

Why?

- Quarters are short! 1 week = 10% of content.
- Faculty = week 1 starts learning.
- Students = week 1 is overwhelming, starting behind.

What?

- Encourage motivation: Provide students with choice about engaging, space to gain sense they can be competent and to connect with the instructor (Ryan & Deci, 2000).
- Nudge toward self-regulating behaviors: learning strategies, use of time, monitoring performance (Seli & Dembo, 2019).

How?

- Open the full course 10 days prior to the start of the term.
- Warm welcome, why of the course, brief overview, connection to larger curriculum.
- Suggested that students use this time to review the course, plan, and ask questions. Clear that no work is required.

Data sources

- Utilized course statistics gathered in Sakai.
- Surveyed enrolled students at the midterm about how they used their time (50% of students responded).

Results

High interest & benefit

- 85% accessed the course early.
- 100% reported access as being beneficial to their learning.

Students use the time to prepare themselves

- Reviewed Course Materials and viewed Gradebook.
- Planned & oriented themselves to the course.
- Positive anecdotal comments from students.

Students prefer 1 – 2 weeks for preparation

- 7 – 10 days is the ideal open date (71% split evenly along these two options (20% preferred 14 days)

Recommendations & next steps

- Continue the practice with the goal of opening the opening courses 14 days before the term starts and staggered reminders for later registrants.
- **Limitation:** This practice does not teach self-regulation, only gives more space for those with existing practices.
- **Future research:** How might we teach students to better self-regulate?

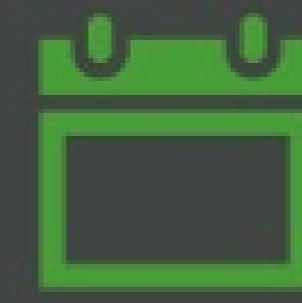
What if I (instructor) am not available for pre-term contact?

- In five offerings of the early access pass, few students have contacted me prior to the term starting connected to early access. Simply note your availability in the message. Be certain to refer to where students can get technical help or report broken links.

Piloting an "early access" pass for online courses

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10 day pre-term access allowed students to...



plan and organize



orient to course and expectations



ease into the term



85% accessed the course



100% said it benefited their learning



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