

Insights from GuidePathways Webinar:
“ Student Belonging and Psychological Safety:
Creating Conditions of Success for Students of Color”

Presented in October 2021 by Diego Navarro,



activities, known as parasympathetic nervous system training, that take just a few minutes to help students reach that calm, focused state that is conducive to learning. Exercises that build community and connection also help students feel safe to learn

Address your implicit biases: Through empathic intelligence, people sense when there are negative feelings toward them, causing them to no longer physiologically be open to learning. Discover your own potential implicit biases to avoid harming students. One example is encouraging students to say “ouch” when they feel harmed, “oops” when they realize they are causing harm and “whoa” when they witness harm to another person

Explore experiential and affective professional development : Expand your ability to teach the vital affective skills students need in today’s workforce, such as listening and communicating with others. At ACE, the [Faculty Experiential Learning Institute](#) provides opportunities for faculty, staff and administrators to engage in personal reflection and activities to examine their working styles and communications techniques. The experience helps college professionals grow their interpersonal, social and emotional skills that enhance student learning and support deeper connections with all students

STRATEGY IN PRACTICE:

In “[Using Student Support \(Re\)defined’s Success Factors to Ensure Student Learning \(Pillar 4\)](#)” Navarro and co-author Kathy Malloy share exercises they have used in their classrooms that have had a positive impact on students. One activity, called “whip arounds,” is a sentence completion exercise. At the beginning of class or after a break, create a sentence starter about something students want to know about each other, e.g., “The most important thing I’m learning this semester is ...” Write it down for all students to see, and ask for one student to start. The student answers the sentence in one breath, and when their breath runs out, time is up. They then choose the next student to do the same. Anyone can pass, and then go at the end. Through simple exercises like this, students build community, get to know each other and develop a sense of belonging to ensure learning

2. Design classrooms and programs to cultivate promotional-ready professionals.

