

### 3. Challenge and Support

The Challenge and Support model is the third component in my leadership philosophy. As an educator, I need to be sure to provide my students with enough support (the tools) so that they can succeed, while also giving the right amount of challenge, so that they are intellectually stimulated. The theory, by Sanford in 1966, is a guiding theory to my practice of leadership.

#### Theory

Sanford developed his theory for student development based on a balance of challenge and support. Too much support with too little challenge creates a comfortable environment for the student, where little development is possible.

However, too little support with too much challenge makes development an impossible and negative experience.



*Ohio State University*

#### Application

While in a teaching role in HDF 415, as a peer leader you constantly needed to utilize the process of challenge and support with the students. It is very difficult to find that crucial balance between enough support and enough challenge, but essential. If a student has too much challenge, they run the risk of being overwhelmed and might possibly "give up". Where if there is too much support, you are essentially doing all the work for them, and not letting them be challenged academically to really use their minds to succeed. To look at this model in practical application, challenge and support model is about showing students enough pathways to succeed, but not giving them a highlighted marked roadmap with turn-by-turn directions.

## References

Sherman, Jeremy. "Challenge and Support." *Fulton-Montgomery Community College*. N.p., 13 May 2011. Web. Sept. 2012. <<http://www.fmcc.edu/2011/05/13/challenge-and-support/>>

Sanford, N. (1962). *The American college*. New York: Wiley.

Sanford, N. (1966). *Self and society: Social change and individual development*. New York: Atherton.