



# Academic Emotions and Self-Regulated Learning

UDL 3.0: Design Options for [Emotional Capacity \(guideline 9\)](#)

[Develop awareness of self and others](#): Develop and manage healthy emotional responses and interactions (consideration 9.2).

## What are academic emotions and self-regulated learning?

Academic emotions refer to the range of emotions students experience in academic settings (Pekrun et al., 2017). They include emotions experienced before, during, and after learning activities or assessments. These emotions significantly influence students' cognitive processes, motivation, and academic performance.

Self-regulated learning refers to students' ability to monitor, evaluate, and modify their emotional experiences and expressions in academic contexts (Lavoué et al., 2020). It involves:

- Recognizing and labeling emotions related to learning tasks
- Understanding the causes and consequences of academic emotions
- Employing strategies to manage emotions that may interfere with or enhance learning
- Adjusting emotional responses to align with academic goals

For adult learners juggling multiple responsibilities, effective emotional self-regulation is critical for persistence and success in higher education.

## Why is it important for faculty to understand academic emotions and self-regulated learning?

Faculty play a crucial role in supporting students' emotional well-being and academic success.

Understanding academic emotions helps us to be more empathetic, reduce learning barriers, and design more effective learning experiences.

- **Impact on learning processes and outcomes:** Emotions significantly influence learning, motivation, and academic performance (Pekrun et al., 2017). Positive emotions like enjoyment can enhance engagement and information processing, while negative emotions like anxiety may impair concentration and recall.
- **Unique emotional challenges of adult learners:** Adult learners often experience intense emotions related to returning to school, balancing multiple roles, and facing academic challenges (Kasworm, 2008). These may include anxiety about technology use, fear of failure, or guilt about time away from family.
- **Link to academic success and persistence:** Effective emotion regulation is associated with better academic achievement, increased persistence, and overall student well-being (Artino & Jones, 2012).

- **Enhanced student-faculty relationships:** Knowledge of emotion regulation can improve faculty's ability to empathize with and respond to students' emotional needs, fostering stronger, more supportive relationships.
- **Promotion of self-directed learning:** By understanding and supporting emotion regulation, faculty can help adult learners become more self-aware and self-directed (Brunzell et al., 2016).

## How can faculty help adult learners with academic emotions and self-regulated learning?

Faculty can employ several strategies to help adult learners with academic emotions and self-regulated learning.

- **Foster a supportive learning environment:**
  - Build a sense of belonging through inclusive practices
  - Provide clear expectations and scaffolded learning to build confidence
  - Offer flexibility, when possible, to accommodate adult learners' complex lives
- **Raise emotional awareness:**
  - Encourage students to identify and label their academic emotions
  - Normalize the range of emotions experienced during learning
  - Help students understand how emotions impact their cognition and behavior
- **Model healthy emotion regulation:**
  - Share your own experiences with academic emotions and regulation strategies
  - Demonstrate composure and adaptability
- **Incorporate emotion check-ins:**
  - Start a class or an online module with a brief emotional temperature check
  - Use anonymous surveys to gauge students' emotional states throughout the course
- **Provide individualized support:**
  - Offer one-on-one meetings to discuss academic challenges
  - Connect students with campus resources for additional emotional support

By implementing these strategies, faculty can help adult learners develop crucial emotion regulation skills that enhance their academic success and well-being.

## References

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