Voice and Choice: 5 Strategies for Fostering Student Agency in the Online Classroom
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Meaningful student engagement relies upon tapping into students’ individual:
- passions
- purpose
- interests

Students value educational experiences aligned with personal and professional goals.

Student agency rests upon creating learning that is:
- Meaningful and relevant to students
- Directed by students’ individual interests
- Supported through guidance of the instructor

Engagement increases when the learning experience can be tailored toward individually relevant outcomes.

Content Paths
Provide clear learning objectives; students choose from a range of instructional artifacts and resources

Benefits:
- Student choice of mode and order
- Caters to learning preferences and interests

Considerations:
- Must have clear learning objectives and self-assessments
- Utilize milestones and guidance to ensure mastery of key content

Assignment Shifting
All students complete the same assignments; choice in the order or timeline that they will submit

Benefits:
- Student choice based on comfort, knowledge, and schedule
- Distribute grading workload

Considerations:
- Assignment focus needs to be more general
- Increased guidance on assignment and grading process
### Adaptable Assignments

All students complete the same assignments but choose the focus of their work within established guidelines.

**Benefits:**
- Student voice to focus their work on topics that are personally relevant
- Decreased concerns of academic dishonesty

**Considerations:**
- Assignment guidelines need to be specific enough to ensure adherence to learning objectives
- Students need baseline level of knowledge to make appropriate choices

### Choice Menus

Students are given a list of options from which they can select how they will demonstrate their understanding.

**Benefits:**
- Student voice to determine the options they are most comfortable with and interested in
- Variability in grading

**Considerations:**
- Options need to be equivalent in weight and workload
- Increased instructor workload for preparation, support, & rubrics

### UnEssay

Each student selects their focus and strategy for demonstrating their understanding in any manner that is meaningful to them.

**Benefits:**
- Maximum student choice and voice
- Decreased concerns of academic dishonesty

**Considerations:**
- Students may lack metacognitive ability to make effective choices
- Increased individualized guidance and support

Creating an environment in which students have active choice and self-directed learning triggers increased:

- Motivation
- Interest
- Engagement
- Investment