

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

ENGAGE: Success Through Personal Growth emerged from an extensive process involving input from constituents including students, faculty, administrators, alumni, and employers. At ECPI University, most of our undergraduate student attrition occurs during the first and second semesters. With ENGAGE, we believe that if our identified target students (the majority of which are adult learners) can develop, strengthen, or enhance specific self-management life skills, then their retention in the first and second semesters will show improvement. Our extensive literature review reveals a positive relationship between self-management skills and the academic success of adult learners and indicates that these skills can be developed and improved.

The student success outcomes of ENGAGE support two goals of our strategic plan and seek to improve the first and second semester retention rates through the development of five self-management skills: self-efficacy, self-management, resiliency, self-improvement, and personal responsibility. We believe these skills have the greatest potential to impact the success of our identified target students at ECPI University.

To achieve our goals, ENGAGE has three student learning outcomes.

1. Students will identify opportunities to develop or strengthen specific self-management skills in two areas.
2. Students will pursue personalized paths for growth to improve the self-management skills identified in the self-assessment process.
3. Students will reassess their progress toward the development of the identified self-management skills as a foundation for future improvement.

Specifically, students will complete a skills assessment in their orientation course that will provide them with a profile of core self-management skills they can develop, strengthen, or enhance. Students will reflect on those results, perform research, and complete curricula providing insight into the value of each skill and ways they can improve; identify SMART goals they will work on to improve two skills; and begin executing their personal growth plans. ENGAGE will affirm their efforts and achievement through badges with swag points for completing specified milestones. Swag points may be redeemed at the ECPI online store. The plan will provide an additional support structure for a subset of students through coaching. Finally, students will re-take the skills assessment and reassess their progress toward the development of the skills on their growth plan in a follow-up reflection assignment later in their programs.

Faculty and staff involved with the QEP will receive support through training and development. Plan initiatives will be assessed through both direct and indirect measures. Evidence of achievement will be gathered, analyzed, and interpreted throughout the life cycle of the plan, with modifications made as needed based on the results. The University supports this QEP by providing the resources needed to implement and sustain it.

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