

Creating an Online Learning Engagement Plan

Every online class requires rich interaction and regular opportunities to practice. Students learn best in an environment where they can engage with the course instructor, their fellow students, and the course materials. When and how will you ensure this takes place? Read through the questions in each area and review some of our suggestions.

Instructor Presence

- *How will the students engage with the instructor?*
- *How will the instructor be present to students throughout the learning process?*

Welcome message. Consider providing a welcome message where you introduce yourself to your students in the Moodle site. This can take the form of an email, a Moodle page, an audio file, or a video. Make it a little bit personal so that the students see you as a real human behind the screen. Pictures or video of yourself can be really helpful!

Office hours. Host your office hours privately in a virtual space like BigBlueButton. Consider having confidential conversations in a Breakout Room so that no other student can accidentally interrupt the conversation by joining the room.

Lecture videos. Consider creating short videos introducing the learning outcomes, demonstrating a procedure, or providing a high level overview for the week. These videos add a personal touch while also showing your expertise or proficiency in the field.

Virtual facilitation. Lead your students in conversation in real time in a space like BigBlueButton or asynchronously in a discussion forum. Take the time to post in the forums and respond to ideas that are strong and/or off base. This reminds your students that you are monitoring the space and encouraging them along the way.

Feedback. Provide regular, timely feedback on your students' progress throughout the course. This can happen individually, in groups, and with the class as a whole. Rubrics and checklists are a good way to communicate feedback on formative and summative assessments.

Check-ins. Consider sending out individual emails to students who are struggling or who are being quiet in the virtual space. You can also check in with your students by soliciting feedback on how the course is going. Use that feedback to tweak the rest of the course.

Social Presence

- *How will the students engage in learning together?*
- *How will the students build community and collaborate with one another?*
- *How will expectations around behaviour be moderated?*