



Using “Feedforward” to Improve Student Satisfaction, Retention, and Persistence

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Across the Curriculum

Learning Outcomes

Define and understand
the characteristics of
“feedforward.”

Apply “feedforward”
strategies to increase
student engagement,
retention, and
persistence.

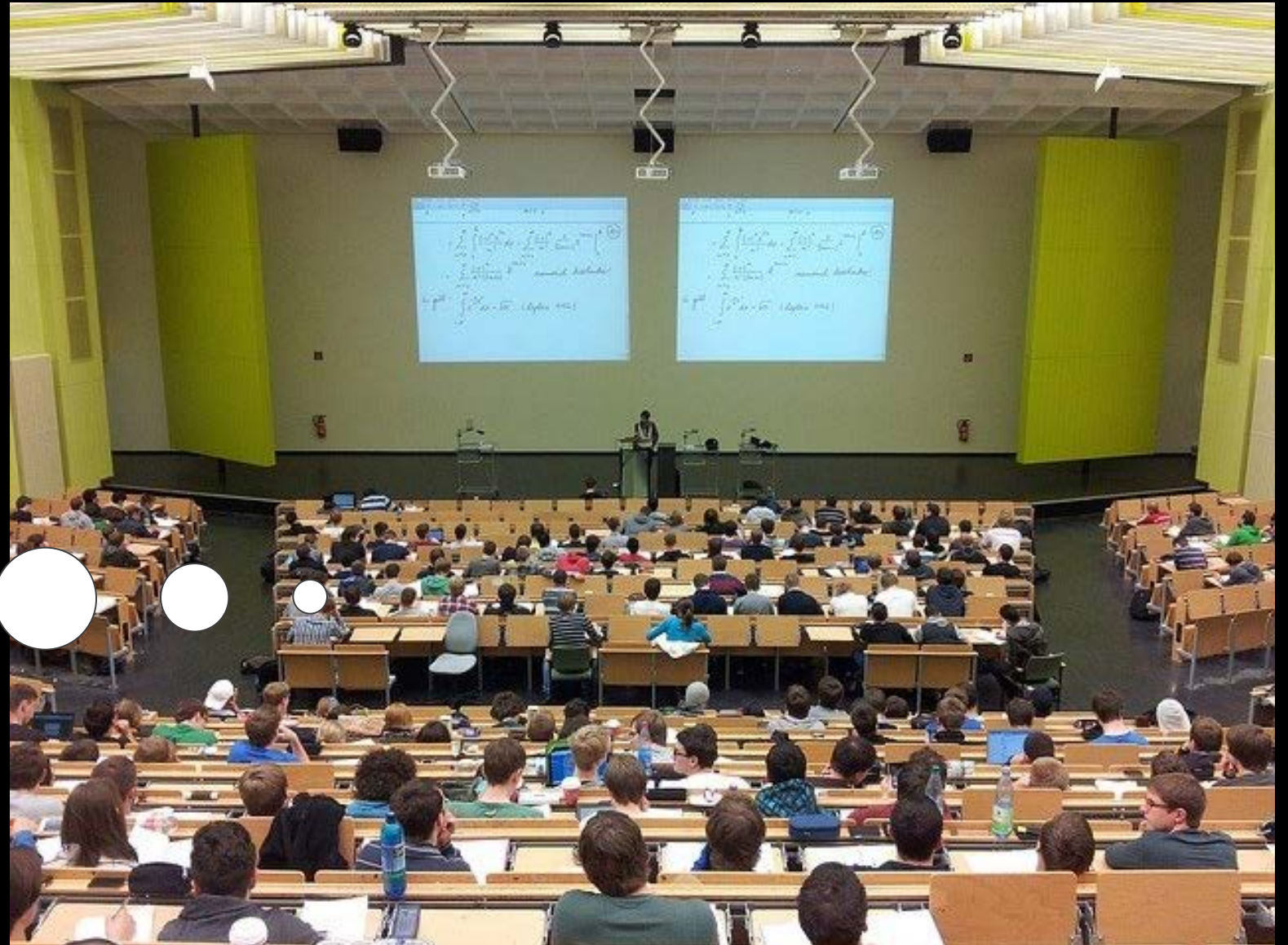
General Considerations:

- Many postsecondary institutions struggle to find ways to improve student retention and persistence.
- Universities are aware that often students lack confidence and/or the skills needed to be solid writers and learners (Ruecker, 2021).
- Studies have shown that apprehension about writing and engagement with courses may have an impact on the very groups institutions seek to support, such as women in Engineering (Mallette, 2017).
- Because “passing or failing a writing course is a strong predictor of students’ likelihood of graduation, then helping students be successful in first-year writing should be on all administrators’ minds” (Rueker, 2021).
- Although writing skills are not the only or the main cause for attrition, changing the way feedback is traditionally provided to a “feedforward” approach is one possible way to improve student satisfaction and outcomes.

Students who fail their first-year writing course have about a 17% chance of graduating; however, following writing pedagogical strategies has improved composition outcomes to 87% even among at-risk students (Rueker, 2021).



We need “feedback that is ‘just in time,’ ‘just for me,’ ‘just for where I am in my learning process,’ and ‘just what I need to help me move forward’” (Hattie, 2019, as cited in Fry, 2021)



Feedback Examples

The Unit 3 Discussion required you to download the “CM107 Unit 3 Discussion Board Topic Generating Chart”; then to discuss the ideas in two paragraphs. You were also to reply to at least two classmates. You shared a chart but did not reply to any classmates’ posts.

Great job!

40/40

Hi, Winston,

Thank you for completing and sharing the topic generating chart. You came up with three possible subjects and shared your thoughts about which topic would work best for your blog post. Sharing ways to pay for college certainly would be of value to an audience of potential students. You found a lot of financial resources that could be linked. Keep in mind that the post is short. How could you narrow the solution you share?

You also did well replying to two classmates. Your suggestion to Lia that she focus on explaining the Understood.org resource more really helped her narrow her solution. Be sure to reply to three or more classmates with a concrete suggestion like this, and check grammar/mechanics carefully to earn the most points possible.

Please let me know if you have any questions.

Dr. Professor
drprofessor@purdueglobal.edu

35/40

Feedback Examples

Hi, [first name],

Thanks for attending the Unit 6 Seminar. You posted 6 times. Post more to earn a higher grade.

Dr. Professor
drprofessor@purdueglobal.edu

10/10

Hi, Winston,

Thanks for attending the Unit 6 Seminar. You were actively engaged throughout the hour, and your example of how you used the question/answer technique to form your thesis statement as well as your sharing the link to the PG Writing Center resource on thesis statements was especially helpful to classmates. Did you notice how many people thanked you in the chat?

Continue making regular contributions like this during our sessions. Try to think of other ways you might share from your own experience, and let me know if you have any questions.

Dr. Professor
drprofessor@purdueglobal.edu

10/10



When you revise, check carefully for any non-essential information and remove it. Notice how much stronger this paragraph is without the information about your dog.

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Feedback Examples

Hi, Winston,

Thanks for submitting your Unit 8 Assignment. See the Purdue Global University rubric.

62/100

Dr. Professor
cindysebay@hotmail.com

Hi, Winston,

Thank you for submitting your Unit 8 Assignment. Overall, you did well explaining how the COVID pandemic caused a change to remote work for many employees.

Strengths: Unity and Coherence

- The thesis statement was directly stated at the end of the first paragraph. It gave a concrete main point and previewed three subpoints.
- Each body paragraph focused on explaining an effect of the change in the order you previewed them in the thesis.
- The credible sources provided solid support for your points, especially the U.S. Department of Labor statistics.

Opportunities for growth:

- Continue to work on APA citation and draft format. The PG Writing Center has some excellent [resources](#), and you can find a copy of the [APA manual](#) on their website.
- Continue to edit carefully for fragments and run-ons using the resources I shared with you in your draft. Working with a Writing Center tutor to strengthen your skills in this area would also be helpful.

Please let me know if you have any questions. You're making progress with your writing skills.


Dr. Professor
drprofessor@purdueglobal.edu

88/100

Feedback vs. Feedforward



Feedback:

- Closes communication.
 - Focuses on the past.
 - Tends to be negative, resulting in stagnation or defensiveness.
 - Places the focus on following directions and a score.
 - Restricts the development of ideas and individuals.
 - Uses a lot of words that don't say anything.
 - Cheerleads rather than being honest.
 - Offers nowhere to go.
 - Demands adherence from the top down.
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Feedforward:

- Initiates or continues a conversation.
- Focuses on the future.
- Tends to be encouraging and empowering.
- Places the emphasis on developing writers/learners.
- Expands growth opportunities for projects and individuals.
- Offers precise, concrete guidance to help writers/learners progress.
- Provides authentic guidance.
- Offers a plan of action.
- Engages multiple voices.



References

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- Mallette, J. C. (2017). Writing and women's retention in Engineering. *Journal of Business and Technical Communication*, 3(4), 417-442.
- Ruecker, T. (2021, Spring). Retention and persistence in writing programs: A survey of students repeating first-year writing. *Composition Forum*, 46. <http://compositionforum.com/issue/46/retention.php>

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