Why would you want to monitor your students?
As an instructor you may find yourself asking a few questions... Are my students accessing the course? Are my students viewing my material, visiting pages, or watching my videos? Being able to monitor your students activity in the course is one method to determine the student’s engagement.

What is student engagement?
Student engagement is typically considered the extent to which students are actively engaged by thinking, talking and interacting with the content of a course, the other students in the course and the instructor. Traditionally, based upon Handelsman, Briggs, Sullivan and Towler (2005), classroom engagement is broken down into four categories, see image below.

How does student engagement affect student success?
In regards to student success in an online setting, student engagement is a key element. A study completed by Pazzaglia and colleagues in 2014 at Wisconsin Virtual School determined that students who engaged in their online course for at least 1.5 hours per week typically earned enough points to pass the course. Another study completed by Williams and colleagues in 2017 reported similar results, including the finding that students with less than 200 clicks in a course during the first five weeks failed the course. These two studies illustrate the overarching idea that engagement and student success have a interactive relationship.

How do you ensure and monitor student engagement in an online course?
Encouraging Engagement...

In an online setting, it can be difficult to encourage engagement, but not impossible. There are three questions you should ask yourself:

1. How do my students engage with the material?
2. How do my students engage with their classmates?
3. How do my students engage with me?

Below are a few ways to keep students engaged in your online course:

• **Create a safe and welcoming environment** - Establishing a community provides a deeper level of engagement and support within the course

• **Be present in your course** - Use the communication tools within Canvas and monitor student interactions to provide students with assurance that they are on the right track.

• **Use active learning** - Research has shown that students learn better when they are interacting with the content, applying information and developing connections

• **Give timely feedback** - Timely and targeted feedback allows students to self-regulate their learning

*Note: For additional resources on learning and engagement visit our website at online.msstate.edu/online-training/**

Monitoring Engagement...

Canvas has multiple tools available to use for monitoring a student’s digital interaction/activity within your course. Depending on what you are monitoring, Canvas generates various reports. Each student has their own “profile” which provides a general overview of their engagement within the course. You can get a deeper view by clicking Analytics. From the Analytics screen you can monitor the student’s activity by date, communication, submissions, and grades.

Canvas also allows an instructor to generate a User Access Report, which details the content, amount viewed, and date last viewed. This is a much more detailed report.

You can monitor student’s interaction with Studio videos as well. By using the Insights feature, you can monitor how long a student has viewed a given video. (Note: this feature does include Youtube videos when imported into your Studio library.)

You can also monitor a students activity during quizzes. By clicking the Moderate This Quiz tab, you can view the time it took to complete the quiz, the score as well as give additional time or attempts.

These examples provide a few methods of monitoring student engagement during your course.

Still need help?

Please call Mississippi State Center for Distance Education 662.325.3473 or email help@online.msstate.edu.