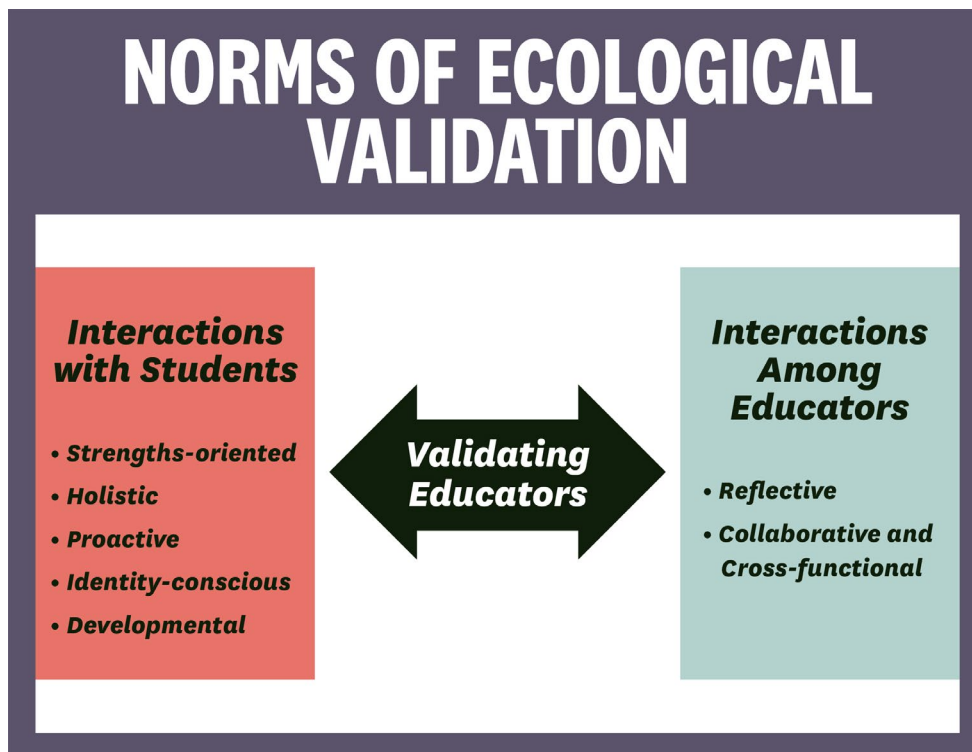


## Promoting At-Promise Student Success

### Ecological Validation Reflection Tool for Educators

[To guide individual reflection]

Instructions: As an educator on campus—whether you are student-facing or not—you play an important role in supporting at-promise student success. Before using this tool, please review the video on ecological validation and the below graphic that outlines the norms that inform this concept. Then, use the guiding questions to individually reflect on how **ecological validation** informs your current approach to supporting students. Finally, identify a few steps you can take to strengthen your approach to supporting and centering students in your individual practice.



#### Reflective Questions to Consider:

- In what ways do I embody the norms of ecological validation? Do I interact with students in ways that are strengths-oriented, holistic, identity-conscious, and honor their developmental stage? Provide concrete examples.
  - \*For campus stakeholders who don't work directly with students, consider how your work supports students in ways that are strengths-oriented, holistic, proactive, identity-conscious, and developmentally aware. This might include configuring data reports, developing policies, and/or supporting other educators in meaningful ways.
- Am I proactive in reaching out to and supporting students?
  - For people who are not teaching or advising: Am I proactive in elevating issues that I see as barriers to student success?

- Where are my areas of strength in enacting the norms of ecological validation?
- Where are my areas of potential growth in enacting the norms of ecological validation?
- In what ways do I engage in reflective practice about my approach to supporting at-promise student success?
- How have I been able to collaborate effectively with colleagues around supporting at-promise student success? Provide examples of instances or spaces that have facilitated effective collaboration.
  - When has collaboration involved cross-functional interactions (i.e., with people who hold different types of roles on campus)?
  - Where are opportunities to develop collaborative relationships with others across campus units?
- What type of support-relational and material-do I need to improve my ability to enact ecological validation?

**Take action:**

- Identify 1-2 small actions that you will incorporate into your work aligned with the norms of ecological validation.
- Name 1-2 concrete ways that you will connect to and engage with other educators on campus to support ecological validation in ways that are reflective and collaborative.

## Defintions

**Holistic:** Considers all aspects of a student’s background, identities, personality, and goals, as well as academic and interpersonal experiences in college when connecting them with resources and opportunities.

**Proactive:** Places the onus on institutional agents to regularly reach out to students to build relationships, address challenges, and identify opportunities.

**Strengths-oriented:** Focuses on the cultural assets, talents and skills, previous successes, and personality traits that students bring with them to campus rather than employing a deficit approach, which focuses primarily on the assumed challenges that at-promise college students may face.

**Identity-conscious:** Intentionally considers students’ identities—with acute attention to the identities of those students from underserved (e.g., at-promise) backgrounds.

**Developmental:** Involves supporting students throughout their educational journeys in a cohesive way from admission through graduation.

**Collaborative:** Explores ways to build connections across various campus services and programs to create integrated and reinforcing validating experiences across a student’s ecology of experience, which requires cross functional work across departments, programs, support services and other aspects of academic and student affairs programming.

**Reflective Practice:** Involves continually considering how students, staff, and leadership experience initiatives to make shifts necessary to improve student success. This process uses both formal and informal data to inform decision-making.

For more information about the PASS project, please visit our [website](#). Please note that resources for practitioners are located [here](#) and materials related to Professional Learning Community can be found [here](#).

### Citation:

Corwin, Z. B., Kaiser, S., Edwards, S., Goodburn, A., Estes, A., Hill, T., Kezar, A., Hallett, R. E., Nagbe, M., Hypolite, L. (2024). *Ecological Validation Reflection Tool for Educators-individual*. [Brief]. Pullias Center for Higher Education, University of Southern California.