

# Student Engagement: Learning Environments & Connecting Students to their Education

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Describe the most engaging learning spaces that you have experienced.

# Traditional Classroom

- Desks in rows
- All facing the “sage on the stage”
- Drab lighting
- Institutional Colors
- Rules about moving furniture
- Uncomfortable seats



# What Makes a Great Learning Space?

## Estrella Mountain CC

- EMCC pioneer in design of creative & dynamic learning spaces; leverage physical space to promote engagement and advance teaching and learning; abandoned traditional classrooms with 70% of classrooms becoming learning studios.

### Learning Studio Characteristics:

- Facilitates Engagement
- Motivating
- Students want to “Linger & Learn”
- Impacts Student Learning
- Allows for Multiple Pedagogies
- Easy Access to Technology
- “Radical Flexibility”: manipulation of physical learning environment resulting in an increased sense of ownership in the learning process
- Captivating colors, textures, and finishes

Roger Yohe, Estrella Mountain Community College

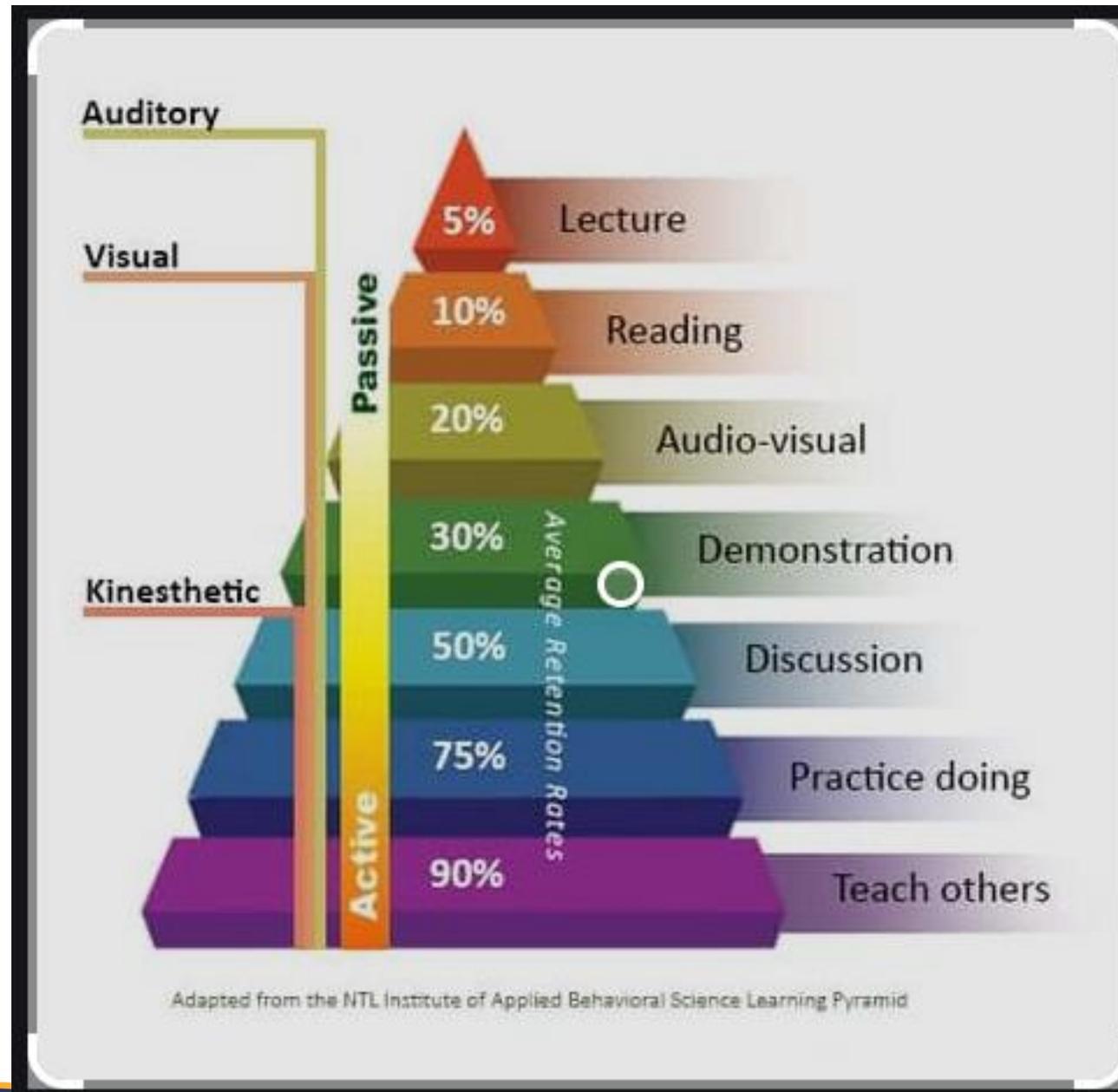
# Why Student Engagement?

Student Engagement is the amount of time and energy that students invest in meaningful educational practices.

Examples include:

- Asking questions in class
- Working with other students
- Communication with faculty
- Tutoring
- Time spent studying, writing, reading, editing, using labs and resources
- Applying theories to practical problems
- Working on a career plan

R. Yohe, Estrella Mountain Community College



# Designing 21<sup>st</sup> Century Learning Environments

- **Learning spaces should represent the college's vision and strategy for learning:**
  - responsive
  - inclusive
  - student success-oriented
  
- **Depict a dynamic environment that allows and encourages**
  - ~learning
  - ~research
  - ~creativity
  - ~collaboration
  - ~engagement



# CCSSE: Active & Collaborative Learning

Students learn more when they are actively involved in their education and have opportunities to think about and apply what they are learning in different settings. Through collaborating with others to solve problems or master challenging content, students develop valuable skills that prepare them to deal with the kinds of situations and problems they will encounter in the workplace, the community, and their personal lives.

		2021 Cohort
Item	Variable	Mean
Item 4: In your experiences at this college during the current academic year, about how often have you done each of the following?		
1 = Never, 2 = Sometimes, 3 = Often, 4 = Very often		
4a. Asked questions in class or contributed to class discussions [ACTCOLL]	CLQUEST	2.92
4b. Made a class presentation [ACTCOLL]	CLPRESEN	2.05
4f. Worked with other students on projects during class [ACTCOLL]	CLASSGRP	2.28
4g. Worked with classmates outside of class to prepare class assignments [ACTCOLL]	OCCGRP	1.82
4h. Tutored or taught other students (paid or voluntary) [ACTCOLL]	TUTOR	1.33
4i. Participated in a community-based project (service-learning activity) as part of a regular course [ACTCOLL]	PARTICCBP	1.33
4q. Discussed ideas from your readings or classes with others outside of class (students, family members, co-workers, etc.) [ACTCOLL]	OOCIDEAS	2.48

How did COVID change the learning environment at your college?

What aspects of those changes should stay and  
which need to be adapted  
as we return to the classroom?

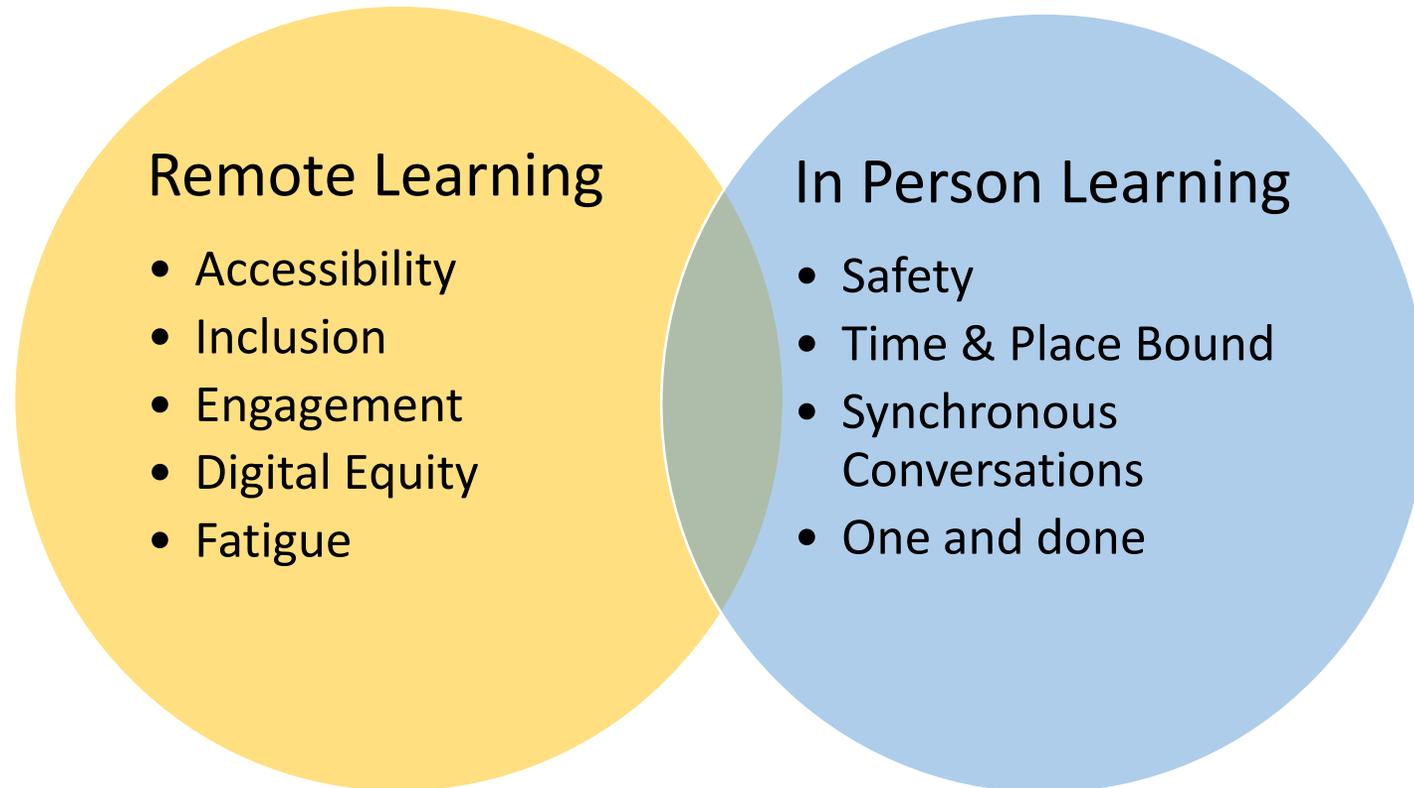
# “Student-Centered Learning Spaces During a Pandemic”

- 2021 Masters Thesis by Rebeccah J. Maley, Eastern Illinois University

Students:

- value their communities
- appreciate localized spaces for collaboration
- acknowledge various influences can enhance or inhibit ability to study
- designs that offer privacy, public view, or solidarity
- safety, large surface areas, and a sense of peace
- resources: water, food, restrooms, technology, human connection

# The Learning Sweet Spot



# Today's Students Expect

- On-demand lectures to repeat or listen to at faster speeds
- Deeper Connection to Content
- Learning spaces that foster smaller clustered conversations
- Hands-on experiences
- Proximity that results in innovation, collaboration, strategic thinking
- A strong sense of community which helps students to keep up academically
- Less command and control, rather moving toward a “neural network”
- Learning, Living, & Recreation are interconnected

Discuss your reaction to Student Expectations for Learning.

What are the challenges and opportunities for meeting student learning expectations?

# Examples of Engaging Learning Spaces













# QUESTIONS & COMMENTS

**“Effective schools use their settings to educational advantage by creating engaging spaces for learning. These spaces sometimes have profound, if not always clearly understood meaning to students, faculty, and staff!”**

*Student Success in College: Creating Conditions That Matter*

Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, Whitt, and Assoc.

