

# Strategies for Engaging International Students

Created by Vanessa Lanning, Dr. Martina Schiavo, and Dr. Susan Luo

**Create new methods for students to express knowledge:** international students may need a bit more processing time (especially in their first semester or two). They may also be unfamiliar with turn-taking in the classroom and could be concerned about their accent. Include multiple modalities for students to express knowledge.

**Provide prep time for course discussions:** classroom discussions could be a new experience for international students. We may need to do a bit more to prepare them for how they work, what we are expecting, and how they can prepare.

**Use non-verbal clues:** gestures, eye contact, images, etc., can all be useful for conveying course content.

**Normalize office hours:** it may be difficult for a new international student to come to office hours. This kind of individual contact with an instructor may be completely new to them. Personally invite a student if you notice they are struggling in the class.

**Clarify expectations:** be very explicit about class expectations, attendance, and assessment. It may also be helpful for you to discuss how a student should be preparing for class. Some educational contexts just ask students to memorize and recite information. This is not likely what you are hoping for students to do in your class.

**Avoid Yes/No Questions:** it is possible that you could ask a question like, “Does that make sense?” The student could respond with, “yes,” just because of the power dynamic. But they may actually have questions. Try “What questions do you have?” Or even use direct comprehension questions like, “Explain [concept] to me.”

**Consider how you will handle academic dishonesty:** students must avoid cheating and plagiarism. But these concepts are culturally bound. It might be normal in one culture to copy the words of a famous quote or text and not provide a direct citation. If this is the first time that the student has plagiarized, consider it as a learning opportunity. If they continue to plagiarize, then the appropriate ramifications should follow.



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