Instructor Usage

Regularly informing students of their current standing and progress in your courses and providing insight as to how they can improve is nothing more than good practice. Doing so results in students better learning the material you are teaching and provides them with skills that will benefit them throughout their academic career. Course Signals is perfect for courses when instructors want to provide individual feedback but do not have a good way to do so. Incorporating Course Signals into your classes can be done very quickly, and sending messages to students takes just a few minutes each time. Following these tips can help you maximize what Course Signals can do for your class.

- Show students the Course Signals video to help them understand how their signals are calculated. You can find the video on the Course Signals homepage.
- Course Signals can be run as soon as there is one grade available in your grade book.
- Focus your messages on what students should do, not on negative behavior.
- Compose your brief student messages ahead of time so you will only need to copy and paste when it's time to run Course Signals. Research has shown 40-60 words are best.
- Providing students ongoing updates on their progress aids in their understanding of their standing in the course and how to improve or maintain it.
- Feedback should provide concrete activities or steps students can take to enhance their learning. Link to available resources such as: http://www.purdue.edu/studentsuccess/academic/index.html
- Resources found on the Course Signals website can aid you in sending the most meaningful and effective messages possible. PassNote (www.purdue.edu/passnote) is another tool designed to help you construct emails to students.
- Create customized messages, unique to your course every time you generate a signal.
- It is important to remember that signals do not expire. The most recent signal is always visible. Run Course Signals often so feedback to students is always current.
- Advisors are able to see their advisees’ signal and can intervene with those who are struggling. Running Course Signals often will allow this practice to be more effective.
- Insert a paragraph in your syllabus such as:

This class uses Course Signals, a warning system initiated by your instructor to help you understand your academic standing in this class. When a signal is calculated, you’ll be sent an email with specific information about how you can maintain or enhance your grade. You’ll also see a signal icon in Blackboard, and clicking on it will show your current signal as well as the current email message. For more information on Course Signals, see the website (www.itap.purdue.edu/learning/tools/signals) or watch the video (http://bit.ly/coursesignals).

For more information about Course Signals

Visit: http://www.itap.purdue.edu/ltl/signals
E-Mail: tlt-ewscs@lists.purdue.edu
ITaP Gold Answers: http://tinyurl.com/purdue-signals