

Social-Emotional Learning

What Is Social-Emotional Learning?

According to Woolf (2023), “Social-emotional learning is a process that enables individuals to develop and use social and emotional skills to understand and manage emotions, set and achieve positive goals, feel and show empathy for others, establish and maintain positive relationships, and make responsible decisions” (para. 2).

Social-emotional learning is based on the premise that success in academia depends not only on the learner's aptitude and prior performance but also on social-emotional competencies. Some students might be having difficulties getting used to a new learning environment; others might be struggling with personal or family-related issues. There are five key social-emotional competencies that the instructor can help students gain:

- Self-awareness
- Self-management
- Responsible decision-making
- Social awareness
- Relationship skills (Bennett, 2019, para. 5)

Benefits of Social-Emotional Learning to Students

When social-emotional learning has been integrated into teaching, students benefit in different ways, including the following:

- Improved academic performance
- Enhanced well-being
- Increased social and cultural competence
- Improved job readiness (Woolf, 2023., para. 4)

How Can Social-Emotional Learning Be Integrated into Teaching?

Research conducted at James Madison University reported that faculty members could promote social-emotional well-being among their students by integrating six key factors in their teaching. They include; “A positive attitude, a proactive approach to life, a tendency to set goals, perseverance, effective support system, and empathy” (Elmi, 2020, para. 39, Conclusions). For example, faculty can build a positive attitude in each student by recognizing related character traits and praising students in ways that reinforce and promote such character traits. Another example would be to engage in activities such as group problem-solving, discussion on diversity (e.g., communicating with a diverse audience), creative writing, and reflection on end-of-the-day successes or challenges (FutureLearn, 2017, para. 39-44).

References

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