

ONWARD WITH TEACHING AND WRAPPING UP THE COURSE

Maintaining Instructor Presence

Instructor presence is obviously important for any course. In the online and hybrid environment students need to know their instructor is present and active in the course regularly. Connecting with students to show instructor presence can be done using various tools and strategies. This can include lectures, online webinar sessions, small discussion and other various means.

- Provide instructions for assignments and activities, ensure they are written clearly and concisely.
 - Try using bullets or numbered lists rather than paragraph instructions.
- Establish a communication policy in the course syllabus for both you and the students, so that student's know what to expect from you and what is expected of them.
- Utilize the News Tool regularly
- Try HTML pages to create documents with important information
- Try creating video instructions, demonstrations, other student examples or samples, or Zoom sessions for big projects.
- Try using Zoom sessions or recordings for communications that may involve questions for students.

Facilitating A Course

Facilitation of the course involves setting expectations that students will not be passive in their learning process. The learning process is a two-way street. They are expected to initiate communications not only with the instructor but also with their peers. In addition, students will need to be made aware; and often reminded, what they are responsible for in the class in order to be successful.

- News Tool in BeachBoard (BB)
 - The News tool allows announcements posted on the course homepage, e.g. weekly announcements
 - Students can have News announcements emailed to themselves, NOTE this is a feature that they will need to set up on their BB
- Email tool in BeachBoard
 - Use for checking in on students with low participation in discussions, or who are at risk of not doing well in the course
 - Sending out quick reminders or notifications to check feedback on assignments



- Setting up individual/ group meetings via Zoom.
- Discussion Boards (DB) in BeachBoard
 - Instructors should be checking in on when students post and replying to a few students, these replies can be positive reinforcements to encourage further discussion and checking to see if the student responses are on track with the prompt. Also, it's an opportunity to clarify confusions.
 - Create a DB for students only. Note that instructor will still be monitoring the feed to ensure that is a positive and safe space for students to chat. This space is an opportunity for them to connect and create a sense community amongst each other.
 - Create a DB for class questions. These can be questions that are open for both the instructor and even another classmate to respond. Again, this is a space to establish community not just with the instructor and the students but for all parties.
- Zoom sessions
 - Zoom can be used for office hours
 - Set up group meetings with students for check in for the course, e.g. "muddiest point" in the course material, so it's an opportunity to have a small discussion about the topics for a less that might be dense
 - Set up meetings to discuss questions on a big assignment/ quiz
 - 1:1 sessions with students who might be struggling or have other questions related to the course or subject of study.

Community of Practice

To help facilitate and begin incorporating engagement for students is by creating what is known as a community of practice. By definition this means that students or a group of people share knowledge on something they find interest in and use each other to learn about the topic or subject. As a result, all gain more in depth knowledge of a subject than if they had studied it on their own. Therefore, by implementing a community of practice within a course the instructor accomplishes the following:

- Instructors incorporate their own practice of presence and facilitation throughout the course by planning active learning activities.
- Instructors guide students to provoke higher-level thinking (i.e. critical thinking, reasoning and problem-solving skills)
- Students are more likely to connect with the content/ course materials (i.e. watch lecture



videos and read) provided by the instructor

- It also encourages students to have a dialog with one another, the course materials and the instructor

Here are some ideas on how to incorporate the community of practice:

- Check back at lesson plans, and verifying the assignments meet the objectives for the lesson and overall course objectives
- Are the DB questions/ prompts challenging students. For example do the questions provoke critical thinking, problem solving or reasoning skills?
- Instructor Videos can used to introduce or summarize a topic, touch on key points in the content, or connect to student learning objectives
- Create opportunities for peer review or dialog for peer to peer reflection on a topic; or discuss how their materials connect to the overall objective of the lesson
- Use of Zoom or BB Group tool to have smaller group discussions about sensitive or in-depth topics to help facilitate critical thinking and allow opportunity for questions
- Set reminders for assignments or pace the progress of the course by using tools like News tool, calendar tool, time restrictions or checklist.

Strategies for Engagement

Strategies for engagement are methods and tools used to help instructors keep students interested in their learning of the material. Some methods include active learning activities, teaching to learning styles, and utilizing technology tools to help students complete their assigned tasks.

- Incorporate a variety of assignments and activities like quizzes, discussion boards, projects and etc. Note: activities can be graded or non-graded
- Maintaining timely feedback to students on their assignments and use tools like TurnItIn for writing assignments
- Providing clear communications like utilizing bullets and numbered bullets for instructions
- When creating text documents include images, and use the accessibility checker in BB to ensure it is accessible for all to read and view.



- Facilitating dialog in discussion boards by providing positive reinforcement and encouraging communications between students
- In larger courses, setting students up in groups and establishing a rotating group leader responsibility to facilitate their own discussions
- Create rubrics stating clear and concise expectations of assignments and projects
- Scaffold or breakdown a large cumulative assignment for example, a presentation. Presentations can be broken down to the following assignments: topic idea/ brainstorm, outline, draft and final draft
- Using Zoom to connect with smaller groups of students for more in depth discussions or peer reviews
- Using Class progress tools to check on student progress on content and logins in BB
- Using analytic media data from videos to ensure students are reviewing the content
- When creating videos make sure to include key points in lectures that students need to know for assignments or quizzes; this incentivizes students to watch the videos
- For larger class sizes utilize group leaders/ TA's for managing discussions or assignments
- Use Group tool in BB and other collaboration tools like OneDrive, Teams and even other open source tools like, Google docs.
- Survey tool can also be used for providing student feedback to the instructor, reflection or polling of student opinions

Wrapping up the course

We also encourage including a summary wrap up connecting the assignments to the course objectives and an end of class survey or reflection. This accomplishes two main goals, it gives students a sense of why they were asked to read, watch and do all the work they just finished and it's an opportunity to have them reflect and provide the instructor with feedback on what they learned.

- Use Checklist tool for reminders of when final assignments are due
- News tools for announcing final dates of receiving information for the course
- Have a final reflection/ journal assignment using dropox or survey tool
- Create or share recommendations for students to network and connect once the class is over



- Instructor can also provide list of resources for further study and remind students of the overall skills they just acquired from the course that can be related to the job market
- A written or video Reflection to from instructor to students.