

Activity: Mid-Semester Check-up

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NSE Goal Focus: Academic rigor & personal growth.

Activity Goal: The students will be challenged to make personal reflection an ongoing life practice.

Activity Objectives: 1. Students will reflect on their lives to identify areas that they consider to be strong and areas in which they consider to be uncertain or challenging.

2. Students will identify Baylor resources to access for their situations.

Areas on which I asked them to reflect: *Academics *Living Situation *Relationships *Mental health *Physical health *Spiritual Health

Materials

- Three large post-it sheets and a marker
- Several stacks of traditional-size post-it notes—enough to give each student at least ¼ of an entire stack
- Students should have a pen or pencil

Prior to class, prepare three large Post-It sheets. Label one, “Bright,” one, “Shadow,” and one, “Dim.”

Modification: This activity can be modified to have only two categories, “Bright” and “Shadow/Dim.”

Explain to students that the intention in using these labels is for them to think of areas in their lives that are going very well (*Bright*), areas that are going “so-so/not too bad, but could be better (*Shadow*),” and areas where “I’m not doing well (*Dim*).”

Caution: Be mindful of how the words “Shadow” and “Dim” are presented. Some students may be experiencing issues about which they don’t feel comfortable sharing, even without their names attached. Students are not required to participate or to write about every category. There may be some students who do not have anything “Bright” to report. Acknowledge this, allowing options of whether to participate.

Activity

First, place the three Post-It sheets on the classroom white board, side-by side.

Second, after speaking 5 minutes (or less) about “Illuminate,” and “Transformational Education,” remind the students how light, shadow and dimness are connected. They are dynamic in that they move and change and are not always the same.

Then, explain the activity to the students and outline these steps to them.

1. The students are encouraged to think of current experiences or situations in each of the above areas of their lives that would fit under the label of “Bright,” “Shadow,” or “Dim.”

Below are some examples.

For the “Academics” area, if they made an “A” on their first Chemistry test, they would write “I made an ‘A’ on my first Chemistry test,” on the sticky note.

If they scored a “C” on the test, they might write, “I made a “C” on my first Chemistry test.”

*An example for the “**Living Situation**” area: If they have a positive roommate situation, they could write, “I love my roommates.” OR maybe a not-so-positive situation: “I don’t get along with my roommates and have not made friends on my floor.”*

*In considering their “**Spiritual Health**,” they might write, “I have not found a church yet.”*

2. The students are asked to write one situation per sticky note and make as many as they wish.
3. When finished, they are to place the sticky notes on the corresponding post-it sheet. The students choose the sheet on which to place their sticky note.

****No names are included on the sticky notes unless they want me to know about it, and then they are asked to write their name on the back of the note. Follow up with those who chose to do so, keeping in mind Baylor resources to which the student can be referred.**

Next, instruct students to do a “One-Minute Quick Write,” answering these two questions (papers will be submitted):

1. Here at mid-semester, what do you feel positive about if you placed something on the “Bright” sheet?
2. Here at mid-semester, what is one Baylor resource you could use that would address one of the “Shadow” or “Dim” issues you placed on a sheet?

Finally, in closing the class session, spend a few minutes thanking them for their participation and willingness to reflect, reminding them of the value of interdependence and community, using Baylor resources as part of this community-building, highlighting the importance of self-awareness and reflection as a life discipline, encouraging them to use critical thinking skills in understanding how to make possible shifts in life situations, and challenging them not to let a busy college culture prevent them from taking time to engage in the practice of reflection.

****Reading their papers will allow the instructor to see if more time needs to be spent on ensuring that students know about Baylor resources.**