



Supporting Modern Learners: Real Examples from College Campuses

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What we know about Today's learners

Majority of incoming students are First-Gen

Many suffer from Impostor Syndrome

Many feel lonely and isolated

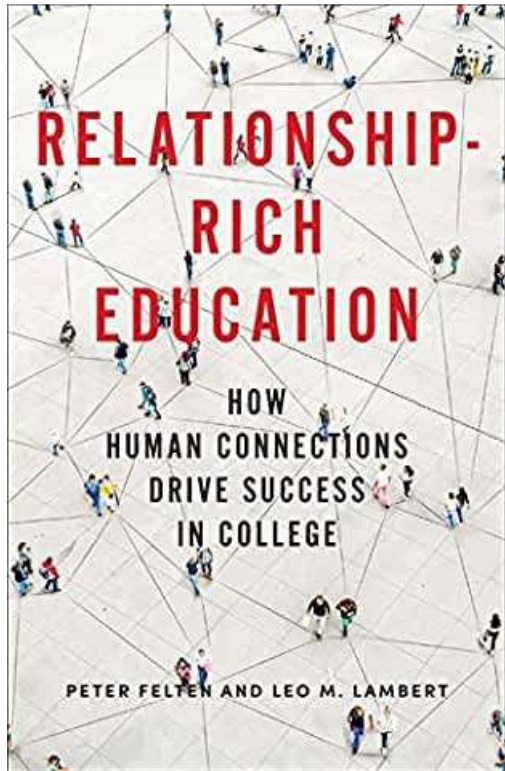
Don't know what they don't know

Feeling a sense of belonging leads to
persistence and success



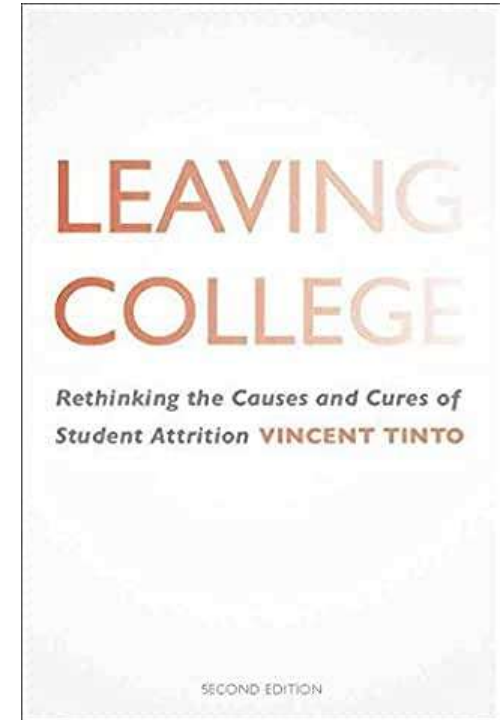
Inside Higher Ed

- According to the Gallup State of Higher Ed report, Students are more likely to rate their program higher if it is offered in-person and if ***they feel they belong at their institution.*** Researchers also found that students who considered their experience to be good quality also ***felt supported and cared for by faculty members.***



A focus on behavioral changes that have been proven to “influence students’ sense of belonging and their academic self-concept and motivation” through enhanced interpersonal experiences which results in improved student retention and success as well as a reduction in equity gaps.

“Decades of research demonstrate that peer-to-peer, student-faculty, and student-staff relationships are the foundation of learning. Belonging and achieving in college...effects are particularly strong for students of color and first-generation students.” (2020)



What is Caring Campus?

- An intentional effort to make students feel welcome and a sense of connectedness to your college
- Employs specific behaviors that data shows lead to students' improved sense of belonging
- Helps staff and faculty connect with one another and with other employee groups to create a positive college environment
- Causes the college to re-examine policy barriers to student success



What is Caring Campus?

Transactional



Hard Work

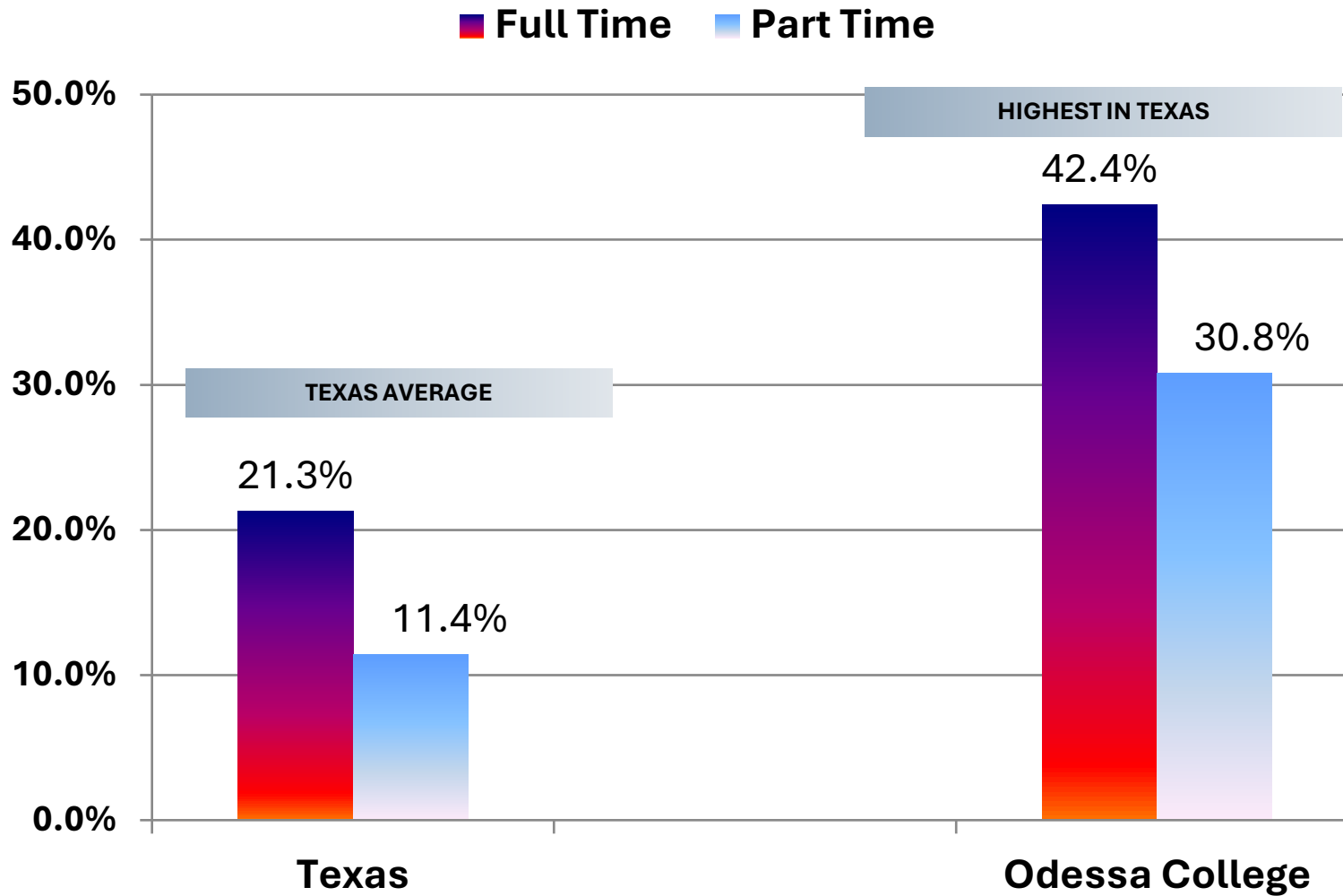
Heart Work

Relational

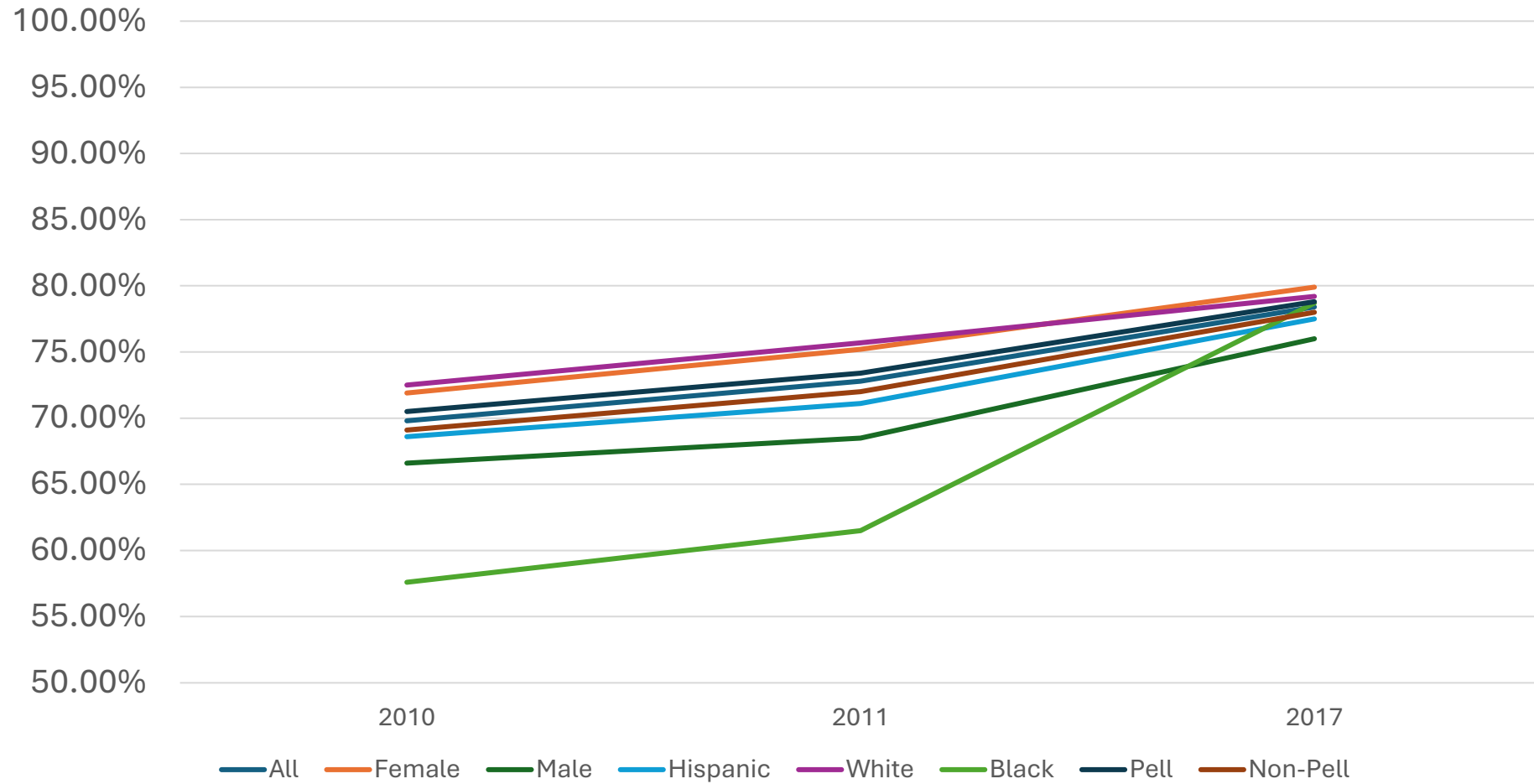
Caring Campus Top Six Faculty Behavioral Commitments

Face-to-Face	Virtual Environment
<u>Welcome to the Course</u> : Activity to engage all students	<u>Welcome to the Course</u> : Welcome letter and virtual activity
<u>Learn and Use Student Names</u> : Name game, name plaques, use student name when returning assignments	<u>Learn and Use Student Names</u> : When referring to students in synchronous and asynchronous environment
<u>Comprehensive Syllabus</u> : See “The Course Syllabus: A learning Centered Approach, Grunert O’Brian et al.	<u>Comprehensive Syllabus</u> : See “The Course Syllabus: A learning Centered Approach, Grunert O’Brian et al.
<u>Moments that Matter</u> : Meeting with every student to get to know them	<u>Moments that Matter</u> : Start with a student paper they write about themselves. Comment on the paper and make sure that the paper is shared among all students: Engage each and every student
<u>Assignments Early and Often</u> : Quick feedback to students about their performance and follow-up with students if they are struggling	<u>Assignments Early and Often</u> : Quick feedback to students about their performance and follow-up with students if they are struggling
<u>Compassionate Coaching</u> : Provide understanding and compassion to students. Know that from time to time students will not turn in assignments and assessments on time due to factors outside of their control and treating each incident on a case by case basis	<u>Compassionate Coaching</u> : Provide understanding and compassion to students. Know that from time to time students will not turn in assignments and assessments on time due to factors outside of their control and treating each incident on a case by case basis

The Odessa College 2014 Cohort had the highest three-year graduation rate in Texas – more than 20% points above the Texas average



Student Course Success Rates Achievement Gap Closing





Temple College

Highlights

4 Locations in Central Texas
Major Industries: Health Care,
Logistics, Advanced
Manufacturing, Semiconductor &
Technology, and AI
Circle of Support/ Mental Health

Student Success Reforms

Caring Campus Culture
Texas & Rural Pathways
Focus to Finish-> 8wk
Courses
Onboard Redesign

Temple College Caring Campus Culture





Welcome Center

Enrollment Advisors

- Academic Plan
- Workforce Plan
- Financial Plan



Student Success Lab



University Center

Student/ Faculty Gathering Spots



panels

Plastic Laminate

Wood Slats

Accent Paint

Accent Tile

LOUNGE

LEOPARD LOUNGE

Quartz

Plastic Laminate

Accent Tile

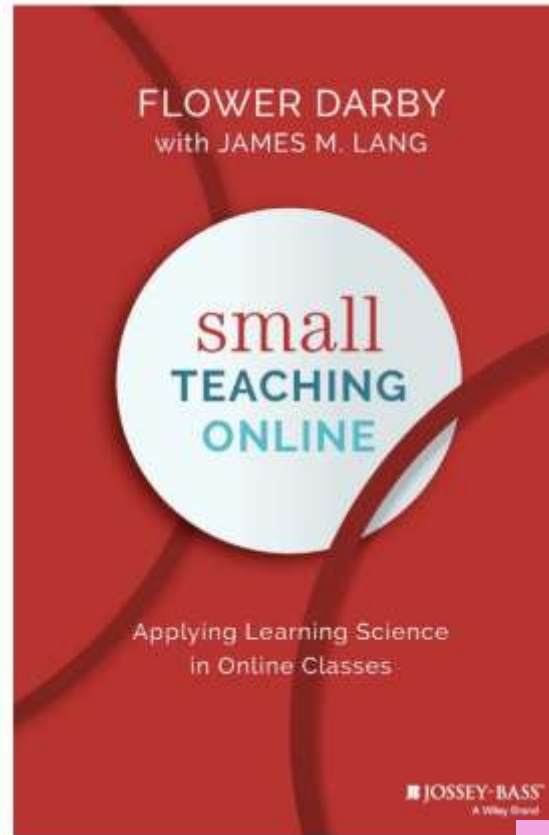
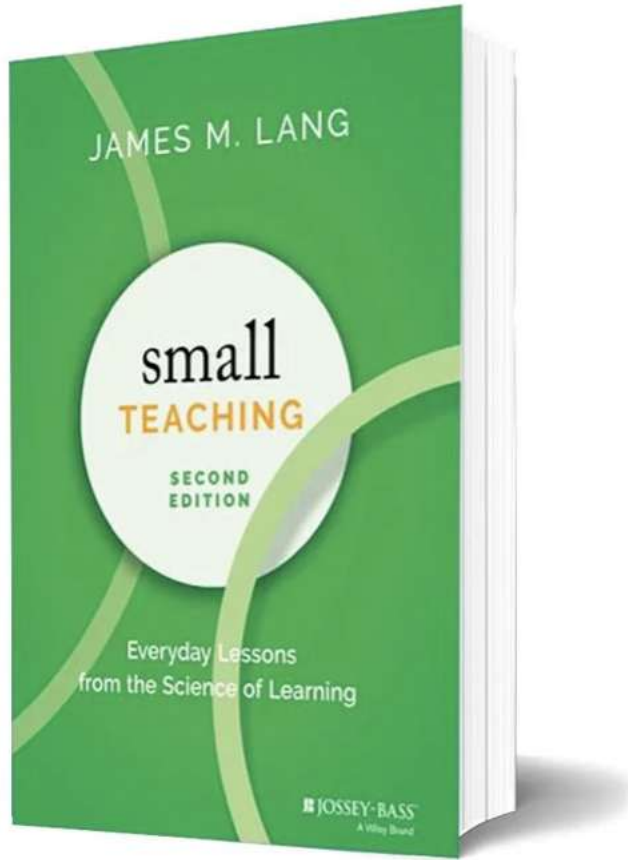
Quartz

Tile

Tile

GROUP

Small Teaching (Lang, 2021)



Small Teaching Online (Darby, 2019)

EXAMPLES- FIRST DAY ACTIVITIES

- Kahoot!
- Interviews
- Selfie Challenge
- Scavenger Hunt
- Icebreakers
- Group Team Building

Situational Awareness: Ex. Rethinking Deadlines



Caring Campus Culture

- Faculty/Staff Onboarding
- Coaching
- Professional Development
- Peer Learning
- Sustainability
- Caring Campus Embedded into Hiring Process



Student Feedback

- Focus Groups
- Surveys
- Links for Immediate Feedback
- Email Signature: How are We Doing?
- Monthly Caring Campus Kudos
- Caught you caring
- Caring Campus Above & Beyond Awards



Caring Campus Ferries



TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY-KINGSVILLE

- Founded in 1925
- First university in South Texas, serving rural and urban communities
- Student population of approx. 6,900
- About 80% of students are undergraduates
- Signature programs in teacher preparation, engineering and agriculture
- **Prior to 2022:** Declining enrollment, leadership turnover, lack of strategic vision and coordination across the university



A NEW NORTH STAR

June 2022 – Dr. Robert Vela becomes President of TAMUK, launching a period of transformation

- Development of new **Mission, Vision, Shared Values**, and **Strategic Plan**
- Launch of the **4 Disciplines of Execution (4DX)** model for strategic execution
- Launch of the **Caring Campus** framework for student engagement
- **New Programs:** Nursing/Allied Health, Workforce Dev



CARING CAMPUS @ TAMUK

- First University to Implement Caring Campus
- Behaviors for all Employees launched in Spring 2024
- Behaviors for Faculty in the Classroom launched in Spring 2025

Fall to Spring Retention: 5-point increase in 2 years (92.7%)

Fall to Fall Retention: 6.5-point 1-year increase (71.1%)

TAMUK EMPLOYEE BEHAVIORS

- 1**
Ten-Foot Rule:
Whenever a student or guest is within 10' and appears to need assistance, take the initiative to approach them. Say hello, smile, and use a positive tone.
- 2**
Nametags:
Wear your name badge with the university logo so students and guests know who to approach with questions.
- 3**
Cross-Department Awareness:
Learn about the services available at the other departments. Maintain accurate and up-to-date directories to refer students or guests to campus services.
- 4**
Warm Referrals:
Call ahead or walk students and guests to their intended destination. Follow up to ensure they arrived and their needs were met.
- 5**
First Week Greetings:
During the first week of classes, set up information tables and meet students across campus to welcome them and provide assistance.

LEARN MORE AT TAMUK CARING CAMPUS WEBSITE
www.tamuk.edu/pes/caring-campus.html