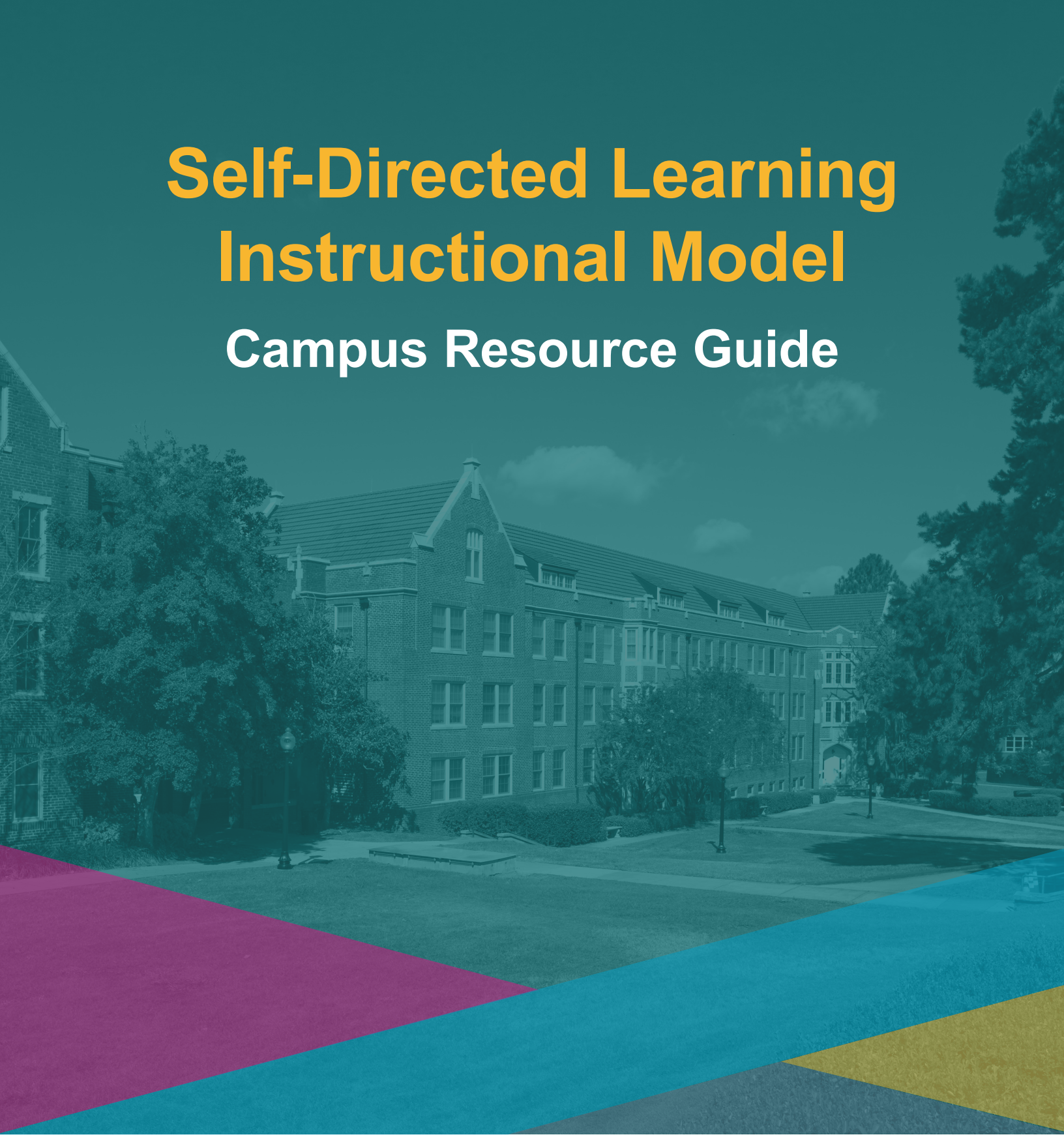
Self-Directed Learning Instructional Model

Campus Resource Guide



Created by:

Postsecondary
Teaching with Technology
Collaborative

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Postsecondary
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Get Ready to Implement Self-Directed Learning Instructional Model on Your Campus!

This **Campus Resource Guide** provides practical tips for college leaders and staff to help faculty adopt the Self-Directed Learning (SDL) Instructional Model. To help college students manage their online learning, the Instructional Model offers college educators three evidence-based strategies to integrate into their courses. These strategies help students cultivate habits that contribute to success:

 **SDL Videos**	 **SDL Prompts**	 **SPIN**
Motivation, metacognition	Metacognition, applied learning	Motivation, applied learning
Three short videos to boost sense of belonging, time management skills, and confidence through a growth mindset	Questions to promote reflection, task-planning, progress-monitoring, and help-seeking	Introductory questionnaire and collaborative activities to foster belonging and promote help-seeking

What's Inside?

Self-Directed Learning Instructional Model: An Overview: Learn about the model and why SDL skills and mindsets are critical to student success.

The Science Behind Self-Directed Learning: Explore the research and theory behind the SDL strategies and their impact on student learning.

Tips for College Leaders: Adopting the Self-Directed Learning Instructional Model on Your Campus: Learn about the Instructional Model and how administrators and academic unit leaders can encourage adoption in online courses within and across departments.

Resources for Educational Developers: Find practical tools and resources for staff who support professional learning to introduce faculty to the Instructional Model, including:

- **Getting Started:** An introductory workshop for a one-time training session.
- **Going Deeper:** A professional learning community for a more intensive and sustained professional learning experience.
- **Staying in Touch:** Additional touchpoints for faculty to build community and support for faculty integrating SDL strategies into their courses.

Appendix: Review additional resources to support faculty to implement the model.

Self-Directed Learning Instructional Model: An Overview

Self-Directed Learning Instructional Model: An Overview

Online courses increase students' access to postsecondary education, but they also present challenges for learning and success. Online courses can be isolating, and it can be challenging to form connections with faculty and peers. They also require students to manage their learning more actively and independently than face-to-face courses. For instructors, it can be hard to know the best ways to help students be successful, and busy students may not be open to trying new strategies.

> In a seated class, if I use language that students aren't familiar with, I can see the look on their face, I can see that, 'Hey, they didn't understand.' … But in an online class, I don't have those visual cues.
>
> – Online STEM instructor

To help faculty create effective online learning environments, the Postsecondary Teaching with Technology Collaborative's Self-Directed Learning (SDL) Instructional Model aims to help college instructors support online students to manage their learning, connect with classmates, and feel more resilient in the face of difficulties.

The SDL Instructional Model was co-developed with faculty and administrators and piloted in online STEM courses at five community colleges and broad-access universities. The Instructional Model features a set of three interconnected strategies to intentionally build and reinforce student learning skills and mindsets within a content area course.

Explore more!

Check out the video How Students Experience Self-Directed Learning Strategies in Online Courses, where students share how and why the strategies have helped them in online courses. Instructors can share the video with students to help convey the value of the SDL Instructional Model.

> The strategies helped foster critical skills such as goal-setting, time management, and self-assessment. For many students, it provided a new way to approach learning that goes beyond traditional teacher-led instruction. While not all students fully embraced the autonomy, the exposure to SDL is likely to have long-term benefits, especially in promoting independent thinking and lifelong learning habits.
>
> – Online STEM instructor

These strategies are easy to integrate into a learning management system and are intended to be a light lift for both faculty and students, with most activities taking students about 20 minutes to complete. By implementing multiple strategies throughout a course, faculty will reinforce the key skills and mindsets that promote student success. The Instructional Model is intended to be customizable so that faculty can select the strategy activities that meet their students' needs and adapt the timing and implementation approach to fit their course context.

Three short SDL videos with corresponding reflection questions introduce sense of belonging, time management, and growth mindset and invite students to reflect on how they can practice these skills in their course.

The SDL prompts package includes several brief reflective questions that invite students to plan the times, places, resources, and strategies for studying and adjust their learning approaches as needed.

Student-peer interaction and networking (SPIN) consists of a brief introductory questionnaire administered during the first week of class and two content-based collaborative activities paired with the SPIN Collaborative Reflection Tool.

Explore more!

View the Course Implementation Guide for detailed instructions for faculty to integrate the strategies into online courses, including ready-to-use text, implementation supports, and optional adaptations for different course lengths and types.

The Science Behind Self-Directed Learning

The Science Behind Self-Directed Learning

Building understanding of the importance of three core psychological processes to student success

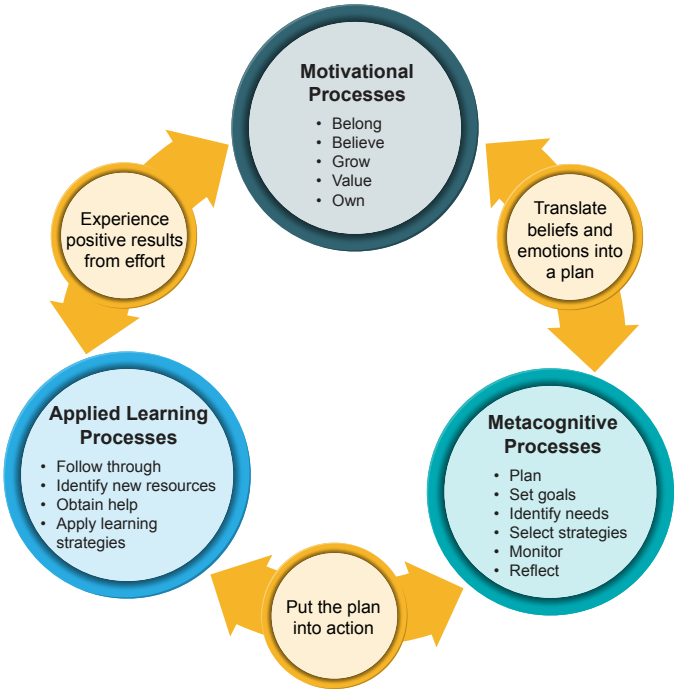
The Self-Directed Learning (SDL) Instructional Model builds on decades of research on how people learn. The circles in the graphic below show three core psychological processes and their respective subprocesses, and how the three processes mutually reinforce one another. The framework begins with students' initial motivational mindsets, which shape their commitment to learning. That commitment then drives their metacognitive processes to plan, monitor, adjust, and reflect on their learning. Those metacognitive processes provide the structure and support for a series of applied learning activities that students can use to adaptively manage their learning. The resulting experience of academic success feeds positive emotions and refuels motivation, which starts the SDL cycle anew.

Motivation

- **Develop a Sense of Belonging:** Students who experience belonging in a course feel connected to peers and faculty and feel accepted, respected, and valued.
- **Build Confidence and Self-Efficacy as a College Student:** Students with self-efficacy feel they can overcome obstacles to achieve their goals; they exhibit a growth mindset.

Metacognition

- **Plan for Learning:** Students with planning skills anticipate the learning strategies they will need to meet their goals; they can estimate the time needed for tasks and lay out steps to meet deadlines.
- **Engage in Regular Self-Reflection Around Learning Progress:** Students assess what worked and what did not after completing a task and use this information to adjust their plans for future assignments.



Applied Learning

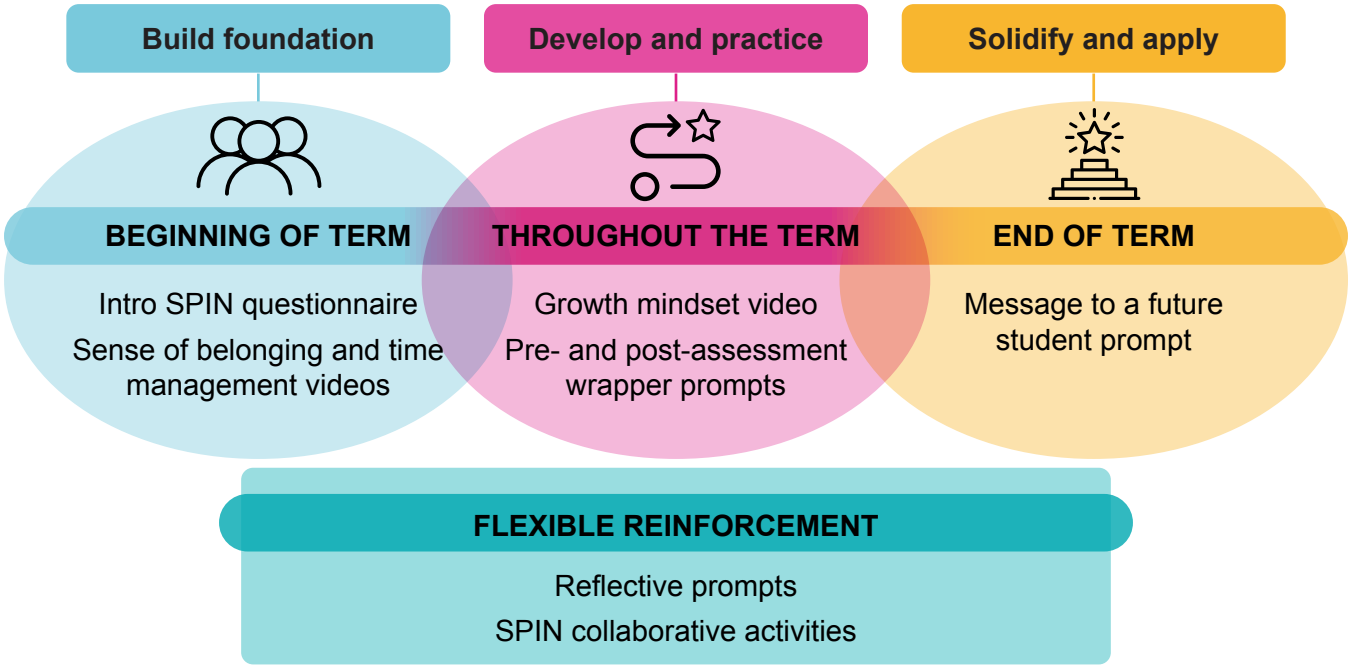
- **Seek Help, Find Resources, and Implement and Adjust Strategies:** Students are able to take action when a learning problem requires additional resources, social support, or different study strategies.

Fostering key psychological processes through instructional strategies

The Instructional Model's three strategies strengthen these three core psychological processes. We intend for these strategies to be dynamic and mutually reinforcing:[1] Students initially reflect on their motivational processes, which leads to active use of metacognitive and applied learning processes. Using these three processes leads to learning success, which nurtures positive feelings and renewed motivation.

- Students begin by completing a SPIN questionnaire and watching short videos to develop course motivation, goals, sense of belonging, and time management plans.
- Next, students respond to reflective prompts, applying metacognitive processes for developing study plans and tracking progress.
- Then, students participate in collaborative SPIN activities, building productive applied learning habits, such as gathering resources and seeking help.

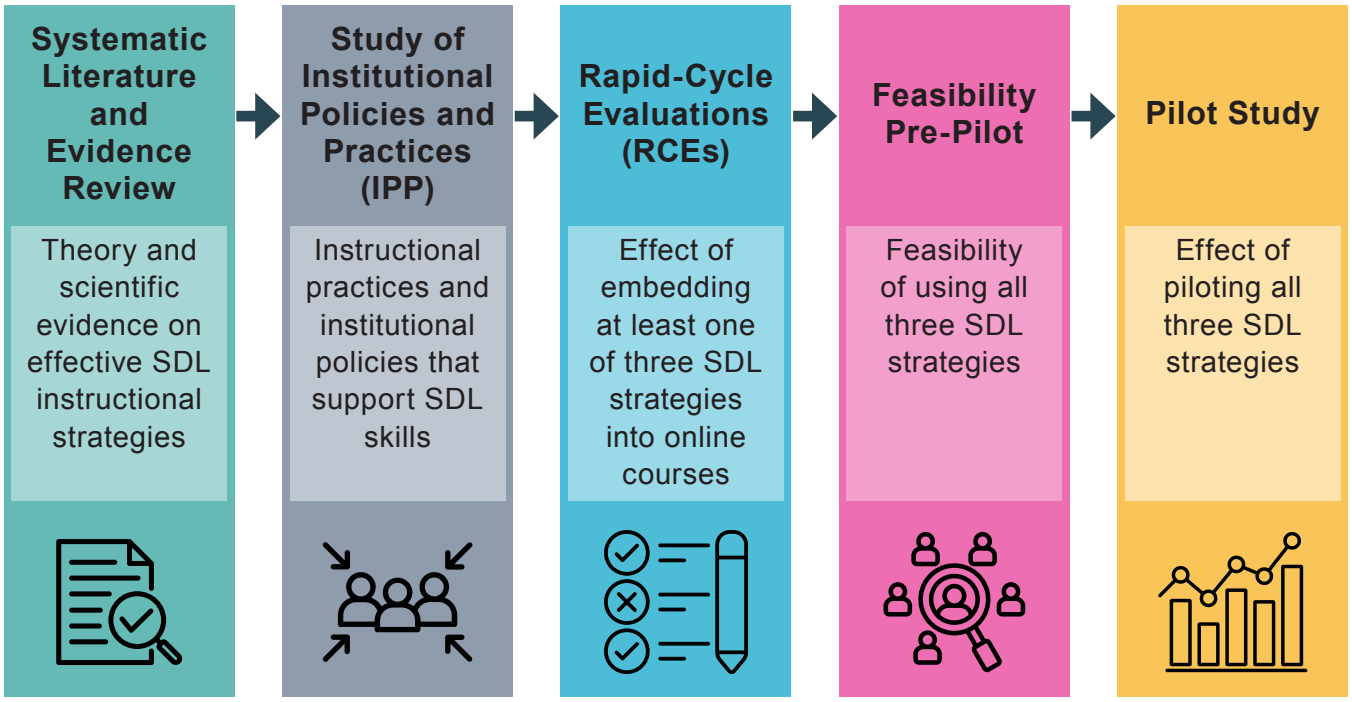
These strategies follow a microlearning approach that offers "bite-sized learning" experiences while students advance through course assignments in a learning management system (LMS).



[1] Ryan, R. M., & Deci, E. L. (2000). Self-determination theory and the facilitation of intrinsic motivation, social development, and well-being. *American Psychologist, 55*(1), 68–78. https://doi.org/10.1037/0003-066X.55.1.68.

Research results on the impact of implementing the SDL strategies

The Collaborative conducted five phases of research to deepen understanding of how SDL strategies can support college students' achievement in online STEM courses.



Key findings across these research phases demonstrate that the SDL Instructional Model:

- **Addresses a demonstrated problem of practice.** The Instructional Model is grounded in the successes and challenges students and faculty reported experiencing in online courses, including performance gaps between students enrolled in face-to-face and online courses and difficulties promoting student engagement in online environments.
- **Draws on the research and evidence base.** The strategies included in the Instructional Model were identified via a systematic literature review of effective SDL interventions and then adapted for online courses with instructors at four partner institutions.
- **Was co-designed with instructors, administrators, and students.** The Instructional Model was co-developed by practitioners representing diverse perspectives—including instructors, faculty developers, and senior administrators—and with input from student fellows, to ensure its relevance and usefulness for multiple audiences. The Instructional Model underwent multiple rounds of revisions based on feedback from faculty and student users.
- **Is feasible, free, and ready to use in authentic course contexts.** The Instructional Model provides concrete supports to faculty, including clear and concise guidance and resources for implementing the strategies. Most instructors found the strategies easy to integrate into their existing course structure and easy to implement, particularly the video and prompt strategies.

- **Yields engagement from students.** Student uptake of the SDL strategies varied to some degree, with most pilot instructors reporting that three quarters or more of their students completed the activities. Some of the students who did not complete the activities had disengaged with course content altogether, while others shared in interviews that they had used the SDL strategies selectively based on their course goals or other time commitments and responsibilities.
- **Has value to instructors and students.** Nine in 10 pilot instructors indicated the SDL strategies were valuable for their students, and 7 in 10 pilot students who responded to the survey indicated the strategies were useful and worth their time. Students often reported the SDL strategies helped them assess their workload and responsibilities for the week and plan their schedules to dedicate their study time. Students who found less personal value in the strategies said they saw the value for other students who had less experience in college or online courses. Instructors found the strategies insightful for real-time adjustments to course content to better support student learning and understanding.
- **Demonstrates evidence of improving SDL skills.** In the rapid-cycle evaluations (RCEs), being in a course implementing at least one strategy had a positive and statistically significant impact on the applied learning strategies students used and on their reflection of their learning approach. The smaller pilot study did not find statistically significant impacts on students' SDL skills, but this sample was not large enough to detect effects as large as those found in the RCEs.
- **Is likely to improve end-of-course grades.** Although the impacts of the SDL strategies on end-of-course grades were not statistically significant in the RCEs or pilot study, additional rigorous analyses that drew on the broader evidence base for postsecondary interventions indicated a 78% probability (RCEs) and 67% probability (pilot study) that the strategies had a positive effect on grades.
- **May offer particular benefits to some students.** In the RCEs, being in a course implementing a strategy was positively associated with improved SDL skills as measured by students' time and patterns of activity in the LMS, with stronger relationships for first-generation and female students compared with their peers. Analyses of RCE student survey data revealed distinct SDL profiles. In courses implementing a strategy, students who entered the course with low confidence but high vigilance around studying, or who self-reported lower SDL skills and mindsets, increased their likelihood of being a highly self-directed learner over time.

Overall, the SDL Instructional Model can be used as a vehicle for continued learning about low-lift practical strategies to improve students' SDL and success in online courses. Users are invited to explore how the Instructional Model can be best implemented in their context and to consider refinements to meet their students' needs.

Explore more!

Explore our SDL framework and review of evidence-based SDL interventions in Teaching and Designing Online STEM Courses to Support Self-Directed Learning Skills.

Find more information about the feasibility of implementing the SDL Instructional Model in our white paper, Using Self-Directed Learning to Improve Online Learning.

Hear more about faculty and student experiences with the SDL Instructional Model in our webinar, Supporting Student Success in Online Courses: Insights from Students and Faculty.

Explore more detailed findings from the RCEs in our paper, Technology-Based Instructional Strategies Show Promise in Improving Self-Regulated Learning Skills at Broad-Access Postsecondary Institutions.

Learn about students' patterns or profiles of SDL learning in Self-Directed Learning Profiles and the Influence of Technology-Based Interventions among STEM Undergraduates.

Find more publications detailing findings from the pilot study on the Collaborative's website.

View the Course Implementation Guide for detailed instructions for faculty to integrate the strategies into online courses, including ready-to-use text, implementation supports, and optional adaptations for different course lengths and types.

Tips for College Leaders: Adopting the Self-Directed Learning Instructional Model on Your Campus

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College students have high interest in online courses, but some research shows online courses are less successful than in-person formats, and many online faculty report frustrations with student engagement and learning.[2] College leaders have tried varied methods to improve college persistence and completion, such as stand-alone "college success" courses and professional development for online faculty. As a complement to these methods, research underscores the benefit of integrating ongoing learning support within content courses.

The Self-Directed Learning (SDL) Instructional Model offers a set of evidence-based instructional strategies that:

- Reinforce strategies typically introduced in student orientation or college success courses
- Help faculty establish and maintain techniques recommended in professional development
- Build on what many faculty are already doing in their courses to encourage student success

The three strategies in the Instructional Model — SDL videos with planning questions, SDL prompts, and student-peer interaction and networking (SPIN) activities — are free, easy to use, and can be implemented in any course. There's also a step-by-step faculty guide for implementing the SDL strategies throughout a course.

These strategies have been rigorously tested in introductory online STEM courses, and both faculty and students report positive gains from them. For more on the research and positive impacts of the strategies, refer to the Science Behind Self-Directed Learning. In the two videos below, students and faculty describe how the strategies impacted their learning and teaching online.

Explore more!

Check out these videos:

- How Students Experience Self-Directed Learning Strategies in Online Courses
- How Faculty Use Self-Directed Learning Strategies in Online Courses

[2] Altindag, D. T., Filiz, E. S., & Tekin, E. (2021). *Is online education working?* (Working Paper 29113). National Bureau of Economic Research. http://www.nber.org/papers/w29113.
Brown, A. E., Bickerstaff, S., & Edgecombe, N. (2024). *Supporting learning online: Perspectives of faculty and staff at broad-access institutions during COVID-19*. Postsecondary Teaching with Technology Collaborative. https://postseccollab.org/supporting-learning-online-perspectives-of-faculty-and-staff-at-broad-access-institutions-during-covid-19/.

Tip 1: Connect the SDL Instructional Model to other important institutional initiatives

Faculty have demands on their time and frequently find themselves navigating multiple reform efforts. Institutional leaders can promote the SDL Instructional Model by assuring faculty that these light-lift strategies are central to the institution's broader priorities for student learning and success. When presenting the Instructional Model to faculty and campus instructional leaders, institutional leaders can communicate the following key points:

- Online courses present challenges for student engagement, learning, and retention, and faculty and students can benefit from course-based strategies designed to support learning success.
- The SDL Instructional Model is evidence-based and promotes key learning habits that are strongly related to student success, including developing a sense of belonging that builds social connections, planning time for coursework, reflecting on progress to develop confidence and self-efficacy, and learning how to seek help when needed.
- The SDL strategies are easily embedded into an LMS and complement course content goals by creating an environment that fosters engagement and can positively influence persistence in a course.
- The Instructional Model can help the college achieve its broader strategic goals to improve retention, help students stay on their learning path, recruit more students into STEM programs, and meet students' various learning needs.

Tip 2: Identify champions who can speak to the SDL Instructional Model's benefits and support its adoption

Institutional leaders can secure a base of user advocates by identifying:

- **Early adopters and champions** who can share their experiences using the SDL Instructional Model with colleagues. Some faculty may fear that adding the SDL strategies to a course will be too time-intensive or disruptive to their teaching. Champions can describe their positive experiences with the model and speak to its usability and benefits. These champions can also collect and analyze course-level data to provide local examples of positive outcomes.
- **Educational developers** who can use the materials in this Campus Resource Guide to lead workshops and other professional learning opportunities about the Instructional Model. Educational developers may include leaders of a Center for Teaching and Learning, instructional designers, individuals with expertise in online teaching, as well as faculty and staff who facilitate professional development.
- **Technical supporters** such as instructional designers who can embed the strategies into the institution's LMS. Technical supporters can provide practical assistance to faculty and help lower any hurdles faculty may perceive in implementing the technical aspects of the Instructional Model.

Tip 3: Integrate the SDL Instructional Model into existing professional development programs

Faculty may be hesitant to commit to additional professional development on top of the learning opportunities they are pursuing for their own professional growth. Therefore, embedding an introduction to the Instructional Model into existing institutional structures may be the best way to promote it. To introduce faculty to the SDL Instructional Model and build their capacity to implement it, institutions can:

- Integrate information about the Instructional Model into existing faculty development structures such as new faculty orientation, convocation, all-staff professional development days, and ongoing workshops and inquiry groups.
- Embed the instructional strategies into faculty training materials or course design guidelines for online courses that focus on a combination of technology use and teaching practices. The Resources for Educational Developers section provides guidelines and ready-to-use resources for a one-time professional development workshop as well as for more extended, in-depth faculty learning.
- Offer stipends or professional development credits to incentivize faculty to attend workshops focused on the Instructional Model.

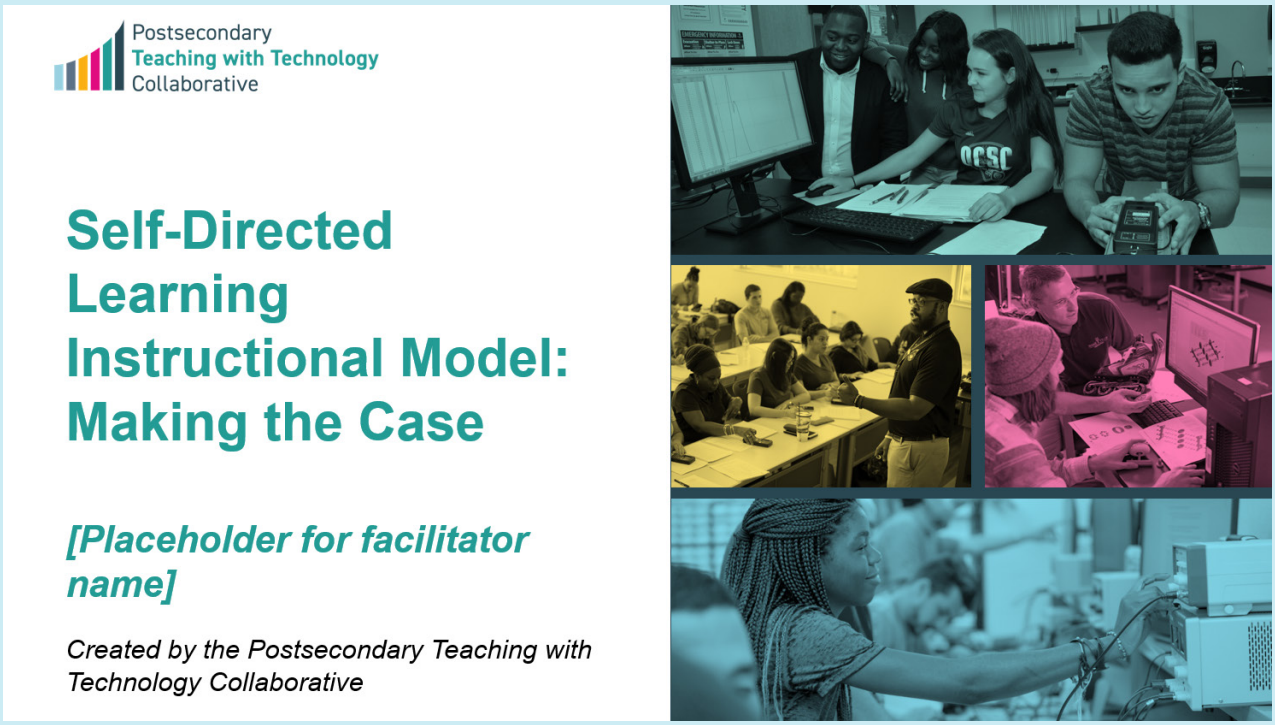
Tip 4: Support strategic planning to integrate the SDL Instructional Model across disciplines and courses

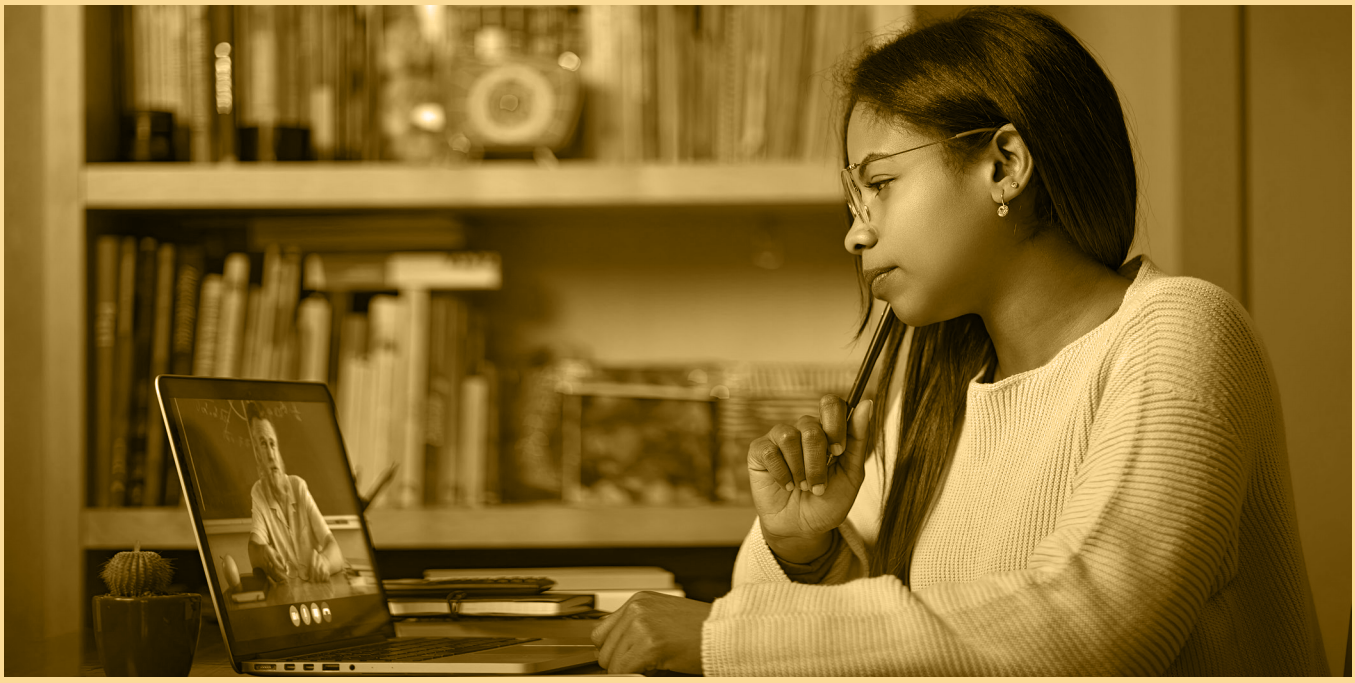
The SDL Instructional Model may first be implemented by a few enthusiastic faculty who take the initiative to use the strategies in their course sections. But this may soon lead to the question: Should the model be systematically integrated into all sections of some courses? And if so, which ones? While the Instructional Model has been tested extensively in online STEM courses, it can also be valuable in other disciplines and course modalities. Institutional leaders can:

- Facilitate conversations with deans and faculty about the needs of online students and faculty and the courses that will benefit most from the Instructional Model. This may include a review of course outcome data.
- Foster departmental planning to reduce redundancy across multiple courses by ensuring strategies are highly contextualized to each course.
- Help deans, faculty, and educational developers deploy the strategies to reinforce these skills throughout a student's time at the institution.

Explore more!

To support building the case for the Instructional Model, adapt these slides, which include an overview of the SDL Instructional Model and the research behind it, as well as customizable slides that can be used to make the case for implementing the Instructional Model on your campus. Find these slides on the SDL Instructional Model - Leaders and Administrators page.





Resources for Educational Developers

Resources for Educational Developers

The **Course Implementation Guide** includes detailed information about each strategy, including ready-to-use text, so that faculty have enough information to integrate the full Self-Directed Learning (SDL) Instructional Model into any course. However, faculty will benefit from support before and during their implementation. In this section, you will find resources for educational developers: faculty and staff who facilitate professional development, instructional designers, and others who support faculty with teaching and course design. This section includes three types of resources:

Getting Started

This slide deck and supporting materials give educational developers the tools to facilitate a workshop to introduce the Instructional Model to faculty and help them integrate the three strategies into their online courses.

Going Deeper

To build on the Getting Started workshop, educational developers can go deeper with an outline for four additional meetings to support deeper exploration of SDL concepts and practices for faculty implementing the three strategies. These meetings may be formatted as a professional learning community, seminar, or faculty inquiry group.

Staying in Touch

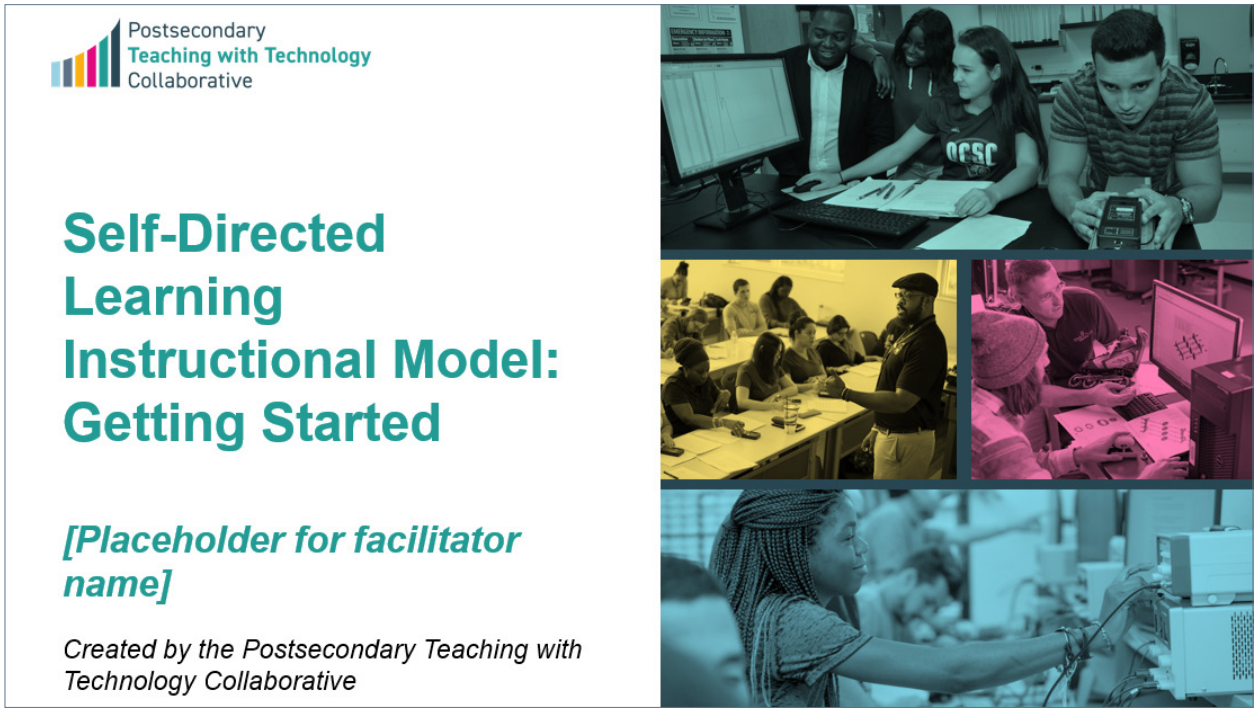
Educational developers can use these materials to reach out to faculty during the term to provide reminders and tips. This section includes a proposed timeline for faculty outreach as well as draft language for each message.

Getting Started Materials

The Getting Started workshop introduces the SDL Instructional Model to faculty and helps them integrate the three strategies into their online courses.

- **The workshop slide deck** has a modular structure to allow for flexible implementation. Ideally, educational developers will facilitate a 90-minute workshop before the semester begins to introduce all the content together, virtually or in person. If a 90-minute synchronous meeting is not feasible, the content can also be segmented to share in a series of meetings or shared asynchronously for faculty to review themselves. These slides have the content and notes for four modules, which can be customized and reordered to meet the needs of the audience.

  1. **Foundation:** Why focus on self-directed learning (SDL)?
  2. **Introduction:** What is the SDL Instructional Model?
  3. **Implementation:** How is the SDL Instructional Model integrated into a course?
  4. **Background:** How was the SDL Instructional Model developed?



- **An annotated facilitator's agenda** (included in Appendix B) provides guidance on running the Getting Started workshop.
- **The SDL Activity Implementation Planner** can help faculty schedule the instructional strategies throughout their course (see Appendix A and the Course Implementation Guide). Educational developers can collect and review planners to monitor implementation and provide additional support as needed.

Going Deeper Materials

To support faculty who have an interest in learning and reflecting collaboratively to improve their implementation of the SDL Instructional Model, facilitators can build on the **Getting Started workshop** by convening a series of meetings with a cohort of faculty. Below, you will find an outline for four 90-minute meetings. The meeting topics focus on teaching in online courses, but these materials can be adapted to include faculty teaching in other modalities.

Educational developers can set the cadence for these meetings and host them virtually or in person, based on faculty availability and interest. This seminar, professional learning community, or inquiry group may unfold over several months or may be adapted to other structures (e.g., a one-week intensive, a full-day retreat). Faculty may engage with this content before they begin implementing the Instructional Model, or they may participate during their first term of implementation. If these sessions are offered while faculty are teaching with the Instructional Model, they can support faculty in making refinements and improvements in future terms.

Meeting Topics At-A-Glance

This section provides an at-a-glance content summary for four potential meetings. A detailed description of activities for each meeting is in Appendix C.

Meeting 1: Digging Deeper into the Value of Self-Directed Learning

Faculty are busy, their time is valuable, and their courses are filled with important content. Therefore, a key aspect of supporting faculty to implement the SDL Instructional Model is helping them understand the value and importance of supporting SDL in disciplinary courses taught online. This session should emphasize that students with stronger SDL skills are more successful in college and that students need help to apply SDL in content area courses, even if they have been exposed to these concepts through other college programs.

Meeting 2: Mapping Strategies to Course Content

The SDL Instructional Model includes a pacing guide that provides a framework for the ideal timing of strategy implementation in online courses. But faculty still have many choices when deciding how to implement the strategies, including when and how to connect them to course content and activities. This session will invite faculty to explore the flow of a single online course and identify opportunities to integrate the strategies — for example, by appending them to existing assignments or using them as precursors to units or topic areas.

Meeting 3: Designing High-Quality Collaborative Work in Online Courses

SPIN, one of the three SDL strategies, is centered on collaboration, which is beneficial for student motivation and help-seeking. Students report that feelings of isolation are among their primary challenges with online course formats. Yet designing meaningful and successful collaborative work can be difficult, especially in online courses. This session will engage faculty in considering the principles for high-quality collaborative work, reflecting on successful and unsuccessful online collaborative activities, and designing a collaborative assignment for a course they plan to teach.

Meeting 4: Learning from Students and Refining Approaches

The SDL Instructional Model provides faculty with many opportunities to hear directly from students about their learning experiences, including perceived strengths and weaknesses. As part of each strategy, students share personal reflections related to their sense of belonging, planning, confidence, and other SDL skills in their online course. This session will explore how faculty can learn from these student responses, offer feedback, and make adaptations in current and future courses to address student needs.

Staying in Touch

Educational developers can use the Staying in Touch resources as an optional way to connect with faculty to check if they need any support to implement the SDL Instructional Model effectively. Below is a proposed schedule and content for five touchpoints throughout a course and example text. Find the full suggested text for each communication in Appendix D.

Educational developers can select their mode of delivery (e.g., direct emails, newsletters) and update the cadence as best fits the course structure and length in their institutions.

Touchpoint	% of way through course	Staying in Touch topics
1	Before course begins	• Summary and recording of Getting Started workshop • SDL Activity Implementation Planner to ensure faculty have a plan to embed the SDL strategies (see Appendix A for examples) • Ask for any questions or challenges with starting implementation
2	0%	• Reminder for SPIN introductory questionnaire • Reminder for SDL videos: Sense of Belonging and Time Management • Implementation tips on SDL videos
3	40%	• Reminder for SDL prompts: Assessment wrapper • Reminder for SDL videos: Growth Mindset • Implementation tips on reflective prompts and assessment wrappers
4	80%	• Reminder for SPIN collaborative activity • Reminder for SDL prompts: Message to a future student • Implementation tips on collaborative activities
5	90%	• Reminder for SDL prompts: Message to a future student

Here is an example of the first touchpoint, designed to be sent before the course begins. Find example text for the additional touchpoints in Appendix D.

New message

To:

Subject: Self-Directed Learning Instructional Model | Touchpoint 1

Hi [Faculty Name],

I hope this email finds you well! To support your implementation of the SDL Instructional Model, every few weeks I will reach out with resources and tips about implementing the SDL strategies. Between these official touchpoints, please don't hesitate to reach out with any specific questions!

SDL Strategy Implementation

Thank you all for attending the Getting Started workshop. In this workshop, we provided an overview of the three SDL strategies. For your reference, we have saved all the materials from the workshop <here>, including:

- **Workshop materials:** The recording and slides from the workshop.
- **Course Implementation Guide**
- **SDL Activity Implementation Planner:** Individual planning documents. Please complete your plan **no later than the first day of your course!**

Please take 1 minute to reply with the following:

1. Reply, YES or NO, to this statement: "I feel confident in my plan to implement all three strategies in my course this semester."

If no, also share:

1. Which strategy(ies) are you not confident with?
2. What additional resources or support would be helpful?

If yes, just reply "yes."

If you do not feel confident, I will reach out to provide further support. Thank you for your dedication!

Send

Appendix

Campus Resource Guide

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Appendix A: SDL Activity Implementation Planner

Faculty can use this table to plan their implementation of the three strategies included in the Self-Directed Learning (SDL) Instructional Model. The first table is an example of how to fill out the plan, and the second table is a blank template. While the pacing guide provides a suggested cadence for implementation, faculty can choose how and when to implement the strategies to best meet the needs of their students.

SDL Activity Implementation Plan: Example

Strategy: Activity	Implementation timing	Alignment with syllabus	Delivery method	Description and adaptations
List the strategy and specific activity	*Specify the week of the course and release date*	*Specify what unit and/or assignment*	*Specify how and where you will embed the activity in the course (e.g., discussion forum, survey)*	*Describe any planned adaptations from the Instructional Model. For SPIN 2, include the specific planned collaborative activities*
SPIN: Introductory Questionnaire	Week 1: January 7	Course launch	I will distribute the introductory questionnaire as a survey assignment. I will share summary tables of student responses in class.	I will prioritize fun questions as well as questions around preferred modes, methods, and timing of communication. I will set up a required discussion board post to have students reflect on what they learned.
SDL Videos: Sense of Belonging	Week 1: January 7	Course launch	I am going to use our LMS to create an embedded page to share the video links from YouTube. I will include the introductory text at the top of the page and then include the link to the video right below it. The reflection questions will be an assignment for extra credit.	In the reflection assignment, I will include the following help-seeking options: • Attending office hours • Visiting the STEM Center • Visiting the Science Resource Center • Individualized Learning Center tutoring • Forming a student study group

Strategy: Activity	Implementation timing	Alignment with syllabus	Delivery method	Description and adaptations
List the strategy and specific activity	*Specify the week of the course and release date*	*Specify what unit and/or assignment*	*Specify how and where you will embed the activity in the course (e.g., discussion forum, survey)*	*Describe any planned adaptations from the Instructional Model. For SPIN 2, include the specific planned collaborative activities*
SDL Videos: Time Management	Week 2: January 14	Second week	I am going to use our LMS to create an embedded page to share the video links from YouTube. I will include the introductory text at the top of the page and then include the link to the video right below it. The reflection questions will be an assignment for extra credit.	No planned changes.
SDL Prompts: Reflective Prompts 1	Week 3: January 21	Launch of Unit 2	I am going to use our LMS student discussion board for the prompts.	No planned changes.
SDL Videos: Growth Mindset	Week 4: January 28	After first quiz in Unit 2	I am going to use Moodle to create an embedded page to share the video links from YouTube. I will include the introductory text at the top of the page and then include the link to the video right below it. The reflection questions will be an assignment for extra credit.	No planned changes.
SDL Prompts: Pre-Assessment Wrapper	Week 5: February 4	Week before midterm	I am going to use our LMS student survey feature for giving students the assessment wrappers.	I will adjust the options for how students plan to prepare to align with my course.
SDL Prompts: Post-Assessment Wrapper	Week 6: February 11	After graded midterm is returned	I am going to use our LMS student survey feature for giving students the assessment wrappers.	No planned changes.

Strategy: Activity	Implementation timing	Alignment with syllabus	Delivery method	Description and adaptations
List the strategy and specific activity	*Specify the week of the course and release date*	*Specify what unit and/or assignment*	*Specify how and where you will embed the activity in the course (e.g., discussion forum, survey)*	*Describe any planned adaptations from the Instructional Model. For SPIN 2, include the specific planned collaborative activities*
SPIN: Collaborative Activity 1	Week 8: February 25	Part of Unit 3	This will be a graded assignment that students can work on outside of class time. I will assign groups based on the introductory questionnaire responses regarding what time of day students usually like to do work.	I will do a group lab assignment to launch Unit 3, with clear expectations. After the lab, I will ask students to complete a team feedback form. I will aggregate the results and share lessons with the class via a discussion board, asking students to reply as they feel comfortable.
SDL Prompts: Reflective Prompts 2	Week 9: March 4	Launch of Unit 4	I am going to use our LMS student discussion board for giving students the prompts.	As this aligns with the launch of Unit 2, I will add a concept-specific prompt about Unit 1.
SPIN: Collaborative Activity 2	Week 12: March 25	Part of Unit 5; align concept-mapping activity with preparation for final exam	I will use small breakout rooms for this activity in a synchronous portion of my class.	I will do a concept-mapping activity to support students' preparation for the final exam. I will create a concept map summarizing information from across all five units and ask students to work in groups to identify any mistakes. We will share out as a class.
SDL Prompts: Message to a Future Student	Week 15: April 15	Last week of class before final	This will be a graded assignment.	No planned changes; depending on responses, it is possible I will use these messages in future classes.

SDL Activity Implementation Plan: Template

Strategy: Activity	Implementation Timing	Alignment with syllabus	Delivery method	Description and adaptations
List the strategy and specific activity	*Specify the week of the course and release date*	*Specify what unit and/or assignment*	*Specify how and where you will embed the activity in the course (e.g., discussion forum, survey)*	*Describe any planned adaptations from the integrated model. For SPIN 2, include the specific planned collaborative activities*
SPIN: Introductory Questionnaire (Week 1)				
SDL Videos: Sense of Belonging (Week 1)				
SDL Videos: Time Management (within first two weeks)				
SDL Prompts: Reflective Prompt 1 (flexible)				
SDL Videos: Growth Mindset (after first major assessment)				

Strategy: Activity	Implementation Timing	Alignment with syllabus	Delivery method	Description and adaptations
List the strategy and specific activity	*Specify the week of the course and release date*	*Specify what unit and/or assignment*	*Specify how and where you will embed the activity in the course (e.g., discussion forum, survey)*	*Describe any planned adaptations from the integrated model. For SPIN 2, include the specific planned collaborative activities*
SDL Prompts: Pre-Assessment Wrapper (one week before first major assessment)				
SDL Prompts: Post-Assessment Wrapper (one week after first major assessment)				
SPIN: Collaborative Activity 1 (flexible)				
SDL Prompts: Reflective Prompt 2 (flexible)				

Strategy: Activity	Implementation Timing	Alignment with syllabus	Delivery method	Description and adaptations
List the strategy and specific activity	*Specify the week of the course and release date*	*Specify what unit and/or assignment*	*Specify how and where you will embed the activity in the course (e.g., discussion forum, survey)*	*Describe any planned adaptations from the integrated model. For SPIN 2, include the specific planned collaborative activities*
SPIN: Collaborative Activity 2 (flexible)				
SDL Prompts: Message to a Future Student (final weeks of course)				

Appendix B: Annotated Agenda for Getting Started Workshop

This agenda has a modular structure to allow for flexible implementation. Ideally, educational developers will facilitate a 90-minute training workshop to introduce all the content together, virtually or in person. If a 90-minute synchronous meeting is not feasible, the content can also be shared in sections (virtually or in person) at various standing meetings. Finally, the content can be shared asynchronously for faculty to review themselves. This workshop should be implemented before the semester begins, or at the very start of the semester, to allow faculty to implement all strategies within their courses.

Workshop objectives

- Faculty will understand the **why**, **what**, and **how** of the Self-Directed Learning (SDL) Instructional Model.
  - **Why:** Faculty will build a shared understanding of the importance of SDL skills in online courses and a framework for SDL.
  - **What:** Faculty will learn about the three strategies included in the Instructional Model.
  - **How:** Faculty will learn about resources to help them implement the Instructional Model in their courses.
- Faculty will start to build relationships with other faculty implementing the strategies to build a foundation for the professional learning communities (if applicable).

Introduction (10 minutes)

Purpose

The purpose of this section is to introduce participants to the workshop and prime them for the information they are about to receive. If the meeting is synchronous, this is an important time for faculty to start to build relationships.

Content

- Welcome participants
- Review the agenda
  - If presented in modular form, facilitators should acknowledge that the module they are introducing is part of a larger series.

- Incorporate an opening question, such as:
  - On a scale of 1 to 5, how familiar are you with self-directed learning? (1 = never heard of it, to 5 = I'm an expert)
  - What does "self-directed learning" mean to you?

Materials

- Slides

Module 1. Foundation: Why focus on self-directed learning (SDL)? (10–15 minutes)

Purpose

The purpose of this section is to share the "why" behind SDL to build buy-in and engagement in the Instructional Model. Facilitators will provide an overview of challenges faced in online courses, particularly in STEM, and how developing SDL skills and mindsets can help mitigate the challenges.

Content

- Share challenges in online courses as identified by research, focusing on STEM learning
  - If time allows, facilitator can ask participants to share their thoughts on challenges in online courses, asking:
    - What other challenges do you face in teaching online courses?
    - What other challenges do you see your students facing?
- Introduce the framework for self-directed learning and its three core processes: motivational, metacognitive, and applied learning
  - If there's time, facilitator can ask participants to reflect on practices they already do to promote these processes and skills, asking: What strategies or resources do you already use to:
    - Increase student motivation?
    - Help students reflect on their learning?
    - Help students seek help and resources to study and learn more effectively?

Materials

- Slides
- Postsecondary Teaching with Technology Collaborative report: Teaching and Designing Online STEM Courses to Support Self-Directed Learning Skills

Module 2. What is the SDL Instructional Model? (10 minutes)

Purpose

The purpose of this section is to introduce the SDL Instructional Model at a high level to ensure participants understand the model in its entirety before diving into the specifics. Facilitators will share the three strategies, their alignment with the five skills shared in the last module, and resources to support implementation.

Content

- Describe the three strategies co-developed and tested, and how they target the five skills
- Present the five specific skills aligned with these processes and targeted by the Instructional Model
- Introduce the Course Implementation Guide and highlight the pacing guide
- Answer prepared commonly asked questions about the pacing guide and, if there is time, ask participants if they have questions on the guide
  - Note: It may be better to wait for questions before going deeper into the strategies.

Materials

- Slides
- Course Implementation Guide
- Campus Resource Guide
- Pacing guide (page 10 of the Course Implementation Guide)

Module 3. Implementation: How is the SDL Instructional Model integrated into a course? (35 minutes)

Purpose

The purpose of this section is to guide faculty through implementation of the three strategies. For each strategy, facilitators will highlight specific sections of the Course Implementation Guide aligned with that strategy, discuss implementation considerations, and leave time for questions.

Content

- Highlight the specific strategy sections of the Course Implementation Guide, general practices for how to embed the strategies, and considerations for implementation (5 minutes)
- Introduce each strategy (8 minutes per strategy)
- Overview of the strategy: what, why, and when
- Detailed information about the strategy
- Testimonials from students about the strategy
- Best practices to support engagement

Materials

- Slides
- Course Implementation Guide: Deep Dive into the Three Strategies

Module 4. Background: How was the SDL Instructional Model developed?

Purpose

The purpose of this section is to provide information on the Postsecondary Teaching with Technology Collaborative (the Collaborative) to demonstrate how the SDL Instructional Model was developed. Facilitators will emphasize how it was a collaborative process, co-developed in partnership with institutional partners, and is grounded in evidence.

Content

- Describe the Collaborative
- Present the multiple stages of Collaborative research
- Share findings from research

Materials

- Slides
- Postsecondary Teaching with Technology Collaborative report: Technology-Based Instructional Strategies Show Promise in Improving Self-Regulated Learning Skills at Broad-Access Postsecondary Institutions

Wrap-Up and Next Steps (5 minutes)

Purpose

The purpose of this section is to close the meeting, sharing next steps for participants.

Content

- Share next steps
- Answer questions

Materials

- Slides
- SDL Activity Implementation Planner (Appendix A)

Appendix C: Structure and Topics for Going Deeper Meetings

Meeting 1: Digging Deeper into the Value of Self-Directed Learning

Faculty are busy, their time is valuable, and their courses are filled with important content. Therefore, a key aspect of supporting faculty to implement the Self-Directed Learning (SDL) Instructional Model is helping them understand the value and importance of supporting SDL in online disciplinary courses. This session should emphasize that students with stronger SDL skills are more successful in college, and students need help to apply SDL skills in content area courses, even if they have been exposed to these concepts through other college programs.

Learning Objectives

1. Can identify problems of practice in online classes that may be addressed with SDL strategies
2. Can help faculty understand the value and importance of supporting SDL in disciplinary courses taught online
3. Can explore how reinforcing SDL in online courses complements other college-wide SDL supports (e.g., student success courses, academic coaching)

Potential Activities

- Introductions and community-building activity (15 mins)
  - Each session could begin with a community-building activity or icebreaker that allows participants to get to know one another. Examples include general check-in questions (“What’s one good thing that happened to you this week?”) or questions aimed at priming participants for the discussion topics (“Name one online teaching strategy that you’ve found to be successful”).
- SDL framework refresher (15 mins)
  - This section could be adapted in length and depth, depending on how familiar participants are with the concepts underlying the framework for SDL.
- Investigate problems of practice in online courses (30 mins)
  - In pairs, small groups, or a large group, list teaching and learning challenges in online courses.
  - Work collaboratively to make connections between these problems of practice and concepts in the SDL framework (e.g., missing assignments may be connected to low motivation or lack of planning).

  - Identify which SDL strategy might address these problems. (This could be done with Post-it notes, where strategies are placed on top of problems, or on a collaborative online whiteboard.)
- Explore other SDL supports at the college (30 mins)
  - List supports available to students at the college that promote SDL (e.g., new student orientation, student success courses, tutoring, academic coaching).
  - Invite a guest speaker (e.g., director of student support or student success course instructor) to share the specific ways that these programs or services support SDL.
  - Brainstorm why and how the SDL Instructional Model is an important complement and extension of these supports by supporting students to apply these skills in online content area courses.

Resources

- Getting Started Workshop Module 1: Why Focus on Self-Directed Learning (SDL)?
- The Science Behind Self-Directed Learning

Meeting 2: Mapping Strategies to Course Content and Context

The SDL Instructional Model includes a pacing guide that provides a framework for the ideal timing for strategy implementation in online courses. But faculty still have many choices to make when deciding how to implement the strategies, including when and how to make connections to course content as well as adjustments to account for course context. This session will invite faculty to explore the flow of a single online course and identify opportunities to integrate the strategies and tailor them to meet the needs of their specific students. *Note: Facilitators may consider pointing faculty to online course design principles or standards (e.g., Quality Matters) to support faculty in structuring content and assignments in their online courses.*

Learning Objectives

1. Can identify how to integrate strategies into existing course content, structure, and syllabus
2. Can adapt a strategy placement for a specific online course
3. Can identify needed adaptations to strategies to ensure alignment with course context and meeting needs of specific students

Potential Activities

- Community-building activity (10 mins)
- Review the Instructional Model pacing guide (15 mins)
  - In addition to looking at the pacing guide, it may be useful also to look at a sample SDL Activity Implementation Plan in which a faculty member has adapted the strategies to a course (see the SDL Activity Implementation Planner in Appendix A). If a faculty member in the group or at the college has used the model, reviewing their plan could be beneficial.

- Map the strategies to course content (25 mins)
  - Each faculty member identifies one online course to focus on for this activity.
  - In pairs, faculty members review the syllabus and week-by-week course plan to identify opportunities to integrate the strategies. Discussion questions may include:
    - When and how do students typically struggle in the course?
    - Is there an assignment during the first half of the course that tends to lead to a dip in confidence?
    - What are the most challenging concepts for students to master?
    - Is there a place in the course where students could benefit from collaboration with their peers?
    - Where in the course does student engagement seem to flag?
    - While considering timing and placement, discuss options for incentivizing strategies to promote student engagement (e.g., assigning points, offering extra credit).
- Share and brainstorm creative approaches to integrate SDL strategies into assignments (20 mins)
  - While some strategies could be implemented in a stand-alone fashion, they can also be integrated into existing assignments for a more streamlined and seamless approach. Invite participants to share opportunities to connect strategies to their course activities. For example:
    - Embedding SDL prompt questions or SDL videos at the beginning or end of an existing assignment
    - Combining prompts with existing discussion board forums
    - Adding the assessment wrapper prompts to an assessment review assignment
    - Embedding the message to a future student into a final portfolio
    - Inviting participants to share their course shell or planner to show how they have customized or plan to customize SDL strategy placement for a specific course
- Discuss course context to identify potential strategy adaptations to meet the needs of the students (20 mins)
  - In small groups, faculty discuss the specifics of their course context that may impact needed customizations to the strategies. For example:
    - What student demographic tends to enroll in their courses? As in, are they non-STEM majors? First-generation students? Part-time students?
    - What customizations may need to be made to meet these students' needs?

Resources

- Pacing guide (in the Course Implementation Guide)
- SDL Activity Implementation Planner (see Appendix A)
- Prompts Adaptations and Customizations (Appendix C, Course Implementation Guide)
- Example Collaborative Activities (Appendix D, Course Implementation Guide)

Meeting 3: Designing High-Quality Collaborative Work in Online Courses

SPIN, one of the three SDL strategies, is centered on collaboration, which is beneficial for student motivation and help-seeking. Students report that feelings of isolation are among their primary challenges with online course formats. Yet designing meaningful and successful collaborative work can be difficult, especially in online courses. This session will engage faculty to consider the principles for high-quality collaborative work, reflect on successful and unsuccessful online collaborative activities, and design a collaborative assignment for a course they plan to teach.

Learning Objectives

1. Can explain the benefits of collaboration for postsecondary learners
2. Can identify features of successful and unsuccessful collaborative learning experiences
3. Can design a collaborative learning activity that meets a learning need in a specific online course

Potential Activities

- Community-building activity (10 mins)
- Review the benefits of collaboration (10 mins)
  - Quickly brainstorm the benefits of collaboration for postsecondary students.
  - Then, brainstorm any specific or different benefits for students taking courses online.
  - Research suggests that collaboration can increase sense of belonging, improve motivation, promote help-seeking, foster critical thinking and deep learning by exposing alternative points of view and different approaches, develop valued workplace skills, reduce isolation and feelings of disengagement, and increase students' perceptions of course relevance.[3]
- Share successes and challenges facilitating collaboration in online courses (25 mins)
  - Ask participants to briefly describe an example of something that worked well to promote collaboration in an online course and/or something that fell flat.
  - Document each example on a poster or shared whiteboard.
  - Ask the group to reflect on anything they notice in common across successful and unsuccessful experiences.

[3] Ansari, Z., & Naseer, S. (2024). Perspective chapter: Collaborative learning benefits and its role in critical thinking. In S. Goundar (Ed.), *Massive open online courses: Learning frontiers and novel innovations*. IntechOpen. https://doi.org/10.5772/intechopen.1007316.
Bickerstaff, S., Thompson, A. H., Walters, K. P., & Gastelum, J. (2025). *Beyond engagement: Promoting motivation and learning in online courses*. Postsecondary Teaching with Technology Collaborative. https://postseccollab.org/beyond-engagement-promoting-motivation-and-learning-in-online-courses/.
Sawyer, J., & Obeid, R. (2017). Cooperative and collaborative learning: Getting the best of both words. In R. Obeid, A. Schwartz, C. Shane-Simpson, & P. J. Brooks (Eds.), *How we teach now: The GSTA guide to student-centered teaching* (pp. 163–177). Society for the Teaching of Psychology.

- Design or update a collaborative learning activity (45 mins)
  - Working in pairs, participants identify an existing collaborative activity they would like to revise or an opportunity to add a new activity. Collaborative activities may be either synchronous or asynchronous. As part of this discussion, they may consider:
    - How the task might be structured to align with best practices to support collaboration (see the Course Implementation Guide, Appendix D).
    - How to implement or adapt the SPIN Collaborative Reflection Tool in conjunction with the learning activity.
    - How to anticipate and mitigate challenges that may arise for students.
  - Participants share their tasks with the whole group for comments and feedback.

Resources

- Course Implementation Guide, Appendix D: SPIN Examples and Additional Guidance

Meeting 4: Learning from Students and Refining Approaches

The SDL Instructional Model provides faculty with many opportunities to hear directly from students about their learning experiences, including perceived strengths and weaknesses. As part of each strategy, students will share personal reflections related to their sense of belonging, planning, confidence, and other SDL skills in their online course. This session will explore how faculty can learn from these student responses, offer feedback, and make adaptations in current and future courses to address student needs.

Learning Objectives

1. Can interpret student responses and use them to identify students' learning needs
2. Can identify ways to provide efficient and supportive feedback to students as part of the SDL Instructional Model
3. Can adjust instructional practices in response to student reflections

Potential Activities

- Community-building activity (10 mins)
- Share feedback approaches (30 mins)
  - In a large group or small groups, invite participants to share ways they have offered feedback to students on reflective assignments. Examples may come from the SDL Instructional Model strategies or from similar reflective assignments. Points of discussion should include (1) efficient and sustainable feedback approaches and (2) providing affirming and constructive feedback on personal reflections. Possible feedback approaches might include:

    - Personalized feedback on each assignment (e.g., responding to each student with custom comments)
    - Personalized feedback on selected assignments (e.g., committing to providing personal feedback to each student on at least one assignment over the course of the term)
    - Collective feedback (e.g., a written or video message that summarizes key ideas and opportunities for growth across the entire class)
    - Tailored feedback (e.g., reaching out to students who reveal challenges, obstacles, or successes that warrant follow-up)
- Revisit the pacing guide with feedback in mind (30 mins)
    - In pairs or small groups, review each participant's syllabus with embedded strategies. Look together for opportunities to deliver feedback that feel productive and reasonable. Discussion questions for this section might include:
        - Where might students benefit from a summary of key insights from the prompts?
        - What patterns have you noticed in past years (e.g., performance on a first assignment, a challenging unit) that might warrant strategic, timely feedback messages?
        - Are there opportunities to deliver feedback in multimedia formats (e.g., video or audio messages) or synchronously?
- Final reflections and looking ahead (20 mins)
    - In this final gathering, invite participants to share reflections on something they gained from this professional learning experience, a question that remains, and a next step they plan to take as they implement the SDL Instructional Model.
    - Consider planning other synchronous or asynchronous points of connection (e.g., a casual gathering at the end of the term to reflect on their experience using the Instructional Model).

Resources

- Pacing guide (in the Course Implementation Guide)

Appendix D: Staying in Touch – Touchpoint Email Text

Instructional coaches can use the Staying in Touch resources as an optional way to connect with faculty to check if they need any support to implement the model effectively. Below is a proposed schedule for five touchpoints throughout a course and example text.

Educational developers can select their mode of delivery (e.g., direct emails, newsletters) and update the cadence as best fits the course structure and length in their institutions.

Touchpoint 1 (before the course)

Subject: Self-Directed Learning (SDL) Instructional Model | Touchpoint 1

Hi [Instructor Name],

I hope this email finds you well! To support your implementation of the SDL Instructional Model, every few weeks I will reach out with resources and tips about implementing the SDL strategies. Between these official touchpoints, please don't hesitate to reach out with any specific questions!

SDL Strategy Implementation

Thank you all for attending the Getting Started workshop. In this workshop, we provided an overview of the three SDL strategies. For your reference, we have saved all the materials from the workshop <here>, including:

- **Workshop materials:** the recording and slides from the workshop.
- **Course Implementation Guide**
- **SDL Activity Implementation Planner:** individual planning documents. Please complete your planners **no later than the first day of your course**!

Please take 1 minute to reply with the following:

- Reply, YES or NO, to the statement: "I feel confident in my plan to implement all three strategies in my course this semester."

If no, also share:

- Which strategy(ies) are you not confident with?

What additional resources or support would be helpful?

If yes, just reply "yes."

If you do not feel confident, I will reach out to provide further support. Thank you for your dedication!

Touchpoint 2 (0% through the course)

Subject: Self-Directed Learning Instructional Model | Touchpoint 2

Hi [Instructor Name],

As a reminder, to support your implementation of the SDL Instructional Model, every few weeks, we will send you an email of resources and tips. Please see below for SDL strategy implementation tips.

SDL Strategy Implementation

In the first few weeks of class, you are laying the foundation for a successful course with your students! To support this effort, be sure to implement the **SPIN questionnaire**, as well as the **first two videos in the SDL series** on *sense of belonging* and *time management* with the corresponding reflection questions. This trio of strategies are intended to set the foundation for course success by activating motivation and supporting students with strategies to effectively plan their learning.

We encourage you to share the *summary* results of the SPIN questionnaire with your students so you can encourage them to feel more comfortable with their peers and facilitate dialogue with your class.

Wishing you a great week ahead! Thanks,

Touchpoint 3 (40% through the course)

Subject: Self-Directed Learning Instructional Model | Touchpoint 3

Hi [Instructor Name],

We're almost halfway through the term – congratulations! Please see below for SDL strategy implementation tips to help maintain student belonging and engagement.

SDL Strategy Implementation

This is a time when students may start to feel frustrated or struggle with their coursework – now it is especially important to maintain connections with students. To support students in building self-efficacy and self-confidence, be sure to share the **video** on *growth mindset*. This week, consider starting your class with a brief discussion of the video and how intelligence is not set in stone but "plastic," meaning that intelligence improves through challenge and disciplined effort.

Also, by this time you should have students complete the **assessment wrapper** to support them in preparing for the first major assessment or assignment. Don't forget to assign the reflection after they receive their grade and feedback. The goal is to encourage changes to study habits for the next assessment/assignment. Check out the Prompts section of the Course Implementation Guide for the suggested text for the wrapper.

Wishing you a great week ahead! Thanks,

Touchpoint 4 (80% through the course)

Subject: Self-Directed Learning Instructional Model | Touchpoint 4

Hi [Instructor Name],

Please see below for SDL strategy implementation tips!

SDL Strategy Implementation

This week, focus on promoting engagement in group activities. **Collaborative activities** can reduce isolation and promote help-seeking behaviors, particularly for students who feel more comfortable asking peers for assistance. When assigning group activities, be sure to explain the purpose of working in groups. Check out the SPIN Collaborative Reflection Tool, which you can update to align with your course. Consider taking some class time to highlight for students that by working collaboratively, they will develop critical skills for their future academic and professional success. Check out other tips to increase student engagement in online group work in the SPIN section of the Course Implementation Guide.

Don't forget to assign the final prompt, **message to a future student**, before the end of the course!

Wishing you a great week ahead! Thanks,

Touchpoint 5 (90% through the course)

Subject: Self-Directed Learning Instructional Model | Touchpoint 5

Hi [Instructor Name],

This is the final touchpoint of the term. Thank you for all of your engagement and enthusiasm this term! Please see below for information on end-of-course activities, including SDL strategy implementation tips.

SDL Strategy Implementation

Use the last activity of the Instructional Model, the **message to a future student**, to prompt student reflection on their growth over the course of the term. Encourage student creativity by allowing them to record their messages or illustrate their reflections. Ask students to focus on their growth – what obstacles did they overcome? What have they learned about themselves through this course?

Be sure to let students know if you plan to use their messages for future terms. Refer students to their reflections from the prompts they completed earlier in the term to facilitate their thinking on the message to a future student activity.

Wishing you a great week ahead! Thanks,

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Postsecondary Teaching with Technology Collaborative

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