Building Community Online in Your Learning Communities

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Online learning experiences supplemented by in-person instruction
2 Levels of Community Building

Entire GenEd Learning Community

Course

Course

Course

Course
Learning objectives for this session

• Identify **tools and techniques** for building community online:
  • within your learning community course
  • across all courses in the learning community
• Identify suitable **times** during the semester to use these tools and techniques
• Factor **diversity, equity, and inclusion** into your implementation of these tools and techniques
2 Levels of Community Building

Entire GenEd Learning Community

Course  Course  Course  Course
Building Community Online in Your LCs

First Opportunities to Build Community and Foster Social Presence

Factoring in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Ongoing Opportunities to Build Community

How to make a Zoom slide in PowerPoint
Factoring in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
Factoring in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

- Access to devices and internet
- Accessibility of materials
- Student sharing of self
- Students’ immediate environments
Factoring in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

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Accessible version of the detailed LEAPS framework
Factoring in Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

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First Opportunities to Build Community and Foster Social Presence
First Opportunities to Build Community and Foster Social Presence

1. Syllabus
2. Welcoming announcement in the LMS emailed to all students prior to the start of the semester
3. Welcoming instructor profile in the LMS
4. Modules in the LMS
5. Introductions prompt
6. A structured small-group activity
1. Syllabus

1. Clear and **supportively worded syllabus**.
2. Use "our" and "we" where possible to communicate from the outset that learning in the class is a community effort.
2. Welcoming Announcement in the LMS

- Prior to the start of the semester
- Emailed to all students
- Welcome them
- Stress your eagerness to get started learning with and supporting them.
Hello Program Evaluators,

Welcome to Program Evaluation, aka “553”. This is one of a few courses this Spring taught in an Accelerated Online format and taught using E-Learning Modules versus having webinars. For several years we have taught the face-to-face courses in the Accelerated format (1/2 semester). The student reaction has been extremely positive and while the workload is about the same, the faculty “get to the meat” of the topic faster. It also means -- there is no time to put off any course work till “next week” --- so please stay current with the readings and the pace of assignments (before you know it, the 8 weeks will fly by).

Now, I do fully understand most of you are working in professional full-time jobs – so please know that I am always available for conference calls to review anything that is muddy or just discuss your major project. My goal is your success!

I am opening the course early in case you want to take a peek at the Syllabus (see Syllabus tab-- and I recorded a video “highlights reel”).

The course is set up in what I hope you find an easy to navigate manner. The left-hand tabs that you will spend the most time with include:

• Announcements: Expect several a week (I am a fan of communication)

• Modules: This is “key” and each week you will find your assignments listed here, along with the resources for the week (PPT slides; readings; videos, etc.).

• E-Learning Modules are located here: Instead of weekly webinars you are expected to navigate through the E-Learning modules which covers the weekly material, offers videos/links on the weekly topic and uses gamification to help seed the concepts. Your review of the E-Learning module is recorded in Blackboard as this replaces the webinars so please expect to spend at least N minutes in the E-Learning module.

• Assignments: This is where you will find the Conceptual Check-ins; the Participation Activities; and where you will upload your HAT).

If you have any questions, my email is: (email) or feel free to call me on my cell (cell number)

Chat soon! Dr. D.
3. Welcoming Instructor profile in the LMS

• Welcoming photo
• Multiple forms of contact information
• Information about office hours, with multiple options for students to get individual assistance outside regular instructional time for the course.
• Say and/or show something personal (weird hobby, fun fact, etc.). In this way you are modeling social presence.
Instructor Profile Can Set Tone and Model Sharing of Self

• Instructor Name
• Welcoming photo

I have been an educator for over 20 years and worked as an art teacher and designer before coming to TXU. I love figuring out ways to help students through common challenges in the design process. Some of my most memorable moments come when I can help students see talents they may not have realized that they have. In the past, I have created interactive installations and commissioned works for individuals and corporations. My current focus in my own studio is on mixed-media and community art projects.

When not working, my husband and I like to ride cross-country on our motorcycles, spoil our grandkids, and enjoy our new home in sunny and warm South Texas. We have six children and twelve grandchildren, so far, with many more to come in are loud and boisterous family. Almost everyone of us is either an artist or a designer, so projects tend to be full of many people sure that their approach is just the right way, lol. Our children are spread around the world so, holidays are great reunion times, and we always have a great vacation spot with an empty bedroom waiting for us!
4. Modules in the LMS

• Use "we" and "our" to sustain the sense of community as students encounter new material ("In this module we'll focus on. . .").
• Make sure they are logically and consistently organized.
• Think like a student - is what they care about prominently located and worded in a way they can understand?
5. Introductions prompt

• Prompt students to reveal something about themselves to foster social presence as a norm for the class

• Give students **choice** so they don't feel forced to share something that makes them feel uncomfortable
6. Structured Small-Group Activity

- Ensures each student gets to know at least 2 other students on the first day.
- Incorporate a short activity placing students in small groups, whether in the physical classroom or online classroom (such as breakout rooms).
- **Structure is a key principle that can support inclusive teaching**
  - Use colored cards, random assignment into breakout rooms, or another structured technique that interrupts students grouping themselves by cliques.
  - Tell them to introduce themselves other group members and give them a **specific task** on which each group **must report back** to you and the whole class.
Introductions or Intro Class Session

• What if some students will be in the physical classroom and some won’t?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Asynchronous introductions - options</th>
<th>Synchronous intro class session - options</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Discussion tool in the LMS</td>
<td>• Intros as a whole class with a well-chosen prompt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• <a href="https://flipgrid.com/0273a9bd">Flipgrid</a> (asynchronous video discussion platform)</td>
<td>• Short segment in breakout rooms to help students get to know some others better at the outset</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• With either, use a well-chosen prompt</td>
<td>• Collaborative document or activity that is relevant to course content or course functioning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Check-in system/buddies</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examples of how videos can appear and are posted in Flipgrid: [https://flipgrid.com/0273a9bd](https://flipgrid.com/0273a9bd)

Use the red Microsoft button and Queens credentials when prompted to log in.
Introductions Prompt – example for discussion

Use this (name of tool in the LMS) to introduce yourself to your classmates. Instead of the normal bio type activity, I would like you to find five photos that tell a story of who you are. You can use pictures that you have personally OR you can find pictures online.

1. Include 5 pictures

2. Explain why you picked the pictures.

Then review the introductions to get to know your classmates and reply to several of them.

This is part of your participation and is due at 11:59 pm on 6/3.
Ongoing Opportunities to Build Community
Ongoing Opportunities to Build Community

1. Prompt students to connect course concepts to personal experiences and share those through discussion, etc. Provide choice where possible.
2. Using a collaborative .docx or .pptx into which all students make contributions in one location.
3. Incorporate audio or video in some announcements.
4. Provide audio or video feedback on student work for some assessments.
5. Incorporate references to the work of the whole class and/or individual students. Spread those references among students so it is not perceived as favoritism or bias. Continue using “we” and “our” to reinforce the sense that learning is a communal effort.
6. Even if you are disappointed, wrap your message in positive language, tone, and encouragement.
7. Well-structured group activities or projects set up for effective digital collaboration.
Announcement – example of #5 for discussion
(this was from right before the semester, but her techniques would work later in the semester too)

Hello Needs Assessment Learners,

We are down to our last weekend before class starts and I am happy to see the majority of you have checked out Blackboard :) We need to hit the ground running in these Accelerated Courses and yes -- there is a Participation Activity (a blog) due by Tuesday. I am attaching a screenshot here --- for those who may not have blogged on Bb before – this shows you how to locate the blogs of your classmates (right side – click that little arrow below the name under blog details). To create your own blog – just click “Create Blog”. I suggest you read Christie Leigh’s, Heather’s, and Brian’s blogs and my comments on their ideas. A shout out to these three for helping us learn about NAs using real world examples that enabled me to make comments that I hope are helpful.

If you have any questions, please reach out. I look forward to our first webinar on Tuesday evening.

Chat soon. Dr. D.

What a blog looks like and how to find others.png
(this was a screenshot showing how to navigate a notoriously confusing tool in Blackboard)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do you want students to do?</th>
<th>Face-to-face environment</th>
<th>Online environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Be present</td>
<td>• Attendance</td>
<td>• Last log in to course in the LMS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Joining a synchronous session in real time or viewing a recording later</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrate their current understanding (graded on completion rather than accuracy)</td>
<td>• Polling apps, clickers</td>
<td>• <strong>Questions in videos</strong> (e.g., EdPuzzle, Stream)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Minute paper</td>
<td>• Low-stakes quizzes graded only on completion and offered for practice</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Other Classroom Assessment Techniques</td>
<td>• Journal tool in the LMS or similar</td>
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<tr>
<td>Explain course concepts</td>
<td>• Whole class discussion</td>
<td>• Discussion boards, <strong>Flipgrid</strong>, VoiceThread</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• Written small-group activities</td>
<td>• Synchronous sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Share new examples of course concepts</td>
<td>• Whole class discussion</td>
<td>• Discussion boards, <strong>Flipgrid</strong>, VoiceThread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Digital collaboration in small-group activities</strong></td>
<td>• <strong>Wakelet</strong> online curation tool</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• Collaborative cloud-based files (OneDrive, G suite)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pose questions to deepen shared understanding of course concepts</td>
<td>• Whole class discussion</td>
<td>• Wiki tool in the LMS or similar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Connect ideas (between readings, experiences, perspectives, examples) to deepen shared understanding of concepts</td>
<td>• Whole class discussion</td>
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<td>• Synchronous sessions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Apply course concepts to new situations or problems</td>
<td>• Written small-group activities</td>
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<td>• Break-out rooms in synchronous sessions</td>
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OneDrive Files

- onedrive.queens.edu
- Shared PowerPoint file
  - Collage
  - Gallery
  - Introductions
  - Use the Designer Ideas icon to quickly add visual appeal to individual slides
- Word file with or without multimedia
  - Glossary
  - Collaborative study guide
  - Student-created essay questions
  - Shared discoveries/applications of course concepts
- Learn more about creating sharing links for OneDrive files here
Instructions for Breakout Group Activity

1. Assign roles
   • Discussion leader/facilitator
   • Note-taker
   • Timekeeper
   • Resource-miner

2. View the collaborative file for specific questions to focus on.

3. Add a couple of ideas that you want to share with everyone in the collaborative file (note-takers please go ahead and add these during your discussion in the section that matches your Group’s room number)
LEAPS Framework for Technology Selection

Accessible version of the detailed LEAPS framework
Technology Toolbox for Instructional Planning and Instructional Continuity