



NUDGE CAMPAIGNS

High GPA and Low Persistence Prediction – Mattering Fall



Driving Student Success Through Nudges

A **nudge campaign** is a communication strategy, built upon a data-informed insight, that an institution designs to nudge a targeted group of students to achieve a specific, measurable outcome.

Nudges are small pushes in the right direction that do not require prescribed actions, but encourage certain behaviors. When students are presented with a nudge sent from a trusted person at your institution, they have the freedom to make their own choices with information about behaviors we know are more strongly associated with positive persistence and graduation outcomes.

- Kuh, George D., et al. *Student success in college: Creating conditions that matter*. John Wiley & Sons, 2011.

An important part of being in a community is feeling the sense that you **matter** to the people in the community. If you feel like others in the community are interested and concerned about you, it can influence your behavior within the community. It is common, especially at large institutions, that students do not feel like they matter to the community. This affects students' sense of belonging.

- Schlossberg, N. K. (1989), *Marginality and mattering: Key issues in building community*. *New Directions for Student Services*, 1989: 5–15. doi:10.1002/ss.37119894803

About the Nudge Campaign

Opportunity

Having a high GPA is often considered a signal that students are on track for success. However, students often leave school for non-academic reasons such as financial, logistical, and social-psychological. The persistence prediction is created using academic and non-academic factors and provide a signal of risk for high GPA students.

Goal

The goal of this nudge campaign is to nudge high GPA students with low persistence predictions into behaviors that will aid in their success within the current term, and persistence into the next term.

Students

The target student group for this nudge campaign is students with high GPAs and low persistence prediction, e.g., students with a GPA greater than 3.0 and in the bottom or second persistence prediction quartile, or Very Low to Moderate persistence predictions.

Owner

The owner of the the nudge campaign is the person responsible for sending the nudges to the students and receiving and acting upon replies from students. Choose the most appropriate person at your institution to send the nudges. Remember, emails sent from a person the student knows are most likely to be read. Advisors or faculty are often appropriate owners for a nudge campaign.

Strategy

This nudge campaign is a series of mattering nudges designed to help students with high GPAs and low persistence predictions build a sense of belonging within their learning community. The nudges are intended to build upon each other and can be reinforced through a call-to-action.

Nudges are sent at four different points during the academic term and utilize the following mattering principles:

- Mattering
- Belonging
- Empathy
- Normalizing

First Two Weeks of the Term

Nudge for Very Low, Low and Moderate Persistence Predictions

Subject Line: Our community is better because of you

Dear [STUDENT FIRST NAME],

It's early in the [TERM/SEMESTER] and you have no idea how much of a great impact you are making here on our community! Even so, the transition into the work of the new [TERM/SEMESTER] can be tough - balancing school, life, finances, and other commitments.

All the dedicated work you put into your studies is a demonstration of your abilities as a learner, and it is not going unnoticed.

[INSERT CALL-TO-ACTION]

I'm glad you're here,

[SIGNATURE]

Nudge for High and Very High Persistence Predictions

Subject Line: Our community is better because of you

Dear [STUDENT FIRST NAME],

Start of the [TERM/SEMESTER] is always a busy time. It's exciting for me to know that students like you are contributing to our community in such a meaningful way. You are an important part of the fabric of our [UNIVERSITY/COLLEGE] and I am glad that you're here.

Your diligent work on your studies is a testament to the way you are working toward your degree goals.

[INSERT CALL-TO-ACTION]

I'm here for you, let me know if and how I can help you on this journey in any way!

[SIGNATURE]

Prior to Midterm Exams

Nudge for Very Low, Low and Moderate Persistence Predictions

Subject Line: Share your knowledge with classmates

Dear [STUDENT FIRST NAME],

Finding this point in the [TERM/SEMESTER] overwhelming? It's so normal to feel this way. We hear from academically strong students like you that this point in the [TERM/SEMESTER] is particularly stressful in balancing all you have going on.

Join up with some of your peers in class. You have so much to offer them based upon your life experiences and what you have mastered in your classes so far. Share that knowledge, and lean into the ways your classmates can support you as a team!

[INSERT CALL-TO-ACTION]

I'm here for you and want to contribute to your ongoing success as a student.

[SIGNATURE]

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Nudge for High and Very High Persistence Predictions

Subject Line: Share your knowledge with classmates

Dear [STUDENT FIRST NAME],

Midterms are almost here. Academically strong students like you know how to navigate exam periods, but that doesn't diminish the stress.

Don't forget that there are lots of ways you can contribute to the learning and support of your peers as you study for exams.

[INSERT CALL-TO-ACTION]

[SIGNATURE]

After Midterm Exams

Nudge for Very Low, Low and Moderate Persistence Predictions

Subject Line: Your goals are within reach

Dear [STUDENT FIRST NAME],

Now that midterms are over, the time between today and final exams will fly by. Before you know it the [TERM/SEMESTER] will be over!

Your success here at [INSTITUTION NAME] means a lot to me as your [ROLE]. These remaining weeks will help you get even closer to your original goals as a college student than ever before. Don't give up now!

[INSERT CALL-TO-ACTION]

I'm here for you and want to ensure you have what you need to complete your program.

[SIGNATURE]

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Nudge for High and Very High Persistence Predictions

Subject Line: Your goals are within reach

Dear [STUDENT FIRST NAME],

Now that midterms are over, the time between today and final exams will fly by. Before you know it the [TERM/SEMESTER] will be over! It's important to be ready for next [TERM/SEMESTER] and ensure you are registered for your classes.

Your contributions to the campus community are an important part of what makes us all [MASCOT]. Keep being a part of the campus community through peer interaction, co-curricular involvement, and through all the ways you engage academically. Your success here at [INSTITUTION NAME] means a lot to me as your [ROLE].

I trust these remaining weeks will be memorable and will help you achieve the goals you set for yourself this [TERM/SEMESTER].

[INSERT CALL-TO-ACTION]

I'm here for you and want to ensure you have whatever you need from me to achieve success.

[SIGNATURE]

Last Two Weeks of the Term

Nudge for Very Low, Low and Moderate Persistence Predictions

Subject Line: We depend on you to guide peers

Dear [STUDENT FIRST NAME],

The [TERM/SEMESTER] is nearly over, and getting through finals will get you one step closer to completing your program.

Our campus depends on high-achieving students like you to really set the tone for your peers. You need to know that your contributions to your studies, and your diligence as a student really make a difference here! I want you to know that being able to interact with students like you really makes me excited to come to work each day.

Thank you for being a contributor to this community.

[INSERT CALL-TO-ACTION]

Keep up the hard work and all the best as you head into your finals!!

[SIGNATURE]

Nudge for High and Very High Persistence Predictions

Subject Line: We depend on you to guide peers

Dear [STUDENT FIRST NAME],

The [TERM/SEMESTER] is nearly over, and exams are the only thing left ahead of you.

Our campus depends on high-achieving students like you to really set the tone for your peers. You need to know that your contributions to your studies and diligence as a student really make a difference here!

Thank you for being a contributor to this community.

[INSERT CALL-TO-ACTION]

Keep up the hard work and all the best as you head into your finals!

[SIGNATURE]

Call-To-Action

A nudge campaign is intended to encourage student behaviors that lead to an increased likelihood of success. To have an impact on students' likelihood to persist and graduate, the nudge must alter students perspectives or illicit actions that increase their chances of meeting their educational goals.

*A nudge can be reinforced with a request for a student to think or behave in a way that will likely improve their educational outcomes. This is a **Call-To-Action**. Including a call-to-action in a nudge is optional, but highly recommended. Nudges that ask a student to do something specific make it significantly more likely that they will do it and it will have an impact.*

It is important not to overwhelm the student by including a long list of resources or choices. Include just one call-to-action and make it specific to the target student population.

Four calls to action are described below along with examples of each.

Types of Calls-To-Action

1 Thought Exercise

Students' attitudes and beliefs can be changed simply by asking them to think about a question or reflect on a hypothetical situation. For example, asking students to remind themselves about the reasons they are going to college can reinvigorate a sense of determination to help carry them through a tough point in the term.

Thought exercises have the benefit of being powerful yet not requiring any additional resources beyond sending the nudge. They also provide students cognitive tools they can use anytime to increase their resilience when facing challenges.

2 Link to a Resource

Your institution has resources available to support students throughout their academic journey. You may also know of resources outside your institution that would be helpful for certain student groups. Provide a link to a resource related to the purpose of the nudge or to the targeted student group. This call-to-action leverages existing resources without requiring additional time or new initiatives.

3 Request to Signup or Attend

Your institution has a variety of support activities already in place for students, such as orientation sessions and student clubs. Ask students to signup, attend, and participate in one of these events or activities. This also has the benefit of not requiring any additional resources to support students beyond what is already allocated.

4 Schedule an Appointment or Visit

Ask students to schedule an appointment with someone in their academic support network. The call-to-action may be especially impactful for students in need of acute intervention such as students with Very Low and Low persistence predictions.

Asking students to schedule an appointment or visit an advisor, faculty, success coach, mentor, or academic support center requires the capacity to handle the influx of students wanting to utilize those resources. This is especially important to consider when using this call-to-action in a nudge campaign with a large targeted student group.

Thought Exercise Examples

Remember goals and aspirations

Think about the reason you applied to [INSTITUTION NAME] in the first place. Remind yourself about those goals and aspirations; you can achieve your goals here.

Use good habits

Good habits you discovered as a first-year student are the ones you can re-use to experience success this year. What habit will you use this week to prime yourself for success in your classes?

Address challenges

Now is the perfect time to consider a *new* way to tackle a *new* challenge. Working through new challenges is how we all learn. What new challenge are you facing? What is one way you will address this challenge today?

Link to Resource Examples

Study tips

Final exams are coming up. Click here for tips on how to beef up your study skills.

Time management resource

Juggling life and school is challenging. Here is a link to a guide on time management that may help.

Getting around

Getting around campus can be tricky. Here are links to campus maps and shuttle routes.

Learn about support services

Did you know that you have access to [WRITING CENTER/TUTORING/SUCCESS CENTER] to support you while you learn and grow at [INSTITUTION NAME]? Click here to learn about how you can take advantage of these services.

Request to Signup or Attend Examples

Join a student club

At [INSTITUTION NAME] we have a variety of student clubs you can join to meet students with similar interests as you. They are a great way to get connected to your learning community. An information session with representatives from the various clubs will be held at [TIME AND LOCATION]. Come to the session and meet student like yourself.

Attend orientation

It's important to attend one of your upcoming orientation sessions. They provide information that will help you be successful as you start your journey as a [MASCOT NAME].

Signup for an activity

A bunch of your fellow [MASCOT NAME] are volunteering at a local school this weekend. There are lot of opportunities to get involved with your peers and give back to the local community. Signup for an upcoming volunteer opportunity.

Schedule an Appointment or Visit Examples

Advising appointment

Schedule an appointment with me so we can review your plan for next term.

Tutoring center

[COURSE NAME] provides foundational information you will need in future courses. Like many students, if you feel like you need support learning the material, visit the tutoring center.

Office hours

Making a connection with your professors is important. Make a goal to visit all of your professors at least once this term.