



Using Validation Theory As a Tool for Student **SUCCESS!**

Validation Theory, created by Dr. Laura Rendón, defines validation as: "an enabling, confirming and supportive process initiated by in- and out-of-class agents that fosters academic and interpersonal development."

Validation is intentional and proactive and acknowledges students as valuable members of a learning community, creators of knowledge, and, importantly, capable of being successful in all their classes. Validating the abilities of our students is particularly beneficial for our students of color, low-income, returning/adult learners, and first-generation college students. The ultimate idea is that faculty, through validating actions, can instill a confident, motivating, "can do" attitude within our students that leads to student success, learning, and development. There are 6 components:



INITIATE CONTACT

The onus on faculty and staff to actively reach out to students to offer assistance, encouragement, and support.



AFFIRM

Reinforce that students are capable of learning and build up their sense of self-worth by recognizing the strengths and knowledge they bring to the classroom.



CONSISTENCY

Ensure that you are consistently validating students so they feel confident in themselves.



IN AND OUT

Validation should occur inside and outside the classroom space.



A COMPONENT

Validation should be seen as a first step in ensuring student success and only one component of development.



DO IT EARLY

Validation early on in a student's interaction with faculty and in their college career is critical.

Examples of Validation

- Recognize yourself as a learner in the classroom. Let students know that they can teach you too.
- Curriculum, including guest speakers, texts, videos, examples should include positive representations of student diversity.
- Validate and recognize the experiences, cultures, and knowledges of students that may not be rooted in traditional or foundational texts or ways of knowing and doing. Allow students to share these parts of their lives regularly through speeches, assignments, or other learning activities.
- Actively reach out to students to offer assistance, encouragement, and support both in and out of the class.
- Create learning teams that allow students to support each other and reduce competition.
- Build caring relationships with students and see students as people, not just pupils.
- Increase faculty accessibility especially outside the classroom. Meet with students in libraries, dining halls, patio areas, and other spaces that are not traditionally considered academic spaces.
- Do not lower academic expectations, validate students as able to meet those standards.
- Validate students as leaders and capable of developing leadership identity.