted will be deleted without being viewed. There is no penalty for withdrawing.
- **Contact Information:** If you have any questions about the purpose, procedures, or any other issues related to this research study you may contact the Principal Investigator, Michelle Keenan at (302) 259-6474 or michelle.keenan@dtcc.edu. You can also contact the University of Delaware Institutional Review Board (IRB) office at (302) 831-2137. If you would like documentation about this research study, please email your request to Michelle Keenan, the principal investigator, at michelle.keenan@dtcc.edu.

If you wish to participate in this study, please check “yes” to continue.

## *IRB Exemption Letter*



Institutional Review Board  
210H Hallsboro Hall  
Newark, DE 19716  
Phone: 302-831-2137  
Fax: 302-831-2828

DATE: September 20, 2024  
TO: Michelle Keenan  
FROM: University of Delaware IRB  
STUDY TITLE: [2227197-1] Instructor Self-Perception Survey on Culturally Responsive Trust-Building Practices  
SUBMISSION TYPE: New Project  
ACTION: DETERMINATION OF EXEMPT STATUS  
EFFECTIVE DATE: September 20, 2024  
REVIEW CATEGORY: Exemption category # 2(i)

Thank you for your New Project submission to the University of Delaware Institutional Review Board (UD IRB). According to the pertinent regulations, the UD IRB has determined this project is EXEMPT from most federal policy requirements for the protection of human subjects. The privacy of subjects and the confidentiality of participants must be safeguarded as prescribed in the reviewed protocol form.

This exempt determination is valid for the research study as described by the documents in this submission. Proposed revisions to previously approved procedures and documents that may affect this exempt determination must be reviewed and approved by this office prior to initiation. The UD amendment form must be used to request the review of changes that may substantially change the study design or data collected.

Unanticipated problems and serious adverse events involving risk to participants must be reported to this office in a timely fashion according with the UD requirements for reportable events.

A copy of this correspondence will be kept on file by our office. If you have any questions, please contact the UD IRB Office at (302) 831-2137 or via email at [hsrb-research@udel.edu](mailto:hsrb-research@udel.edu). Please include the study title and reference number in all correspondence with this office.

INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

[www.udel.edu](http://www.udel.edu)

## *Survey*

<https://forms.office.com/Pages/DesignPageV2.aspx?subpage=design&FormId=HugkMTb3oEiGurkus0XIhRk1FKWQpsxOtI0kYxIZ6v1UMzI1TTINPTkY2SVc1TDYwNUwzSUwwRzk2Ui4u&Token=e05cacc9eff642cfbc9839baaed23af0>

The following was adapted from CRTSE and CRTOE (Siwatu, 2007)

## **Instructor Self-Perception Survey on Culturally Responsive Trust-Building Practices**

\* Required

Consent

Please review the linked consent form to determine your participation in this survey

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1YkdAsfspD7QxWaO6hW5Tur26JRbUw20B/view?usp=sharing>

1. Do you consent to participate in the following survey? \*

I consent. Take me to the survey

Demographics

2. What is your age group?

18-24

25-34

35-44

45-54

55-64

65+

Prefer not to answer

3. Please indicate your gender Male

Female

Non-binary

Prefer to Self-Describe

Prefer not to say

4. What is your ethnic background?

- Hispanic or Latinx
- Not Hispanic or Latinx
- Prefer Not to Answer

5. Please mark the box or boxes that best describe your race (Mark All That Apply).

- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Black or African American
- Native Hawaiian
- Pacific Islander (non-Native Hawaiian)
- White
- Bi-Racial/MultiRacial

Prefer Not to Answer

6. On What campus do you primarily teach?

- Georgetown (Owens)
- Dover (Terry)
- Stanton
- Wilmington (George)

7. What are the number of credit hours you typically teach per semester?

- 16 – 4 credits
- 5 – 8 credits
- 9 – 11 credits
- 12 – 15 credits
-

More than 15 credits

8. How many years have you been teaching at the college level (include both adjunct and fulltime employment)?

- 17 – 5 years
- 18 – 10 years
- 11- 15 years
- 16 – 20 years
- More than 20 years

9. What is your current department or program?

- Agriculture
- Business
- Culinary Arts
- Education
- Engineering Technologies
- General Education
- Health and Sciences
- Information Technologies
- Public Service
- Transportation

Visual Services

### **Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: Student Academic Needs**

Rate how confident you are in your ability to successfully accomplish each of the tasks listed below. Each task is related to student academic needs. Please rate your degree of confidence by recording a number from 1 (no confidence at all) to 10 (completely confident). Remember that you may use any number between 1 and 10. How confident are you to...

10. Adapt instruction to meet the needs of my students

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

11. Obtain information about my students' academic strengths

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

12. Obtain information about my students' academic weaknesses

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

13. Communicate with students regarding their educational needs

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10

14. Use a learning preference inventory to gather data about how my students like to learn

15. Obtain information regarding my students' academic interests

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

16. Use the interests of my students to make learning meaningful for them

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

### **Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: Learning Community**

Rate how confident you are in your ability to successfully accomplish each of the tasks listed below. Each task is related to creating a community of learners. Please rate your degree of confidence by recording a number from 1 (no confidence at all) to 10 (completely confident). Remember that you may use any number between 1 and 10. How confident are you to...

17. Determine whether my students like to work alone or in a group

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

18. Determine whether my students feel comfortable competing with other students

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

19. Develop a community of learners when my class consists of students from diverse backgrounds

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

20. Help students develop positive relationships with their classmates

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

21. Help students feel like important members of the classroom

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

22. Implement cooperative learning activities for those students who like to work in groups

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

**Culturally Responsive Teaching Self- Efficacy Scale: Student Culture**

Rate how confident you are in your ability to successfully accomplish each of the tasks listed below. Each task is related to student culture and home life. Please rate your degree of confidence by recording a number from 1 (no confidence at all) to 10 (completely confident). Remember that you may use any number between 1 and 10. How confident are you to...

23. Obtain information about my students' cultural background

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

24. Identify ways that the school culture (e.g., values, norms, and practices) is different from my students' home culture

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

25. Implement strategies to minimize the effects of the mismatch between my students' home culture and the school culture

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

26. Obtain information about my students' home life

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

27. Establish positive home-school relations

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

28. Identify ways how students communicate at home may differ from the school norms

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

### **Culturally Responsive Teaching Efficacy Scale: Instructor-Student Relationships**

Rate how confident you are in your ability to successfully accomplish each of the tasks listed below. Each task is related to fostering instructor-student relationships. Please rate your degree of confidence by recording a number from 1 (no confidence at all) to 10 (completely confident). Remember that you may use any number between 1 and 10. How confident are you to...

29. Build a sense of trust in my students

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

30. Develop a personal relationship with my students

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

31. Structure conferences so that the meeting is not intimidating to students

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

### **Culturally Responsive Self-Efficacy Scale: Classroom Management**

Rate how confident you are in your ability to successfully accomplish each of the tasks listed below. Each task is related to classroom management. Please rate your degree of confidence by recording a number from 1 (no confidence at all) to 10 (completely confident). Remember that you may use any number between 1 and 10. How confident are you to...

32. Create a learning environment that conveys respect for the cultures of all students in my classroom

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

33. Establish high behavioral expectations that encourages students to produce high quality work

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

34. Clearly communicate classroom policies

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

35. Structure the learning environment so that all students feel like a valued member of the classroom

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

36. Encourage students to work together on classroom tasks, when appropriate

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

37. Design the classroom in a way that communicates respect for diversity

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

38. Use strategies that will hold students accountable for producing high quality work

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

**Culturally Responsive Teaching Efficacy Scale: Behaviors and Outcomes**

Read each statement below and rate your degree of certainty that the behavior will lead to the specified outcome. You may indicate your certainty by rating each statement on a scale of 1 (entirely uncertain) to 10 (completely certain). The scale below is for reference only: you do not need to use only the given values. You may assign any number between 1 and 10 as your degree of certainty.

39. A positive teacher-student relationship can be established by building a sense of trust in my students

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

40. Incorporating a variety of teaching methods will help my students to be successful

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

41. Students will be successful when instruction is adapted to meet their needs

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

42. Developing a community of learners when my class consists of students from diverse cultural backgrounds will promote positive interactions between students

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

43. Understanding the communication preferences (e.g., the value of eye-contact; protocol for participating in a conversation) of my students will decrease the likelihood of student-teacher communication problems

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

44. Matching instruction to the students' learning preferences will enhance their learning

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

45. Conveying the message that students are an important part of the classroom will increase student participation

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

46. The likelihood of student-teacher misunderstandings decreases when my students' cultural background is understood

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

47. Student attendance will increase when a personal relationship between the teacher and students has been developed

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

48. Students' self-esteem can be enhanced when their cultural background is valued by the teacher

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

49. Helping students from diverse cultural backgrounds succeed in school will increase their confidence in their academic ability

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

50. Students' academic achievement will increase when they are provided with unbiased access to the necessary learning resources

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

*Infographic*



## **Appendix E**

### **ARTIFACT 5 – LET’S TALK ABOUT TRUST PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SEMINAR SLIDE DECK**

This professional development training has three parts: 1). a presentation of the slide deck on best practices and strategies for trust building through the CRP framework, 2). instructor discussion and collaboration to determine department and instructor specific goals for building connection and trust with students, and 3). a proposed follow up for individual instructors interested in furthering their work on building their strategies. This professional development was designed based on strategies recommended in the research summarized in Appendix B: Artifact 2 along with Hammond’s (2015) trust generators. The purpose of this professional development was to introduce research on the importance of trust, provide results from the institutional survey, and present strategies instructors could use inside and outside of the classroom, utilizing each of Hammond’s (2015) trust generators, with the overall goal of increasing instructor trust-building practices (Appendix E, Artifact 5).

*Slide Deck Images*



# Using Culturally Responsive Strategies to Build Trust

**Michelle Keenan**  
**November 15, 2024**



## Mission Statement

Students are at the center of everything we do!  
We empower students to change their lives through comprehensive educational opportunities and holistic support services that promote equitable outcomes. As the state's only community college, we provide quality education that responds to workforce and community needs, leverages partnerships, and strengthens Delaware's economy. We embrace the diversity of all individuals by nurturing an inclusive culture that institutionalizes access and equity for student success.

## Overview

- What is “Trust?” 01
- Why is Trust Important? 02
- How do Delaware Tech Instructors feel? 03
- Trust Generators 04
- Trust-Building Strategies in Action 05
- Time to Talk



## What is Trust?

Trust can be defined in many ways. Research studies focus on determining key factors to define the intangible idea of “trust” and how that plays out in the educational system, particularly in the framework of culturally responsive pedagogy.



### Payne et al. (2022)

There are five main components to trust: Competence, Openness, Congeniality, Sincerity, and Integrity



### Tormey (2021) & Rychly & Graves (2012)

Trust is based on empathy, warmth, and relationship building.



### Hammond (2014)

“Trust is the byproduct of rapport — that sense of connection and goodwill you feel when you’re getting along with classmates or colleagues.”



## Why is trust important?

- Strong predictor of student outcomes
- Builds relationships and a sense of belonging
- Allows students to have high expectations of you and themselves
- It boosts cognition
- Can be done through strategy building



*Student trust in the instructor is one of the strongest predictors of student commitment and success in the course (Cavanaugh et al., 2018).*

## The Tie Between Culturally Responsive Practices and Trust



### Building a Sense of Belonging

Part of trust building is understanding and building a sense of belonging by being aware and supportive of student differences



### Perspective Taking

Acknowledging students' viewpoints and experiences shows empathy and allows for stronger outcomes

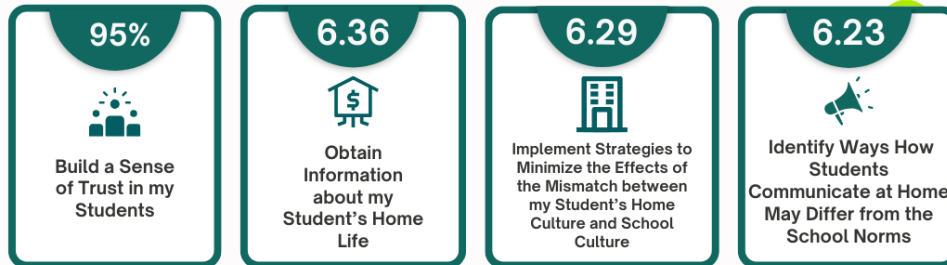


### Learning About Students As People

Affirmation and Validation are core components to trust building

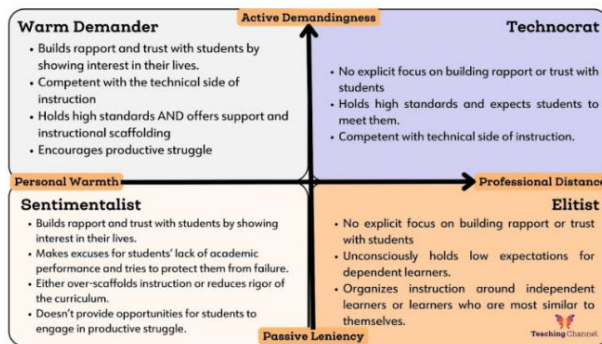
## How Do Delaware Tech Instructors Feel?

In September 2024, Delaware Tech instructors were provided a survey rating their ability and perceptions on culturally responsive pedagogy and trust building.



## Warm Demander

Hammond states in her interview with Larry Ferlazo (2023) that being a culturally responsive teacher isn't just building the trust and rapport through knowing your students, but by using that trust to push students and have high expectations.



(Kuntz, 2024)

## Trust Generators

Hammond provides five trust generators for instructors to help build rapport and “earn the right” to demand success from students.

### Selective Vulnerability

Connection built through vulnerability. Showing you're human.

### Familiarity

Being present and being seen.

### Similarity of Interests

Finding commonalities.

### Concern

Showing students you care about them as a person.

### Competence

Knowledge of content as well as delivery. Showing students you are an effective teacher.

## Strategies

How do we communicate with students in ways that build trust and rapport?

### Tell A Story

Make your story a part of the lesson. What do you remember about learning this material? How have you used the information in life? Why is it important to you?

### Participate in Ice Breakers

It's important that you get to know your students and they get to know you. Ice breakers are a great way to do this, especially when we incorporate questions about life and home.

### Bond Over Shared Interests

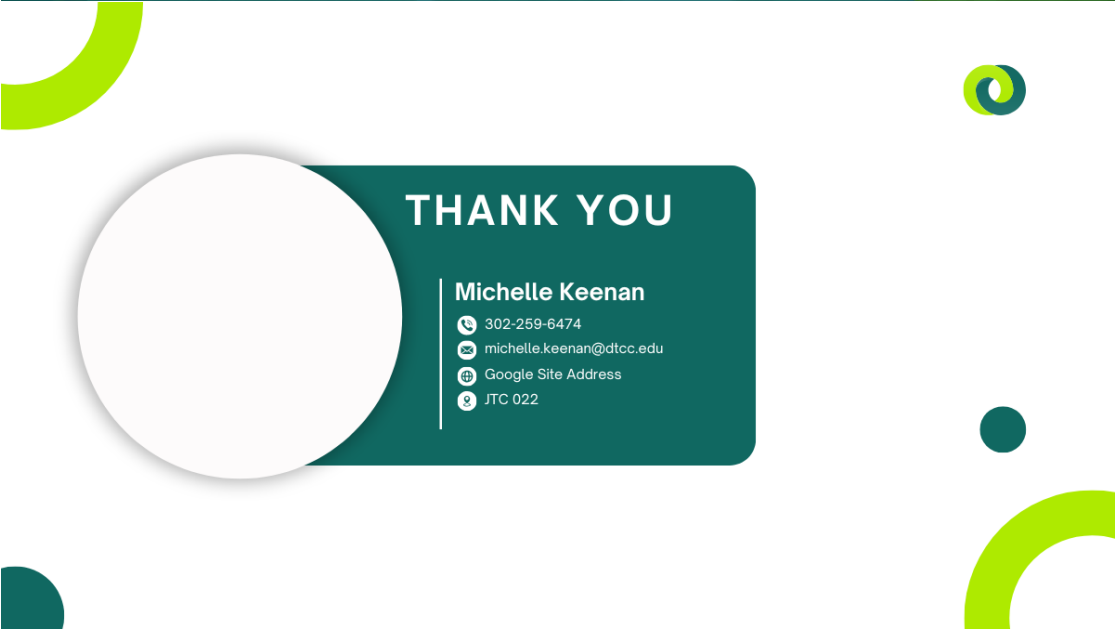
It's easier than you may think to find commonalities. Pets, first jobs, hobbies, and sports teams are all easy ways to find a common interest with students.

### Practice Affirmation

Make it a point daily to affirm students in the most crucial ways-- This means to be aware of implicit bias and focus on affirming them as diverse individuals



# Break Out Time



## THANK YOU

**Michelle Keenan**  
📞 302-259-6474  
✉ michelle.keenan@dtcc.edu  
📍 Google Site Address  
📍 JTC 022

## Appendix F

### **ARTIFACT 6 – MICRO-CREDENTIAL COURSE PLAN AND COURSE MATRIX DESIGN FOR TRUST GENERATORS FOR BUILDING RAPPORT IN HIGHER EDUCATION**

This micro-credential course plan and design matrix focused on laying the foundation for CRP practices through learning partnerships and generating trust. This curriculum plan was built through the ADDIE framework and focused on specific strategies for instructors to engage in each trust generator as defined by Hammond (2015). This curriculum plan was the foundation for the Course Design Matrix, a required component for building a micro-credential course for Delaware Tech's CCIT Department. This matrix includes an overview of the course objectives, learning materials, and assessments. After an introductory module, the next five examine learning partnerships and Hammond's (2015) trust generators: selective vulnerability, similarity of interests, concern, familiarity, and competence. This course was designed to provide instructors with multimodal resources, articles, reflection practices, and learning activities to enhance their self-paced learning on using trust generators to build learning partnerships.

#### ***Inclusive ADDIE Course Plan***

Micro-credential courses are offered to our instructors as part of professional development and learning. The goal for this course will be to offer instructors a professional learning opportunity to understand and implement Hammond's (2015) trust generators to build rapport and learning partnerships with students.

The course will be self-paced and take approximately 5 hours for instructors to complete. After the curriculum planning and design project is complete, I am hoping to build this course in our institution's LMS, *Brightspace* through D2L

Below is a table based on the INCLUSIVE ADDIE process that will help to map out the background, focus, and design of the MCC. The ADDIE model was chosen as it is recommended for small groups, course development, and higher education. The INCLUSIVE model was added in order to support DEI in instruction education.

<b>INCLUSIVE ADDIE PROCESS</b>	
<b>Analysis</b>	
Introspection: Reflection of Self	<p>My identifying features that may have an impact on how I design and develop this curriculum are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• My work experience: I have been teaching for over 18 years with 14 years at Delaware Technical Community College. I am currently the English Department Chair for Owens campus. Through this position, I am both an administrator and instructor. As a general education teacher for a technical school, my primary instructional goal is to prepare students for writing in further education and career fields. In my administrative role, I have a strong passion for instructor coaching, particularly in the areas of equity and policy.</li> <li>• My worldview and power dynamics: As a white woman, I am in the majority of educators, including at my institution. It is important that I take this into account when building a course that focuses on implementing strategies to foster equity and diversity. Along with my role as a department chair, as a doctoral candidate and curriculum designer for this course, I must understand my role as an authority on the topic and make sure that I am advocating for DEI appropriately and adequately throughout the curriculum.</li> <li>• My teaching philosophy: I understand that instructor development and education can be tricky. I believe that all students, including PD students, have the ability and the motivation to learn if it is activated appropriately. Due to this, I will need to make sure that I include appropriate buy-in for the course content that will reach all learners.</li> </ul>
Needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The target audience for the micro-credential course are current Delaware Technical Community College faculty, both adjunct and full time. As this course will be offered</li> </ul>

	<p>through our CCIT Department, it will be free for instructors to take, self-paced, and allow instructors to earn micro-credentials toward salary lane changes and professional development credits.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The needs of instructors-as-students vary depending on the instructors' prior knowledge of technology use and teaching as well as use of the Delaware Technical Community College learning management system, <i>Brightspace from D2L</i>. I must be active in making the learning intuitive and have appropriate stopping points to accommodate already-busy instructor schedules.</li> </ul>
Context	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>As an MCC course through the College's Center for Creative Instruction and Technology, which offers both full and micro-credentialed courses for novice and experienced instructors, I recommend this course be taken after IDT-G10: Foundations of Effective Teaching and either concurrently or after IDT-G20: Essentials of Distance Education. Both of these courses are required for instructors at Delaware Technical Community College.</li> </ul>
<b>Design</b>	
Lessons	<p>The educational objective of MCC- Trust Generators for Communication in Higher Education is to prepare instructors to effectively Hammond's Trust Generators to build student rapport, and subsequently, foster student success. Delaware Tech's motto is that students are at the center of everything we do, so the course will be built around culturally responsive strategies that foster trust and a community of caring but is also manageable considering an instructors' workload. The course is structured into four units:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Selective Vulnerability</li> <li>Familiarity</li> <li>Similarity &amp; Interests</li> <li>Concern</li> <li>Competence</li> </ol>
Understanding	<p>Assessment Types:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Selective Vulnerability:</b> Through a journal entry, instructors will reflect on their own process of learning, including personal strengths and weaknesses. Instructors will identify appropriate instances of vulnerability in their own lives and learning to share with students.</li> </ol>

	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. Familiarity: Instructors will build a semester calendar of institutional and community events that they can attend in order to engage with students outside of the classroom.</li> <li>3. Similarity of Interests: Instructors will create a collage to share with students on the first day to tell students about themselves, including family, hobbies, and interests. Instructors will develop an icebreaker that allows students to share this information with the class.</li> <li>4. Concern: Instructors will develop a list of holistic resources that can be provided to students when a student indicates that they are struggling with situations outside of the classroom.</li> <li>5. Competence: The instructor will build a lesson or slide deck based around a concept or lecture that students often find confusing, making sure to focus on overcoming challenging aspects for students.</li> </ol> <p>The curriculum will be built around experiential learning and focus on instructors building their own strategies to implement trust generators with their students. All assessments will be self-check and self-paced. Feedback will be provided through certificate and award-earning tools within D2L, which are structured to notify the student when they have successfully completed tasks and units.</p>
<b>Development</b>	
Supporting Structure	Supporting structures include inclusive policies and accommodations for “life” events. As this is a self-directed and self-paced course, there are no policies or scoring. However, completion is likely to be interrupted by instructors’ workloads, schedules, competing PD, etc. As such, a bi-weekly check from CCIT on student pacing and a check-in with students to recommend course completion will help to build a support system of learning.
<b>Implementation</b>	
Interactions	As MCC courses are designed for student focus and do not include direct interaction with an instructor, it is important to build spaces for student questions and challenges. A way that this will be implemented is by providing a course module that includes CCIT contact information, a calendar to upcoming PD events, and technology support.
<b>Evaluation</b>	

Values	The focus of this MCC is professional improvement for instructors. As it is completely voluntary, it is likely that the student has chosen this focus as an area of improvement or interest, indicating intrinsic value of the course material. A way to incorporate the importance of the course is through the required PD goals for instructors. Because instructors will be able to directly tie the course to required goals, it increases the extrinsic value.
Evaluation	The course will include a student survey at the end that will request information of the value of the curriculum and implementation from the student's perspective. With this, each MCC is tied directly to further PD sessions, which are offered weekly throughout the semester. Instructors will be prompted to request a one-on-one session with a member of CCIT to further the ideas and strategies they have built throughout the course.

***Course Design Matrix for Defining and Implementing Trust Generators in Higher Education***

Course Name: Defining and Implementing Trust Generators in Higher Education

Instructor Name: Michelle Keenan

Course Objectives:

- I. Understanding the core concepts behind building learning partnerships for culturally responsive pedagogy
- II. Define Hammond's five trust generators
- III. Develop strategies to implement Hammond's trust generators inside and outside of the classroom

Textbook (Optional): Hammond, Z. (2015). *Culturally responsive teaching & the brain: Promoting authentic engagement and rigor among culturally and linguistically diverse students*. Corwin.

Other Resources:

<https://sites.google.com/view/culturallyresponsiveresources/home>  
<https://resources.corwin.com/hammondaudio>

Module #, Title & Description	Measurable Performance Objectives (MPO's)	Assessments and Rubrics	Learner Interaction & Engagement (Activities)	Learning Materials
<p><b>Module 1</b> Introduction to Culturally Responsive Pedagogy (CRP) and Learning Partnerships. This module will provide a short history of CRP, defining key terms, including Learning Partnerships</p>	<p><b>MPO 1.1 Define culturally responsive pedagogy and describe its impact on education</b></p> <p><b>MPO 1.2 Define Learning Partnerships through the CRP lens</b></p>	<p>Journal Entry defining CRP and listing three significant impacts it has on student learning (MPO 1.1).</p> <p>Journal Entry defining Learning Partnerships as defined by Hammond (MPO 1.2)</p> <p>Warm Demander Chart Self-Assessment (MPO 1.2)</p>	<p>Guided Notes provided for all materials.</p>	<p>Read "What is Culturally Responsive Teaching"</p> <p><a href="https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/culturally-responsive-teaching-culturally-responsive-pedagogy/2022/04">https://www.edweek.org/teaching-learning/culturally-responsive-teaching-culturally-responsive-pedagogy/2022/04</a> (MPO 1.1)</p> <p>Watch "What is Culturally Responsive Teaching"</p> <p><a href="https://youtu.be/V2fe09m0FLs?si=L4HNJy8oo2rQKqCj">https://youtu.be/V2fe09m0FLs?si=L4HNJy8oo2rQKqCj</a> (MPO 1.1)</p> <p>Watch "TrilledU: Culturally Responsive Pedagogy"</p> <p><a href="https://www.ted.com/talks/jeffrey_dessources_trilledu_culturally_responsive_pedagogy?utm_campaign=tedspread&amp;utm_medium=referral&amp;utm_source=tedcomshare">https://www.ted.com/talks/jeffrey_dessources_trilledu_culturally_responsive_pedagogy?utm_campaign=tedspread&amp;utm_medium=referral&amp;utm_source=tedcomshare</a> (MPO 1.1)</p> <p>Watch S2, E3: Culturally Responsive Instructor with Zaretta Hammond (Rules 1</p>

Module #, Title & Description	Measurable Performance Objectives (MPO's)	Assessments and Rubrics	Learner Interaction & Engagement (Activities)	Learning Materials
				<p>and 2)  <a href="https://youtu.be/TWmTe5HBk3s?si=S9adttvWcG1oa0zt">https://youtu.be/TWmTe5HBk3s?si=S9adttvWcG1oa0zt</a>  (MPO 1.2)</p> <p>Read "Warm Demander Chart"  <a href="https://resources.corwin.com/sites/default/files/13_figure_6.2_warm_demander_chart.pdf">https://resources.corwin.com/sites/default/files/13_figure_6.2_warm_demander_chart.pdf</a>  (MPO 1.2)</p> <p>Complete the My Points of Connection Chart  <a href="https://resources.corwin.com/sites/default/files/11_figure_5.3_points_of_connection_worksheet.pdf">https://resources.corwin.com/sites/default/files/11_figure_5.3_points_of_connection_worksheet.pdf</a> (MPO 1.2)</p>
<p><b>Module 2</b>  <i>Concern</i>  This module will define and explain the importance of the trust generator of "Concern." Instructors will develop their own strategies for showing concern.</p>	<p>MPO 2.1 Define the trust generator of "concern."   MPO 2.2. Explain the impact of showing "concern" for students in student learning and success   MPO 2.3 Provide strategies for</p>	<p>Journal Entry defining the concept of "concern" as a trust generator and explaining the impact "concern" can have on student learning. (MPO 2.1 and 2.2)</p> <p>Develop three strategies to implement throughout the semester-- beginning, middle, and end of semester-- to get to</p>	<p>Guided Notes provided for all materials.</p>	<p>Read "Teacher Characteristics for Culturally Responsive Pedagogy."  <i>Multicultural Perspectives</i>, 14(1), 44 – 49.  <a href="https://doi.org/10.1080/15210960.2012.646853">https://doi.org/10.1080/15210960.2012.646853</a>  (MPO 2.1 and MPO 2.2)</p> <p>Read "Concrete</p>

Module #, Title & Description	Measurable Performance Objectives (MPO's)	Assessments and Rubrics	Learner Interaction & Engagement (Activities)	Learning Materials
	<p>showing “concern” for students</p>	<p>know your students. Complete chart on what you learned about each student. Check in with each student about what they shared at least once each quarter. (MPO 2.3)</p> <p>Develop a list of holistic resources that can be provided to students when a student indicates that they are struggling with situations outside of the classroom. (MPO 2.3)</p>		<p>Strategies for Building Community”  <a href="https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/online/designeach/strategies/buildingcommunity.html">https://www.cmu.edu/teaching/online/designeach/strategies/buildingcommunity.html</a>  (MPO 2.2 and MPO 2.3)</p> <p>Watch “Build Relationships With Your Students”  <a href="https://why.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/83f0beff-a14a-434d-b551-4b53e3dee640/ted-talks-education-build-relationships-with-your-students/">https://why.pbslearningmedia.org/resource/83f0beff-a14a-434d-b551-4b53e3dee640/ted-talks-education-build-relationships-with-your-students/</a>  (MPO 2.2 and MPO 2.3)</p>
<p><b>Module 3</b>  <i>Similarity of Interests</i>  This module will define and explain the importance of the trust generator of “Similarity of Interests.” Instructors will develop their own strategies for showing similarity of interests.</p>	<p>MPO 3.1 Define the trust generator of “similarity of interests.”</p> <p>MPO 3.2. Explain the impact of showing “similarity of interests” for students in student learning and success</p> <p>MPO 3.3 Provide</p>	<p>Journal Entry defining the concept of “similarity of interests” as a trust generator and explaining the impact “similarity of interests” can have on student learning. (MPO 3.1 and 3.2)</p> <p>Choose one strategy from the reading materials to implement at the beginning or end of a course session. Adapt the activity to</p>	<p>Guided Notes provided for all materials.</p>	<p>Read “Getting Started with Culturally Responsive Teaching”  <a href="https://www.edutopia.org/article/getting-started-culturally-responsive-teaching">https://www.edutopia.org/article/getting-started-culturally-responsive-teaching</a>  (MPO 3.1)</p> <p>Read “Exploring Shared Interests”  <a href="https://everydayspeech.com/blog-posts/no-prep-social-skills-activity/exploring-shared-interests-">https://everydayspeech.com/blog-posts/no-prep-social-skills-activity/exploring-shared-interests-</a></p>

Module #, Title & Description	Measurable Performance Objectives (MPO's)	Assessments and Rubrics	Learner Interaction & Engagement (Activities)	Learning Materials
	strategies for showing "similarity of interests" for students	<p>reflect on learning materials for that session. Write a five-step plan to implement the activity into class (MPO 3.3)</p> <p>Create a collage to share with students on the first day to tell students about themselves, including family, hobbies, and interests. Instructors will develop an icebreaker that allows students to share this information with the class. (MPO 3.3)</p>		<p><a href="#">building-social-connections-in-the-classroom/</a> (MPO 3.2 and MPO 3.3)</p> <p>Read "Building Connections Through Shared Interests" <a href="https://everydayspeech.com/blog-posts/no-prep-social-skills-activity/building-connections-through-shared-interests-a-guide-for-educators/">https://everydayspeech.com/blog-posts/no-prep-social-skills-activity/building-connections-through-shared-interests-a-guide-for-educators/</a> (MPO 3.2 and MPO 3.3)</p>
<p><b>Module 4</b> <i>Familiarity</i> This module will define and explain the importance of the trust generator of "Familiarity." Instructors will develop their own strategies for showing familiarity.</p>	<p>MPO 4.1 Define the trust generator of "familiarity."</p> <p>MPO 4.2. Explain the impact of showing "familiarity" for students in student learning and success</p> <p>MPO 4.3 Provide strategies for showing "familiarity" for students</p>	<p>Journal Entry defining the concept of "familiarity" as a trust generator and explaining the impact "familiarity" can have on student learning. (MPO 4.1 and 4.2)</p> <p>Develop a calendar with campus events that are being offered that you can share with students. Schedule time to attend three campus events outside of class time. (MPO 4.3)</p>	<p>Guided Notes provided for all materials.</p>	<p>Read and Watch "The Power of Instructor Presence" for online courses <a href="https://ctal.udel.edu/resources-2/instructor-presence/">https://ctal.udel.edu/resources-2/instructor-presence/</a> (MPO 4.1 and MPO 4.2)</p> <p>Read "Student Engagement Starts Outside the Classroom" <a href="https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/student-engagement-starts-">https://hbsp.harvard.edu/inspiring-minds/student-engagement-starts-</a></p>

Module #, Title & Description	Measurable Performance Objectives (MPO's)	Assessments and Rubrics	Learner Interaction & Engagement (Activities)	Learning Materials
				<a href="#">outside-the-classroom</a> (MPO 4.2)  Read "The Teacher is Approachable to Students Outside the Classroom" <a href="https://ysu.edu/institute-teaching-and-learning/teacher-approachable-students-outside-classroom">https://ysu.edu/institute-teaching-and-learning/teacher-approachable-students-outside-classroom</a> (MPO 4.3)
<b>Module 5</b> <i>Competence</i> This module will define and explain the importance of the trust generator of "Competence." Instructors will develop their own strategies for showing competence.	MPO 5.1 Define the trust generator of "competence."  MPO 5.2. Explain the impact of showing "competence" for students in student learning and success  MPO 5.3 Provide strategies for showing "competence" for students	Journal Entry defining the concept of "competence" as a trust generator and explaining the impact "competence" can have on student learning. (MPO 5.1 and 5.2)  Creating a "pact" with each student. (MPO 5.3)  Develop a midcourse survey to assess student learning and confidence (MPO 5.3)  Build a lesson or slide deck based around a concept or lecture that students often find confusing, making sure	Guided Notes provided for all materials.	Review "Establishing Alliance in the Learning Partnership" <a href="https://prezi.com/p/0lw-d-jqxi6si/establishing-alliance-in-the-learning-partnership/">https://prezi.com/p/0lw-d-jqxi6si/establishing-alliance-in-the-learning-partnership/</a> (MPO 5.1 and MPO 5.2)  Read "Creating a Cycle of Student Feedback" <a href="https://www.edutopia.org/article/soliciting-student-feedback-increase-buy-in/">https://www.edutopia.org/article/soliciting-student-feedback-increase-buy-in/</a> (MPO 5.3)

Module #, Title & Description	Measurable Performance Objectives (MPO's)	Assessments and Rubrics	Learner Interaction & Engagement (Activities)	Learning Materials
		to focus on overcoming challenging aspects for students (MPO 5.3)		
<p><b>Module 6</b> <i>Selective Vulnerability</i> This module will define and explain the importance of the trust generator of “Selective Vulnerability.” Instructors will develop their own strategies for showing vulnerability.</p>	<p>MPO 6.1 Define the trust generator of “selective vulnerability.”</p> <p>MPO 6.2. Explain the impact of showing “selective vulnerability” for students in student learning and success</p> <p>MPO 6.3 Provide strategies for showing “selective vulnerability” for students</p>	<p>Journal Entry defining the concept of “selective vulnerability” as a trust generator and explaining the impact “selective vulnerability” can have on student learning. (MPO 5.1 and 5.2)</p> <p>Review course materials and identify “checkpoints” where students often find difficulties. Create a plan to share a time when you also struggled with a concept but persevered (MPO 5.3)</p>	<p>Guided Notes provided for all materials.</p>	<p>Watch “What Makes a Good Teacher Great?” <a href="https://youtu.be/vrU6YJle6Q4?si=CuiWtMn92TuqO6a-">https://youtu.be/vrU6YJle6Q4?si=CuiWtMn92TuqO6a-</a></p> <p>Read “The ‘How’ of Building Deeper Relationships with Students” <a href="https://www.edutopia.org/article/how-building-deeper-relationships-students/">https://www.edutopia.org/article/how-building-deeper-relationships-students/</a></p>

The Online Course Design Matrix

CDM Modified from:

The Online Course Mapping Guide Course Map Template is licensed under a [Creative Commons Attribution 4.0 International License](https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc/4.0/).



## Appendix G

### ARTIFACT 7 – PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION SURVEY

Based on the institutions' professional development evaluation survey, the professional development evaluation plan allows for professional development participants to reflect on the likelihood of implementation of provided strategies in their own instructional practice, recommend edits to the professional development opportunity, and request follow up or make suggestions for further professional development opportunities regarding the building learning partnerships. This plan acknowledges the need for reflection and adaptation throughout the process of professional learning. Survey results were used to make changes to the professional development training seminar for future professional development offerings, including providing more advanced strategies, tailoring the professional development to individual instructors and departments, leveraging the PLC groups for attendance, and implementing different styles of professional development, such as a micro-credential course.

### **"Let's Talk About Trust" Professional Development Evaluation Survey**

Please take a few moments to share your thoughts about the "Let's Talk About Trust" PD session on building trust and rapport with students using culturally responsive communication practices.

⋮

1. Please rate how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements. The "Let's Talk About Trust" Seminar:

presented valuable content	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
was useful toward strengthening effectiveness in your current role	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
was applicable to your professional development goals	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
helped support Delaware Tech's Mission	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
helped build teaching and learning in your courses	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
helped build communication and trust with your students	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
should be offered again	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

2. In one or two sentences, please provide the content of the "Let's Talk About Trust" session that you found the most valuable.

3. In one or two sentences, please provide details on your key take-aways that you will use with your students.

4. In one or two sentences, please provide details on any part of the "Let's Talk about Trust" session that needs improvement.

5. I would like to meet with the presenter to work on these strategies.

- Yes
- No

6. If you answered "Yes" to question 5, please include your name and email address