

Helping Students Stay: Exploring Program and Classroom Persistence Strategies

Course Overview and Schedule

When we focus on helping students stay in programs, we address all the ingredients of program quality and effective instruction. Student persistence is, in fact, an indicator of program strength. In this eight-week course, we'll use the six core "drivers" of persistence, identified in the New England Learner Persistence Project, to organize and review a wide range of successful persistence strategies, and to prioritize the ones that might have the most impact in our own programs.

Course instructor

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Course registrar

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(Please add these e-mail addresses to your e-mail client's accepted sender/recipient lists to insure you receive important course announcements)

Course dates

February 21–April 2, 2012

Time

Approx. 3–4 hours per week; 24 hours total

Technical assistance

1-800-434-0899, call back within two hours

Course Objectives

By the end of the course, you will be able to

- Summarize key persistence research
- Describe six drivers of persistence
- Relate the six drivers of persistence to your own personal experience
- Name the strengths and weaknesses of your own program related to each of the six drivers of persistence
- Identify at least two strategies that address each of the six drivers of persistence
- Present a persistence plan for your own program

Course Topics

Lesson 1: Course Introduction

- Welcome
- Introduction
- Course Requirements
- Personal Learning Goals
- Our Experiences

Lesson 2: Drivers of Persistence

- Images of Persistence
- A Brief Review of the Research

Lesson 3: Building Community

- Introduction
- Topic 1: The First Welcome
- Topic 2: Intake and Orientation Strategies
- Topic 3: Maintaining a Sense of Community
- Program Self-Assessment

Lesson 4: Clarity of Purpose

- Introduction
- Topic 1: Articulating and Reflecting on Goals
- Topic 2: Talking About Learning
- Program Self-Assessment

Lesson 5: Competence

- Introduction
- Topic 1: Experiencing Success
 - Subtopic A: Scaffold Learning and Teach Study Skills
 - Subtopic B: Provide Learning Options
 - Subtopic C: Help Students Learn to Self-Assess Progress
 - Subtopic D: Encourage Students to Take on New Roles
- Topic 2: Relating to Role Models
- Topic 3: Receiving Encouragement
- Topic 4: Reducing Stress

- Reflections on Competence
- Program Self-Assessment

Lesson 6: Stability

- Introduction
- Topic 1: Providing Consistent Support
- Topic 2: Reducing Turbulence
- Topic 3: Retaining Teachers
- Program Self-Assessment

Lesson 7: Agency and Relevance

- Introduction
- Topic 1: Involving Students in Decision-Making
- Topic 2: Engaging Through Real-World Activities
- Program Self-Assessment

Lesson 8: Bringing It Home

- Final Project
- Course Summary
- Course Review

Course Schedule

Lesson 1: Course Introduction

Available:
Tuesday, February 21, 2012

Complete by:
Monday, February 27, 2012

Lesson Activities

- Update computer software
- Become familiar with online tools
- Download course journal
- Review course objectives, schedule, and requirements
- Journal: Online learning plan
- Journal: Personal learning goal

Discussion Posts

- Course Goals*
 - Our Experiences* (required)
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Lesson 2: Drivers of Persistence

Available:
Tuesday, February 21, 2012

Complete by:
Monday, February 27, 2012

Readings

- “Drivers of Persistence”

Lesson Activities

- Writeboard: Add words to Images of Persistence
- View presentation on key academic research on persistence

Discussion Posts

- Building on Our Experiences* (required)
 - Our Collective Experiences*
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Lesson 3: Building Community

Available:
Tuesday, February 28, 2012

Complete by:
Monday, March 5, 2012

Readings

- “Reducing the Patter of Student Drop-Out After the First Class Session of ABE/GED Classes Through Moving T.A.B.E. Assessment from the First Class Session to the Fourth Class Session” (optional)
- “The Boston Higher Education Resource Center (HERC) ESOL Program Intake and Orientation Process”
- “Teacher-Student Interactions” (optional)
- “Creating a Learning Community (optional)

Lesson Activities

- Listen to Clinton podcast
- Watch video on creating a *sanctuary for learning*
- Writeboard: Add ideas to The First Welcome
- Listen to HERC podcast
- Writeboard: Add ideas to Orientation Process
- Writeboard: Add ideas to Sense of Community

Discussion Post

- Signs of Community*
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Program Self-Assessment

- Journal: Conduct program self-assessment on Building Community Driver

Lesson 4: Clarity of Purpose

Available:
Tuesday, March 6, 2012

Complete by:
Monday, March 12, 2012

Readings

- “The Effects of Continuing Goal-Setting on Persistence in a Math Classroom” (optional)
- “Learner Goal-Setting” (optional)
- “‘Then I Stop Coming to School’: Understanding Absenteeism in an Adult English as a Second language Program”
- “Improving Student Persistence at the Genesis Center”

Lesson Activities

- Review a sampling of tools for long- and short-term goal setting and monitoring

Discussion Posts

- Supporting Clarity of Purpose*
- Then I Stop Coming to School* (required)
- Reflections* (required)

Program Self-Assessment

- Journal: Conduct program self-assessment on Clarity of Purpose Driver

Lesson 5: Competence

Available:
Tuesday, March 13, 2012

Complete by:
Monday, March 19, 2012

Readings

- “Learning Logs (optional)
- “Student-Run Open House Helps Recruitment” (optional)
- “I Am Always Behind You” (optional)
- “Managing Stress to Improve Learning Program Notes”
- “Helping Adult Learners Handle Stress” (optional)
- “Love Herself Regardless” (optional)

Lesson Activities

- Listen to RIFL podcast
- Review tools and activities teachers can use to bring student awareness to how they learn and how they study
- Journal: Make notes on experiencing success
- Listen to HERC podcast
- Read some inspiring quotes
- Journal: Make notes on a role model
- Journal: Make notes on giving and receiving praise
- Listen to Balliro podcast
- Review tools and activities for helping adult learners handle stress
- Journal: Make notes on stress reduction activities

Discussion Posts

- My Competence Experience*
- Reflections on Competence* (required)

Program Self-Assessment

- Journal: Conduct program self-assessment on Competence Driver

Lesson 6: Stability

Available:
Tuesday, March 20, 2012

Complete by:
Monday, March 26, 2012

Readings

- ““Role of GED Counselors in Student Retention (optional)
- “Pay Off: New River Finds Success with Retention” (optional)
- Something of interest on managed enrollment from Adult Learner Persistence website
- “Working Conditions and Learning Conditions”
- “When a Teach or Counselor Leaves”

Lesson Activities

- Listen to Quinsigamond podcast
- Review Quinsigamond tools
- Take polls on Our Approach to Enrollment
- Journal: Make notes on poll results
- Listen to Stoughton podcast
- Listen to second Stoughton podcast
- Review sample policies, classroom activities, and a set of questions for information on stop-out policies

Discussion Posts

- Stability Experiences*
- Managed Enrollment* (required)
- Change Agent*

Program Self-Assessment

- Journal: Conduct program self-assessment on Stability Driver

Lesson 7: Agency and Relevance

Available:
Tuesday, March 27, 2012

Complete by:
Monday, April 2, 2012

Readings

- “Look Before You Leap: Helping Prospective Learners Make Informed Educational Choices” (optional)
- “Changing Practice: Expanding Minds”

Lesson Activities

- Review a sampling of tools for long- and short-term goal setting

Discussion Posts

- Agency/Relevancy Experiences*
- Student Resistance* (required)

Program Self-Assessment

- Journal: Conduct program self-assessment on Agency and Relevance Drivers

Lesson 8: Bringing It Home

Available:
Tuesday, March 27, 2012

Complete by:
Monday, April 2, 2012

Activities

- Review the New England Learner Persistence website
- Journal: Note any ideas and strategies that might be effective in your situation
- Print your Certificate of Course Completion
- Evaluate this course

Discussion Post

- Persistence Plans* (required)
- Course Reflections*

Final Project

- Submit Persistence Profile and Persistence Plan worksheets

Course Completion

To successfully complete this course, your work will be assessed on whether and to what extent you have done the following:

1. Completed the required postings: total of 75%
 - Lesson 1: *Our Experiences* posting and responses (5%)
 - Lesson 2: *Building on Our Experiences* posting and responses (10%)
 - Lesson 3: *The First Welcome, Orientation Process, and Sense of Community* Writeboard postings (10%)
 - Lesson 4: *Then I Stop Coming to School* posting and responses (10%)
 - Lesson 4: *Reflections* posting and responses (10%)
 - Lesson 5: *Reflections on Competence* posting and responses (10%)
 - Lesson 6: *Managed Enrollment* posting and responses (10%)
 - Lesson 7: *Student Resistance* posting and responses (10%)
2. Score 12 points or more on Final Project: 25%

If you score an 80% or above, you will have successfully completed the course and earned a certificate of completion from Professional Studies in Adult Education.

Course materials are available through April 23, 2011

Online Course Policies

For courses hosted by ProLiteracy and World Education, Inc.

Online Course Enrollment and Payment

1. Course registration remains open until two days before the course start date or until maximum enrollment is reached, whichever is first.
2. Courses may be canceled within one week of the course start date due to insufficient enrollment. Refunds will be processed for all registrants
3. Courses may be rescheduled within one week of the course start date due to insufficient enrollment. A course registrant may request a refund of the full course fee in lieu of enrollment in the rescheduled course. ProLiteracy or World Education will process refunds for requests made within 4 weeks (20 business days) of the host organization’s notification of the course date change.
4. ProLiteracy and World Education staff will make a reasonable attempt to insure that the course registrants are able to access the online course system by sending confirmation emails, and through telephone contact if necessary, using the contact information provided upon course registration.
5. Full refunds or credit may be given for requests made **no later than 5 business days** prior to the course start date.
6. Registrants requesting withdrawal from the course **within 5 business days** before or after the course start date may receive a 50% refund or a 75% credit toward another online course offered by the same host organization.
7. No refunds or credit will be given for requests made **after 5 business days** of the course start date. (See chart below.)

← Full Refund or credit		50% refund or 75% credit											No refund or credit→	
Thurs	Fri	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Mon Course Start Date	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri	Mon	Tues	Wed

8. Refunds will not be provided for registrants who cannot meet the minimum technical requirements for course participation. See Minimal Technical Requirements on pages 3–4.
9. Full refunds or credit will be given to registrants who meet the minimum technical requirements and have technical problems that significantly impact the delivery of the course content and for which ProLiteracy’s technical support is not able to resolve.
10. Although there may be occasions where the course ending dates and final assignment deadlines are extended to accommodate either the participants’ or instructor’s schedules, ProLiteracy and World Education reserve the right to limit course extensions to two weeks. See Online Course Completion Policies on page 2.

Online Course Completion Policies

1. Upon satisfactory completion of all course requirements, course participants may print a Certificate of Completion by going to their Grade Book in the learning management system (LMS) or a certificate will be supplied via e-mail. (ProLiteracy and World Education do not mail hard copies of the course completion certificate.) Completion certificates are available anytime after the course has ended.
2. The Certificate of Completion documents the professional development hours associated with the course, as listed in the course description; it does not document the actual hours the course participant spent doing coursework. Participants may take more or less time, depending on their depth of participation and comfort with technology. Completion time is the estimated time participants should expect to spend with a course; however, the actual number of hours each participant spends on coursework may vary greatly.
3. Course completion requirements are published in the Course Outline and Schedule, available as a document within the course on the LMS. In order to receive a Certificate of Completion, the participant must meet the course completion requirements listed on the Course Outline and Schedule by the final deadline posted.
4. The course instructor has the sole authority to determine if the participant has met the minimum requirements for course completion.
5. The instructor will post the date on which participants may download their Certificate of Completion.
6. Participants may negotiate revision and re-submission of their work with the course instructor; however, the participant must submit revised work by a mutually agreed upon deadline in order to receive the Certificate of Completion.
7. Participants may negotiate a one-time extension for final course completion at the sole discretion of the course instructor. If the participant fails to meet the extended deadline, no further extensions will be allowed.
8. Course content is only available for the duration of the course: After the course has closed, course content and any documents participants have uploaded to the LMS will not be available.

Course Communications Policies

1. Course communications include group e-mails, discussion posts, chats, Webinars, Webinar archives, team discussions, and instructor/participant correspondence.
2. Course instructors and facilitators will use e-mail, either within or outside of the LMS, as the primary source of communication with course participants. Electronic communications will be directed to the e-mail addresses located in the participants' profile within the LMS.
3. Only course participants, instructors, facilitators, and ProLiteracy or World Education staff may access and use LMS course communication tools.
4. Upon request of the individual participant, ProLiteracy and World Education staff, instructors, and facilitators may provide a course participant's sponsor (i.e., one who purchases the course on behalf of the course participant), with the Course Outline and Schedule and the participant's LMS Grade Book information. ProLiteracy and World Education staff, instructors, and facilitators will not provide sponsors access to or records of any course communications.

Minimum Technical Requirements

ProLiteracy’s online courses are offered via the IntraLearn learning management system and WebEx Internet conferencing system. To participate in courses, you must have access to a reliable computer with an Internet connection. We recommend a high speed Internet connection. For courses that include Webinar sessions, you must have the ability to be on an Internet-connected computer and a telephone at the same time. We recommend a screen resolution 800x600 or higher.

System Requirements

System requirements for operating the course management software, plug-ins and minimum client requirements (e.g., workstation and browser) are listed below.

<p>PC: Windows XP Windows 2000 Internet Explorer 5.5+ Netscape 7.0</p>	<p>Macintosh: Macintosh OS X Internet Explorer 5.2 Macintosh Edition Netscape 7.1 Macintosh Edition Mozilla Firefox</p>
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Note: IntraLearn has been shown to work under Windows 95/98/ME. However, since Microsoft has discontinued support for these operating systems, we will not be able to address any issues related specifically to those operating systems. IntraLearn has not been tested with Microsoft Vista, and ProLiteracy cannot guarantee support for that operating system.

General Requirements for HTML-compliant Browsers

- Accepts cookies
- Supports JavaScript 1.0 and Java 1.0.2.
- Supports XML
- Supports style sheets

Note: The AOL browser is not compatible with the course management software. If you use AOL to connect to the Internet, you should also install a compatible browser to use for these courses. You can connect to the Internet via AOL, then open a second browser window to access your courses.

Accepting Cookies

To access course material, your Internet browser must be set to accept cookies.

- *If you are using a Firefox browser*, go into the browser settings under the Tools menu, and select Options → Privacy. Check the boxes beside "Accept cookies from sites" and "Accept Third Party Cookies".
- *If you are using Internet Explorer (IE7)*, go into Tools → Internet Options → Privacy, and pull the slider all the way down to "Accept All Cookies."

Additional Plug-ins

Some courses require additional plug-ins to access media and course resources (e.g., Shockwave, Windows Media Player, Adobe Acrobat, WebEx media players). You should have the ability to download and install these plug-ins on your computer, or have access to a technical support staff person who can do this for you.