Faculty Matter Teaching Tip #23:

Summer Send-off for Students

In earlier Tips, we provided suggestions for messages you might send to students before the formal start of the semester. This Tip will serve as something of the “other book end” – suggesting things you might do to sustain students’ engagement with the course beyond its official end. In this way, you may provide opportunities for students:

• to deepen their knowledge or appreciation of themes and issues you touched on during the course
• to remain excited about and engaged in their academic pursuits
• to find connections between the material you covered during the course and their “summer world” beyond SJSU
• to share their interest in these topics with the people they spend time with outside of school
• to be(come) life-long-learners.

“Books for the beach.” Bring to your students’ attention a selection of books, periodicals, blogs, podcasts, and the like that they could take up over the summer, wherever they are and whatever they are doing (beach or otherwise).

• You might begin with sources you used as you constructed your course, as these will give students the chance to delve deeper into issues you covered in class.
• Alternatively, you might suggest materials that will provide food for thought and help prepare them for other courses in your department that they are likely to take next year.
• Or you might suggest materials you have found worthwhile for any of a number of reasons not necessarily connected to your course or your department’s offerings.

You could certainly add layers to this, by creating on-line discussion boards or others ways to check in throughout the summer or as students prepare for the fall. Or you could just keep it simple, and provide the list of items you recommend and let your students take it from there.

Please add your own strategies using the comment link on the Provost’s Academic Spotlight blog under the category “Faculty Matter.”