

The following tips were gleaned from three university wide conversations with students, faculty, and staff on fostering learner autonomy. Go to <http://www.sotl.ilstu.edu/cast/Aahe/autoWeb.shtml> to access notes from these meetings:

Tips for Faculty for Fostering Learner Autonomy

- Offer a choice of assignments to foster a sense of control over one's learning in the learner;
- Collaborate with students in designing course policies, syllabus, assessments, etc. as much as possible and then stick with the plan;
- Communicate expectations and consequences clearly and in writing;
- Avoid "lecturing" students;
- Do not tell students what they have already read;
- Encourage class discussions between students and with the instructor and listen to the voices of students;
- Encourage a shared responsibility for learning;
- Have high but realistic expectations for students and provide flexible structure to the course and assignments;
- Do not do a student's work for them; rather scaffold learning tasks;
- Model autonomous learning;
- Avoid negative behaviors (cancelling class, too little interactions with students);
- Be in your office during your office hours;
- Be aware of contextual factors that impact autonomous learning (length of class, time of day of class, room temperature, personal factors in student's lives that impact their learning);
- Use praise and positive reinforcement;
- Create an active learning environment;
- Make students aware of learning opportunities outside of class;
- Provide and recommend additional readings and assignments;
- Recognize that students have many responsibilities beyond your class; and
- Show empathy and foster connections with students as individuals in an authoritative teaching style more than an over controlling, authoritarian, or permissive/indulgent style.