**March 2024**

*Please share with your faculty:*

**Using caution when using online tracking tools to measure students’ engagement**

Online learning management platforms, such as Canvas, provide analytic student tracking tools. These tools provide measures such as the total weekly amount of time each student spent on the course’s learning management site, or the total amount of time each student spent on online quizzes. Many professors find these tools to be a useful indicator of a student’s engagement with course materials and assignments. It is important, however, to use caution when drawing conclusions about students’ engagement with a course based on these statistics. While there may be a correlation between students’ engagement and the time they spent on the learning management platform, there may also be confounding factors. For example, some students may spend a short amount of time on the platform if they print out the readings and read them offline. Or some students may login to the platform and then do tasks unrelated to the course making it appear like they have spent a significant amount of time with course materials when really they haven’t. Tracking students’ time spent on the learning management platform also does not provide insight about students’ comprehension of the material. For instance, some students may require less time if they comprehend the material than other students who require more time to comprehend the same material. While you can’t make definite conclusions about a students’ engagement based on these statistics, they are useful for identifying the outliers, or those students who spent significantly more time or less time than the average time spent by most students in the class. Identifying these outliers can then allow professors to follow up with those students about their engagement and performance in the class.

**Check out!** Santos, Richman, Jiang (2021). Does time spent online with course material result in student success? A study for the online and face-to-face courses. *Journal of Instructional Pedagogies, 25,* 1-11. Retrieved Feb. 27 from <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1294093.pdf>

**Please share examples** Please share examples of how your program measures student engagement and I will feature those examples on [YU’s Learning Assessment Website](http://yu.edu/provost/assessment/).

**Important reminder:** If you have not already submitted your Fall 2023 assessment reports which were due on Jan. 19, please do so as soon as possible. Also, please contact me if you have any questions about your Spring 2024 assessment plans. Thank you.