Applying the *Seven Principles for Good Practice in Undergraduate Education* to Millennial Students discussed by Maureen Wilson (2004)

1. **Encourage contact between students and faculty**
   Cross (1999) stated that “when faculty show an interest in students, get to know them through informal as well as formal channels, engage in conversations with them, [and] show interest in their intellectual development, then students respond with enthusiasm and engagement.” (pg. 264)
   - Know your students by name!
   - Seek informal contact with them (discuss their career plans, sit on a committee with them)

2. **Develop reciprocity and cooperation among students**
   Many millennials were involved in cooperative and team activities growing up. Try to continue to foster this behavior to increase their involvement and understanding of material in and out of the classroom.
   - Incorporate peer evaluation into class work
   - Create class activities that require group work and promote learning groups outside of class
   - Be willing to address the dynamics of the classroom (gender, age, power dynamics, etc.) to break down barriers during discussion

3. **Encourage active learning**
   Chickering and Gamson (1987) stated that instead of passively listening, memorizing, and regurgitating information for an exam, students fare better when they discuss the material, are able to relate to the material, and apply information to their daily lives.
   - Use fewer lectures and dedicate more time to discussion
   - Engage students with group projects and other collaborative endeavors
   - Check in with students routinely about how they see class content relating to the outside world

4. **Give prompt feedback**
   Millennial students are known for their drive to succeed. They have consistently had authority figures in a variety of settings critique their performance and tell them how they’re doing on a regular basis. While it is not necessary to “hand hold,” these students like to know where they stand in a course.
   - Be diligent about grading and returning assignments promptly
   - Incorporating smaller quizzes and writing assignments instead of one or two major exams will decrease their success anxiety (this also allows students to capitalize on different strengths)
   - Write comments on assignments and exams that help the student improve for next time. “Good job” or simply marking something wrong does not promote growth

5. **Emphasize time on task**
   Growing up, millennials were very involved (if not over-involved) in extracurricular activities and lived highly structured lives. They expect to increase time spent studying in college compared to high school, but also expect high grades without that much additional effort.
   - Assist in the development of realistic expectations of how their time should be spent
   - Emphasize that high grades require significantly more effort on their part
   - Let them know they should be spending 2-3 hours outside of class on every hour they spend in class
6. Communicate high expectations

When institutions and faculty members expect students to perform at their best, millennial students will meet that challenge. Especially for millennials who have been raised with a success and high achieving mindset, setting high expectations becomes their self-fulfilling prophecy.

- To aid in the college transition provide clear expectations, detailed syllabi, and structured assignments. Do your best to balance greater autonomy and self-reliance on the part of the students with providing an environment that supports success.
- To mitigate students’ unrealistic expectations of themselves, take time to discuss time-management skills with students and encourage them to speak with you about concerns.
- To avoid setting low expectations, faculty must also put in extra time. If you want students to work harder, you also must be willing to spend more time grading assignments, providing feedback, and meeting with students to discuss their progress.
- Remember that students will put forth their greatest effort when faculty members do too.

7. Respect diverse talents and ways of knowing

King (2003) stated, “Students of all cultural and racial backgrounds should be encouraged to develop learning strategies that are flexible and suited for the specific demands and constraints of the problem at hand.”

- Do not assume learning styles are related to race, gender, culture, or ethnicity.
- Use multiple teaching strategies and assessment techniques.
- Engaging with active learning environments allows your students to determine what works best for them.

References for further information:


