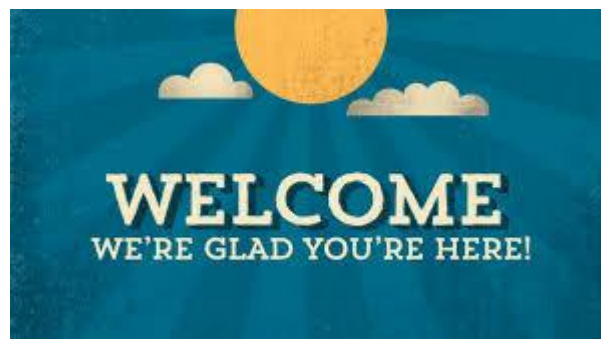




WELCOME AND INVITATION

Call for Nominations

There is no doubt that this past year has brought many challenges to our students and to us, the members of the Kentucky Organization for Student Success, but we have met those challenges with creative solutions, dogged perseverance, and sometimes just longsuffering patience. During this time, KOSS combined forces with KACADA (Kentucky Academic Advising Association) in our continued effort to strengthen our network and expand the reach of our mission. We heartily welcome KACADA members into the KOSS family. It is difficult to predict what this academic year will bring, but together, we continue our work to support each other and advance the cause of student success across Kentucky.



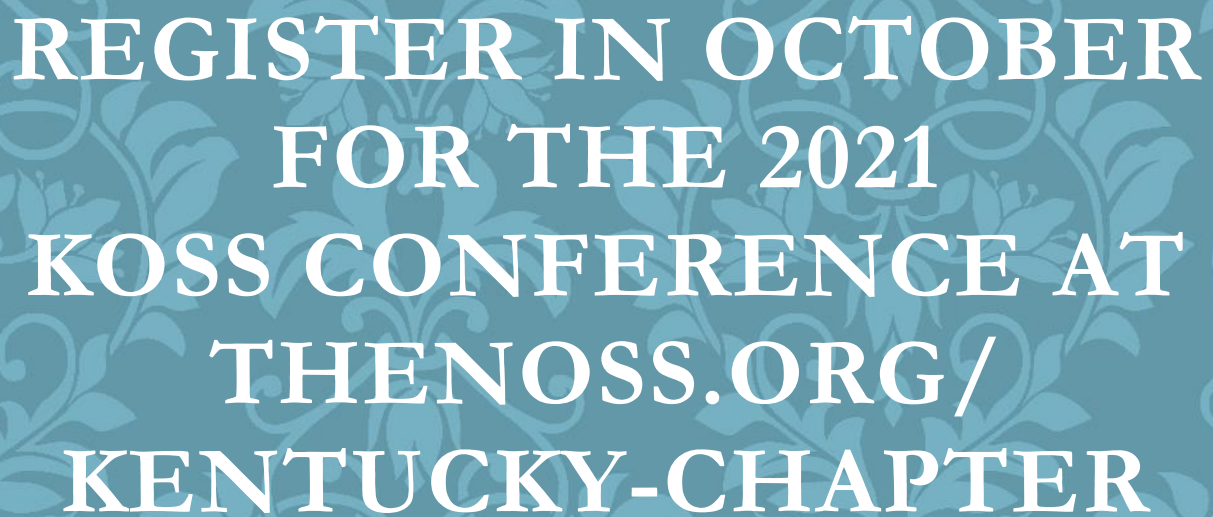
Our upcoming 2021 virtual conference on November 5 is a wonderful opportunity to build on that momentum, to find inspiration and rejuvenation, and to reflect on and share our experiences helping students pursue their dreams. The theme for this year's conference is **Student Success is Alive in Kentucky**. While we work to finalize our keynote speakers for this event, please consider presenting a concurrent session. The call for proposals and more information can be found here: <https://hawkeslearning.lpages.co/koss-2021-call-for-proposals/>.

In addition, this year we will hold elections for President-Elect, Secretary, and Member-at-Large from a two-year institution. Service on the KOSS board is a great opportunity to get involved and impact the direction of our organization. Please consider running for one of these positions. To nominate or for more information, contact our current President-Elect Sally Jackman at sjackman0002@kctcs.edu.

Finally, we will celebrate the achievements of our students and KOSS members with several awards. Students can qualify for the Paul Bush Outstanding Student Scholarship or compete in the Jessica Bryant Student Diversity Essay Contest. KOSS members are eligible for the Outstanding Educator Award, the Belva Sammons Award for distinguished service to the field of developmental education, or the Innovative Project Award for projects supporting student success in Kentucky. More information about these awards and nominating forms can be found at <https://hawkeslearning.lpages.co/koss-2021-award-nomination/> or by contacting Awards Chair Kim Toby at Kimberly.toby@kctcs.edu. Please consider running for office and/or submitting nominations for one or more awards so that we can celebrate our many successes together.

I look forward to seeing you at the KOSS conference on November 5, and I thank you for all that you continue to do to strengthen and promote our organization and advance the cause of student success.

*Brandon Knight
KOSS President
Bluegrass Community & Technical College*



REGISTER IN OCTOBER
FOR THE 2021
KOSS CONFERENCE AT
THENOSS.ORG/
KENTUCKY-CHAPTER

TEACHING DURING COVID

Five Tips for Increasing Student Success

Listed below are five tips for increasing student success during the ongoing pandemic.

1. Record Lectures

For my hybrid students, I tried to use Blackboard Collaborate to hold synchronous class meetings, but when students are quarantined, their whole family is usually quarantined as well. Their normal class time may conflict with another family member's need to use the computer for Zoom or Team meetings. I found it better to record my lectures and make them available on Blackboard. By making the lectures asynchronous, students can go to the computer after their household is quiet to view the lectures and do their coursework.

2. Make Videos for Each Assignment

When we pivoted to online classes in Spring 2020, I created videos for each individual assignment and posted them in Blackboard. I already had multi-media assignments for each module through Pearson. Since then, I created multi-media assignments with e-text links, videos, and/or animations for each one.

3. Announce Tutoring

Although I tell students about our Learning Commons (which offers free tutoring) every day before class all semester long, many are surprised when another student says the same thing. I even had the math tutor from the Learning Commons come to the classroom and work with my students the first week of classes, yet they were still surprised to know we have free tutoring. If they hear it from another student, it appears to have more impact.

4. Increase Interaction

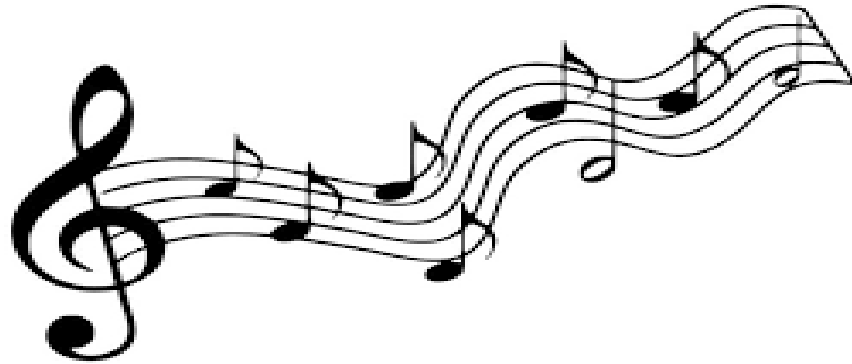
To encourage student-to-student and instructor-to-student interaction, I have created a discussion board after each unit test. I ask if they used any tutoring and where, if they learned anything they can use in everyday life, and what helped them to prepare for the unit test. They get one point for responding to any of my questions and one point for responding to another student.

5. Keep in Touch

In addition to posting a welcome announcement on Blackboard, I contact students by email or phone before the class starts. After each class meeting, I send an email to thank students for attending and to review any quizzes or test they took. If some did not attend, I tell them I missed them in class and let them know where they should be for the next class meeting. For online classes, I send emails twice a week or

whenever they complete a quiz or test. Each month I send an email just to see how my students are doing. If you check-in randomly just to see how they are doing, not mentioning their coursework, you will be surprised how much more receptive your students will be.

Claudean Ellis
Southcentral Community & Technical College



WARM-UP MUSIC

The Classroom as a Swinging Hot Spot

Coming back to campus in Spring 2021 the ground was cold, and our masks protected us not only from potential infection but also from the chilly air sweeping over the campus where I teach Achieving Academic Success. Having gone through the new hybrid half-in-class-half-online all-in-masks Fall 2020 semester, I knew I'd need a little boost and that my students likely would too. We were approaching a year of pandemic living and learning; the world was flat and winter gray. When I was a high-school basketball player, music had been the way to turn my mind toward the task at hand, so I thought maybe it could work in the classroom as well and decided to try starting each class with “warm-up” music.



Since I teach a first-year experience course focused on “promoting academic, personal, and professional success...” and fostering a “sense of belonging” and “engagement,” I decided to pick songs

to open each class meeting that spoke to that day's focus. As I play the song, I use those three to four minutes to note who is in attendance, to talk quietly to students with questions, to pass out materials for the day, and to allow students to leave the cold world outside our door and settle into our class community.

On Day 1, my song choice was Jason Isbell's "Something to Love." This song was my way of introducing my overall approach to the first-year experience course—that I want students, in our time together, to explore both the college and themselves so that they might find their place, their role, "something to love" that would "serve them well." This correlated with my asking the students in their first discussion board to post a song that held significance for them; it could be a song they come back to, something they listened to a lot since the pandemic started, or a personal anthem recently discovered. Music is one connection we can make, one low-stakes way of meeting each other where we are.



On Day 2, I played Sam Cooke's "A Change is Gonna Come." Things may have been hard for my students, but I wanted them to know, we were in this difficult, strange, pandemic world together—and that change is always possible. We can be the agents of the change we want to see in our lives. It's also important in my class to hear from a range of voices. I know some of my students aren't familiar with Sam Cooke; again, music makes it easier to open the door to what may yet be explored.



On Day 3, I played the Indigo Girls’ “Closer to Fine,” another exposure to diverse voices because now we were getting to know each other. We were spending time telling each other “something ‘bout my life,” and in that we were beginning to acknowledge both the darkness and the light we have been through in our lives. We moved into goal setting and talked about having to look honestly at where we had come from, where we were now, and where we wanted to go in order to begin constructing authentic goals. I wanted my students to sit with the notion that “there’s more than one answer” to most of life’s questions.

On Day 4, I played Joseph’s “Burn the White Flag.” This anthem about choosing not to surrender is what my students needed to hear on Day 4, which in the strange hybrid world is actually Week 4 (since we met together in person only once a week). I needed to fuel their fire; the semester was well underway and the shine might have started to wear off. I needed them to review the many resources our college provides to students, to gather their courage (“...never give up”), and to go forward fighting for their dreams.



I continued to play warm-up music for the rest of the semester, important songs tied each time to our lesson because I wanted my students to have at least a moment of being understood in the way that we can be understood by a song, and to shift them out of whatever funk they were in before we gathered together as a class to decide educational and career goals—to discover who they wanted to become. This strategy has been effective for my students as it creates a shared experience at the start of each class, gives us a starting point for the day’s discussion, and allows my students to see the classroom as permeable—a place where the joy of music can still exist, even in a required class.

Amelia Martens
West Kentucky Community & Technical College

REGISTER THIS SEMESTER
FOR THE 2022
NOSS CONFERENCE,
ATLANTA, GEORGIA,
MARCH 17-20, 2022

REUNITING
for STUDENT SUCCESS



NATIONAL ORGANIZATION FOR STUDENT SUCCESS

ATLANTA 🍓 2022

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