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**DESIGNING ENGAGING  
ONLINE COURSES FOR  
ADULT LEARNERS**

Denise Lowe, Ed.D. University of Central Florida Denise.Lowe@ucf.edu

**ai** ACADEMIC  
IMPRESSIONS



**LEARNING OUTCOME**

**After participating...**

...you will understand how to use course design techniques to effectively engage adult online students.

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## AGENDA



- Defining trends in adult learning
- Setting engagement goals through learning objectives
- Building relevant activities and assignments
- Designing peer engagement and communication
- Engaging through faculty interaction



## POLL

**What is the biggest challenge  
for you in online teaching  
with adult learners?**

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## DEFINING TRENDS IN ADULT LEARNING



### WHO ARE ADULT LEARNERS?



- Difficult to describe
  - Diverse group
- Who are adults?
  - Culturally & societally driven roles
    - Social
    - Psychological
    - Economic
- Engage in learning activities
  - Promote sustained change
  - Formal and informal processes

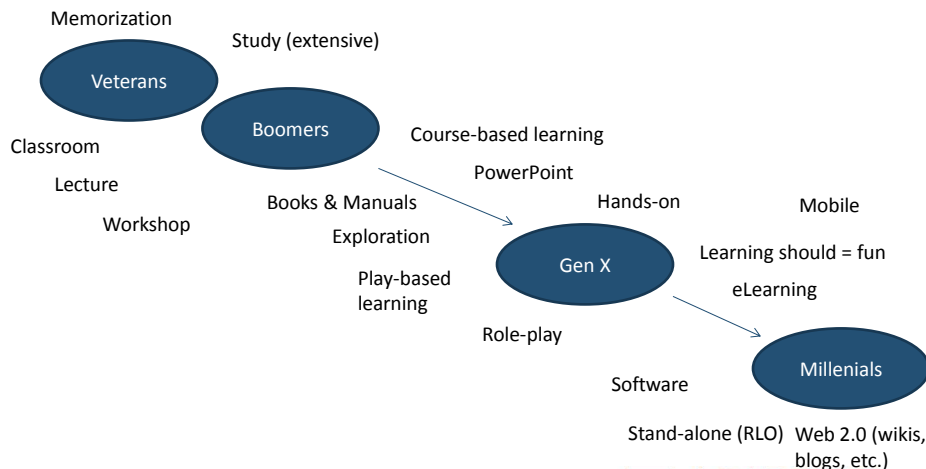


## WHO ARE ADULT LEARNERS?



- 17% of college students are 18 - 22 age group: “traditional”
- Characteristics
  - Older: “late 20s and beyond”
  - Working
    - Career or military experience
  - Competing Priorities
    - Children & family
    - Caring for older parents
- Prepared, Motivated, Self-directed

## HOW DO/DID ADULTS LEARN?



Source: hnjfwzhx.com

## CLASSROOM IMPLICATIONS

Generation	Preferences/Styles	Instructional activities
Silent	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Like the “traditional” classroom structure</li> <li>Will not generally contradict or disagree with instructor in front of others</li> <li>Does not enjoy being singled out in group discussions or for questions</li> <li>Likes to practice alone, not in groups</li> <li>Not likely to ask questions during discussions</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organize materials in bullet/outline form                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Don't provide too much information</li> </ul> </li> <li>Use at least 12 point type</li> <li>Take your time through the important points</li> <li>Don't assume that all are techno phobic                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give computer/research assignments</li> <li>Fastest growing segment of population learning to use the Internet</li> </ul> </li> <li>Encourage periodic movement during class time</li> </ul>
Boomers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Enjoy working in creative and independent manners</li> <li>Sensitive to criticism</li> <li>Often possess significant professional experience</li> <li>Require lots of interaction and “talk” time</li> <li>Enjoy icebreaker and introduction activities</li> <li>Prefer a spirit of collegiality in classroom</li> <li>May have problems with authoritarian instructors</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give plenty of time for Boomers to practice new skills alone</li> <li>Use at least 12 point type for aging boomers</li> <li>Have a tendency to “know” things but not be able to do them</li> <li>Do not generally like role-play exercises</li> <li>Enjoy most team projects                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can serve as group leaders, appealing to their “me” focus</li> </ul> </li> <li>Organize materials with headings</li> <li>Put details on a separate sheet</li> </ul>

Source: Baker College



## CLASSROOM IMPLICATIONS

Generation	Preferences/Styles	Instructional activities
Gen X	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Self-reliant</li> <li>Require regular, if not constant, feedback</li> <li>May lack interpersonal skills</li> <li>Can be cynical</li> <li>Require relevance in assignments and courses</li> <li>Often impatient</li> <li>Consider themselves to be technologically capable</li> <li>Are adaptable and informal</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>School/life balance is important</li> <li>Will resist group work outside of class</li> <li>Use pop-culture examples if possible</li> <li>Give lots of individual attention</li> <li>Use most exciting material in short lecture (15-20 min)                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use small groups to cover other material</li> </ul> </li> <li>Use bullet points when giving info</li> <li>Use plenty of graphics and white space</li> <li>Visual appeal is key</li> <li>Explain why assignments, courses, skills are important on a regular basis</li> </ul>
Millennials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Accustomed to group work</li> <li>Comfortable with active learning</li> <li>Multi-task with ease</li> <li>Technological experts</li> <li>Goal and achievement oriented</li> <li>Require more structure and mentoring</li> <li>Learn from failure</li> <li>Motivated by money and earning potential</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Give lots of activities with several steps</li> <li>Use the most up-to-date technology and references available</li> <li>Tie course or program goals in with economic gain</li> <li>Get creative or allow them to be creative with presentations, etc.</li> <li>Give reading materials for lectures or supplemental information</li> </ul>

Source: Baker College



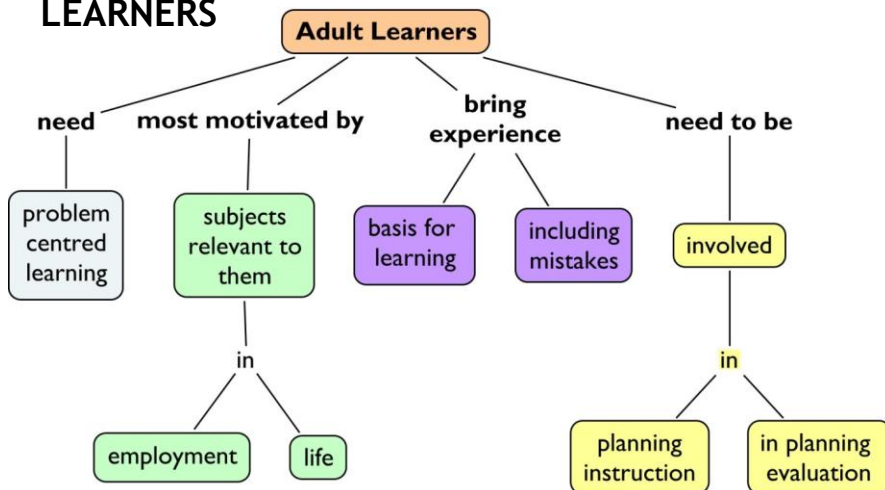
## EXPECTATIONS OF ADULT LEARNERS



- Self-image is valued
  - Life Experiences
  - Critical Thinking
- Learner-centered
- Relevant and practical
- Active
- Collaborative
- Experiential
- Strategies =



## EXPECTATIONS OF ADULT LEARNERS



(The Adult Learner: inspired-edu.org)

## CORRELATING TRENDS & PRINCIPLES

### A/L TRENDS

- Contextual Learning

Adults “want to learn to solve or address a particular problem, and are more satisfied with their learning if (uses) everyday experiences, is practical, or is current” (Draves, p. 11).  
Builds commitment to process through immediate gratification of relevant work

- Collaboration

Creates interactive problem-solving and sharing of ideas.  
Promotes accountability for engagement.

- Critical Reflection

Adults are intrinsically motivated to learn and are in the learning situation by choice.  
Promotes learner independence

### A/L PRINCIPLES

- Immediacy & Applicability

- Community Interaction

- Autonomy & Self-regulation

## 3 KEY TRENDS IN TEACHING & LEARNING

- Collaborative
  - Sharing information & connecting with others is powerful
  - Social networking not just for teens

VOICETHREAD

facebook



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Google



### 3 KEY TRENDS IN TEACHING & LEARNING

- Tech-Powered
  - Interactive tools
  - Creating media



### 3 KEY TRENDS IN TEACHING & LEARNING

- Blended
  - Combining traditional teaching with online activities
  - Best practices
    - Use of online discussions and collaborative projects
    - Fuels the classroom content and discussion



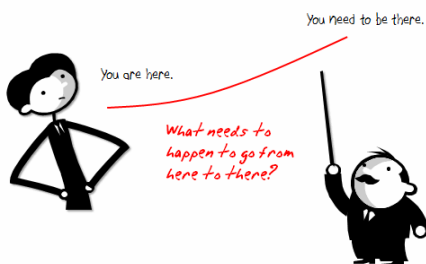


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## SETTING ENGAGEMENT GOALS THROUGH LEARNING OBJECTIVES

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### GUIDELINES FOR LEARNING OBJECTIVES



- Define clear expectations
- Select manageable content
- Structure appropriate activities (collaborative and individual)
- Conduct assessments congruent with intended goal, i.e.,
  - *To foster a deep approach to learning*

(Garrison & Cleveland-Innes, 2005)

Source: articulate.com

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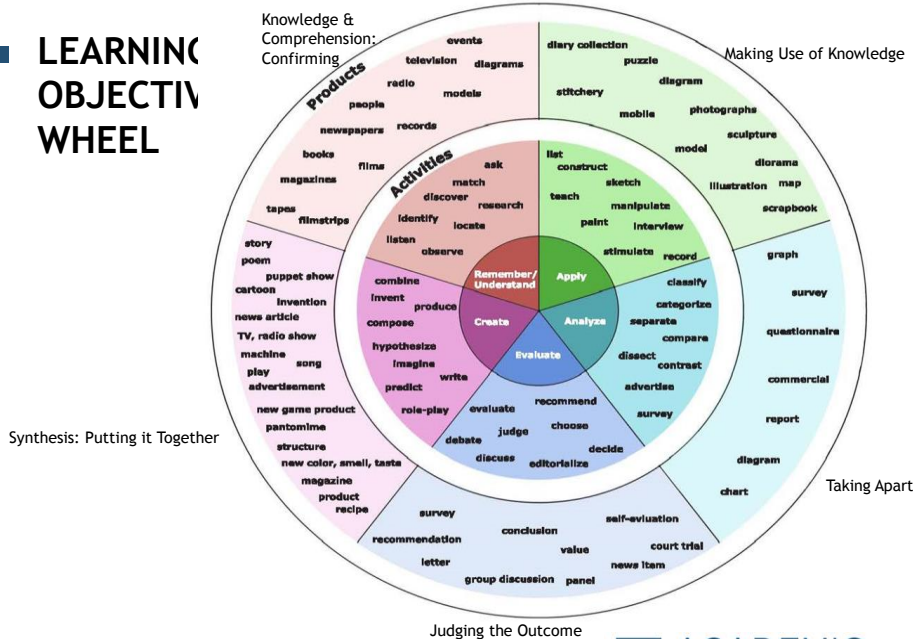
## LEARNING OBJECTIVES

Lower order thinking skills			Higher order thinking skills		
remember	understand	apply	analyze	evaluate	create
<u>Key words</u> Define, label, name, recall, duplicate, spell, list, select, recognize, identify, retrieve <i>Ex: Can you recall...?</i>	<u>Key words</u> Interpret, clarify, paraphrase, exemplify, illustrate, classify, categorize <i>Ex: How would you rephrase the meaning...?</i>	<u>Key words</u> Demonstrate, apply, illustrate, utilize, model, build <i>Ex: What ideas apply..?</i>	<u>Key words</u> Categorize, dissect, discover, inspect, contrast, conclusion, examine, survey <i>Ex: What conclusions can you draw...?</i>	<u>Key words</u> Validate, opinion, support, judge, decide, compare, appraise, value <i>Ex: Are there any errors...?</i>	<u>Key words</u> Compose, develop, hypothesize, invent, organize, produce, propose, design <i>Ex: How would you solve the following...?</i>

(www.lmunet.edu)



## LEARNING OBJECTIVE WHEEL



Adapted from Anderson and Krathwohl, 2001



## L.O. EXAMPLES (BLOOM'S TAXONOMY)

- Knowledge (Confirming)
  - Recite Newton's three laws of motion.
  - Teaching methods:
    - Lecture
    - Memorization
    - Readings
    - Podcast
    - Video
    - Web information

## L.O. EXAMPLES (BLOOM'S TAXONOMY)

- Comprehension (Confirming)
  - Explain Newton's three laws of motion in your own words.
  - Teaching methods:
    - Readings
    - Graphic Organizers
    - Demonstration
    - Discussion

## L.O. EXAMPLES (BLOOM'S TAXONOMY)

- Application (Making Use of Knowledge)
  - Calculate the kinetic energy of a projectile.
  - Teaching methods:
    - Demonstrate problem-solving (Case Studies, text problems, scenarios)
    - Demonstrate application of rules, laws, or theories (Case Studies, text problems, scenarios)
    - Demonstrate methods or procedures
    - Practice in multiple contexts



## L.O. EXAMPLES (BLOOM'S TAXONOMY)

- Analysis (Taking Apart)
  - Compare and contrast potential and kinetic energy.
  - Teaching methods:
    - Case Studies
    - Simulations (Computer-based, mannequins, part task trainers, role plays)
    - Discussion
    - Labs
    - Graphic Organizers



## L.O. EXAMPLES (BLOOM'S TAXONOMY)

- Synthesis (Putting It Together)
  - Compose an original homework problem dealing with the principle of conservation of energy.
  - Teaching methods:
    - Research/Labs
    - Plan development
    - Multiple Case Studies - Class or small group discussions assembling relevant information to produce a hypothesis, plan to address recurring problems
    - Interviews with experts

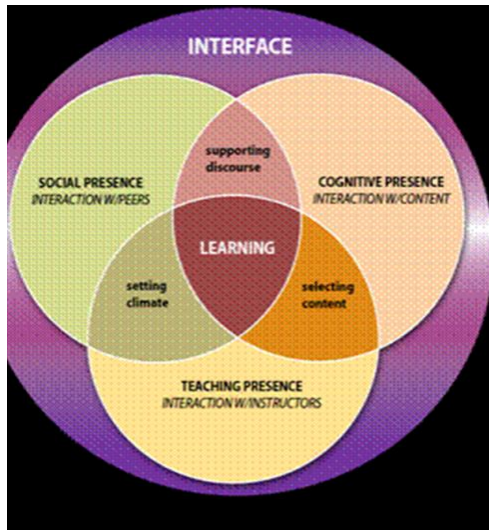


## L.O. EXAMPLES (BLOOM'S TAXONOMY)

- Evaluation (Judging the Outcome)
  - Determine whether using conservation of energy or conservation of momentum would be more appropriate for solving a dynamics problem.
  - Teaching methods:
    - Demonstrate process for evaluating research reports based on criteria
    - Case Studies - Small group discussions of appropriateness of procedures, results
    - Debates



## AREAS OF ENGAGEMENT

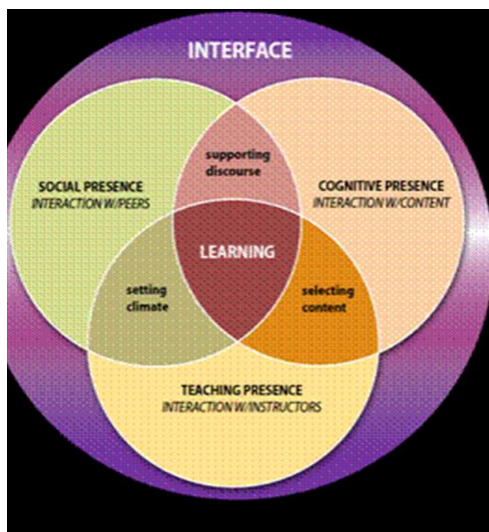


- Using the techniques of problem-solving, student groups will **identify** problem issues, **discuss** possible solutions, and **determine** the most appropriate outcome to the scenario presented.
- (Social, Cognitive)

Source: [www1.open.edu.cn](http://www1.open.edu.cn)



## AREAS OF ENGAGEMENT

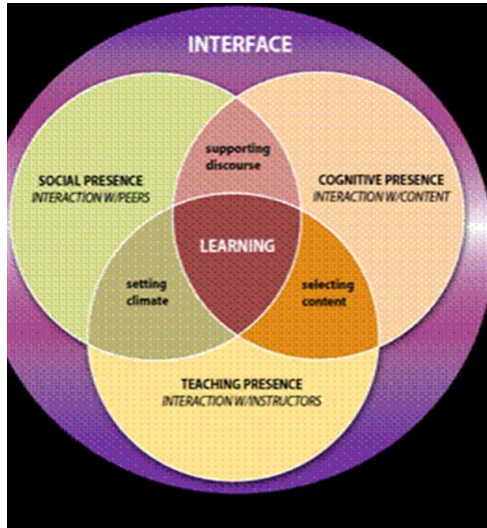


- Student groups will **create** an action plan to resolve the scenario that addresses each required element indicated in the grading rubric.
- (Social, Cognitive, Teaching)

Source: [www1.open.edu.cn](http://www1.open.edu.cn)



## AREAS OF ENGAGEMENT



- Using the grading rubric provided, students will individually **evaluate** the submissions of peer groups & make appropriate **recommendations**.
- (Social, Teaching)

Source: [www1.open.edu.cn](http://www1.open.edu.cn)

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## ENGAGEMENT & OUTCOMES

### External Constructs

- Discourse
- Collaboration
- Management

### Internal Constructs

- Reflection
- Monitoring
- Construction of Knowledge

Methodological constructs consistent with higher levels of learning in online environments

(Kanuka & Garrison, 2004)

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## POLL

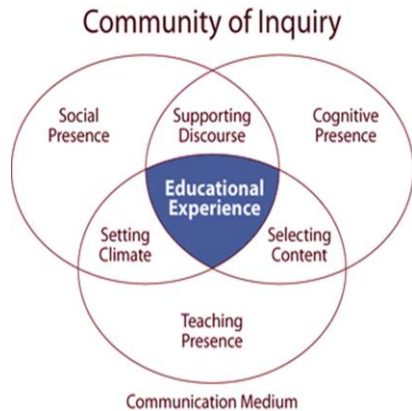
**In what ways do you  
encourage learner  
participation & engagement?**

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**BUILDING RELEVANT ACTIVITIES AND  
ASSIGNMENTS**



## COGNITIVE PRESENCE



(Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000)

- "Cognitive presence is the process of constructing meaning through collaborative inquiry." (Garrison, 2006)
- Existence of
  - a community of learners
  - interaction includes meaningful discourse including traditional critical thinking processes

## COGNITIVE PRESENCE



Source: [blog.letstalkhealth.com](http://blog.letstalkhealth.com)

- Lecturing and telling...  
*questioning*, probing and open inquiry
- *Reflecting, thinking*, and grappling with problems for which there may not be ready answers
  - May need time for this in course assignments

<http://www.designingforlearning.info>

## ■ ENGAGEMENT & OUTCOMES

### Behaviors needed to sustain cognitive presence

High expectations for student inquiry

Instructor examines student responses

- probes, challenges, and questions learners to encourage thought and analysis of ideas

Sustained communication

- learners participate thoughtfully in discussions, responding to content and other learners



## ■ ENGAGEMENT & OUTCOMES

- Focus is on meaning
- Depth and problem-solving favored over concept awareness & covering content
- Requires time, listening, reflecting, and careful responding to encourage discourse

(Boettcher, 2013)



## CATEGORIES & INDICATORS OF PRESENCE

Elements	Categories	Indicators
Cognitive Presence	Triggering Event • PBL	Sense of Puzzlement
	Exploration • Reflection	Information Exchange • Divergent ideas • Brainstorming
	Integration • Convergence	Connecting Ideas • Proposing solutions
	Resolution • Tests solutions	Apply new ideas • Defense of solutions & reasoning

(Adapted from McKerlich, Riis, Anderson, & Eastman, 2011)

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## TOOLS FOR COGNITIVE PRESENCE



(Adapted from Wegmann & Chen, 2011)

## STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

### Instructors: Focus Areas

#### Active Learning

- Transformative because focus is on creating meaning to that which is relevant to learner's life personally and professionally
  - Collaborative strategies
  - Applicability, real-world

#### Critical Thinking

- Not enough to simply transmit knowledge to learners as primary goal of learning
- Learners need to have skills to work with active knowledge base
  - Introducing controversial subjects
  - Scaffolding of activities to build skills - even with conceptual ideas

#### Reflection

- Reflection allows learners to consider:
  - Where they have been
  - Where they are
  - Where they want to go

(revised from Stavredes, 2011)

## STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

### Instructors: How to Use Discussions

#### Components of Critical Thinking

- Challenging assumptions & the importance of context
- Exploring alternatives
- Having reflective skepticism

#### \*Discussion\*

- Develops higher order thinking skills
- Complex ideas and multiple perspectives
- Develops understanding of alternative viewpoints

#### Types of Discussion Questions

- Application - Apply course knowledge to solve real world problems
- Analysis - Break down information to discover causes, assumptions, motives, & make inferences
- Synthesis - Incorporate information in new ways to plan, design, or solve problems in the real world
- Evaluation - Judge, critique, or defend interpretation of concepts

(revised from Stavredes, 2011)

## STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVEMENT

### Instructors: Strategies for Discussions

#### Discussion Questions

- Open-ended
- No correct answer
- Form problem statement
- Encourages multiple perspectives

#### How Learners Interact in Discussions

- Require learners to:
  - Take a critical stance
  - Be open-minded and willing to adjust views
  - Allow learners to contribute thoughts, experiences, and ideas
  - Present evidence from experts

(revised from Stavredes, 2011)

## EXAMPLE OF DISCUSSION FORUM

✓ Current Events

✓ Knowledge Transfer

✓ Bloom's: Knowledge,  
Analysis, & Application

✓ Relevance

✓ Media Elements

We have been discussing problem solving in this class, which is increasingly difficult for a group of people where there is no trust established. The integrity of a leader goes a long way towards establishing this trusting environment and assisting in facing challenges.

1. View the video clips of these two leaders and make the argument for what you see as their integrity gaps, based on Covey's three elements of integrity: **Self-consistency, Personal Efficacy, and Scope of Awareness.**

- a. Remember, you are looking for the GAPS in their integrity. This is not just bad-mouthing or being negative -- you are critically and constructively analyzing these leaders and identifying where there are inconsistencies in their actions vs. what they say. The ability to see the reality of a situation, instead of just what we would like to see or believe, is a critical element of effective leadership.

2. Be sure to provide publisher information or links to your resources, if applicable, should you choose to use other reference materials to support your views.

[Watch Video](#)

[Watch Video](#)

[Watch Video](#)

[Watch Video](#)

ABC News - Martha Stewart Indicted

Martha Stewart on prison: 'It's terrible'

Jesse Jackson Jr. Pleads Guilty, Apologizes to Famous Father

Jesse Jackson Jr. Gets 2.5-year Prison Sentence

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## DESIGNING PEER ENGAGEMENT AND COMMUNICATION

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### SOCIAL PRESENCE



(Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000)

- Projecting personal characteristics into the online community
  - “Real people”  
(Rourke, Anderson, Garrison, & Archer, 2001)
- Online persona (Phillips, 2013)
  - Social identities for the online environment
- Degree of salience (Lowenthal, 2009)
  - “being there”

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## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

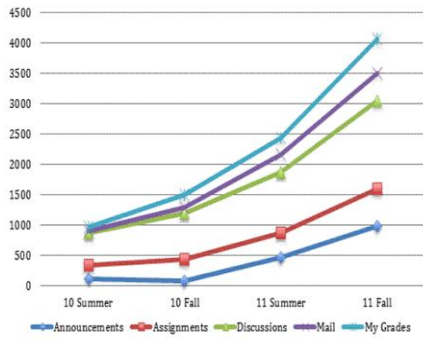


Figure 3. Use of online communication tools

(Chen, Sugar, & Bauer, 2012)

- “Warm” presence = perception of human engagement
  - Sociable
  - Personal
  - Supportive
- Relationship exists between social presence and:
  - Student satisfaction
  - Development of community of learners
  - Perceived learning

(Lowenthal, 2009)

## WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT?

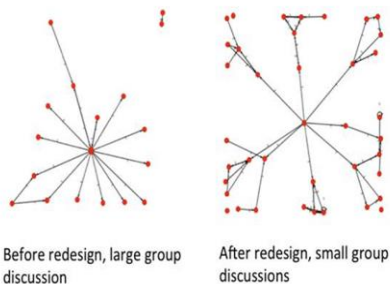


Figure 4. SNAPP analysis 1: Interaction visualization of copyright discussion

(Chen, Sugar, & Bauer, 2012)

- “Insiders” vs. “Outsiders”
  - Comfortable & confident with medium used
- Combat isolation
  - Greater use of communication facilities
  - Design & inclusion of “forming stage”
  - Guidelines for successful online communication

(Joyce & Brown, 2009)

## CATEGORIES & INDICATORS OF PRESENCE

Elements	Categories	Indicators
Social Presence	Effective Expression	Emoticons
	Open Communication	Risk Free Expression
	Group Cohesion	Encourage Collaboration

(McKerlich, Riis, Anderson, & Eastman, 2011)

## TOOLS FOR SOCIAL PRESENCE



(Adapted from Wegmann & Chen, 2011)



## STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVEMENT: INSTRUCTIONAL DESIGN

- Structure collaborative learning activities
  - Knowledge sharing
  - Alternative perspectives
  - Group work
  - Peer Reviews
  - Discussion Boards
- Incorporate reflective activities
  - Allows for use of life/work experiences
  - Current event topics
  - Encourages critical thinking
  - Discussion Boards
  - Peer Reviews
  - Journaling
- Utilize continuous and authentic assessment strategies
  - Relevant & applicable
  - Focus on higher-order thinking skills
  - Variety of activities, including quizzes

(revised from Lowenthal, 2009)



## STRATEGIES FOR IMPROVEMENT: INSTRUCTORS

- Provide suggested due dates for initial postings that promote mid-week engagement as opposed to weekend only postings
- Launch discussion threads and summarize each thread at the end of the week
  - Encourages active participation
  - Encourages discourse regarding alternative viewpoints
  - Encourages collaboration
- Share personal stories and professional experiences
- Use expressions of emotions, e.g. (smile) or (grin).
- Address students by name
  - Provides a sense of caring and personality
  - Connects with professional experiences of students
  - Connects with their valued self-image

(revised from Lowenthal, 2009)

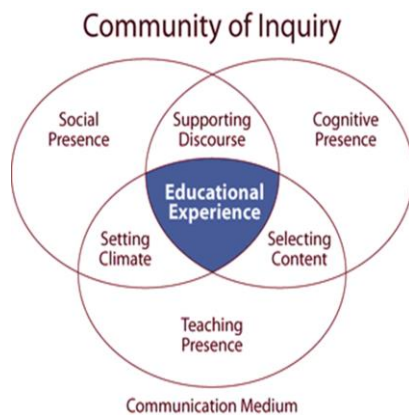


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## ENGAGING THROUGH FACULTY INTERACTION



### TEACHING PRESENCE



(Garrison, Anderson, & Archer, 2000)

- “the work of teaching that is done *before* and *during* the course”
  - Prep work
  - Design & development
  - Directing learners during delivery
- Three major categories:
  - Instructional design & management
  - Building understanding
  - Direct instruction

(Boettcher, 2010)



## TEACHING PRESENCE

Focus is to increase social presence and student learning

(Boettcher, 2010)

- Manifested in course material
  - Syllabus
  - Assignments
  - Readings & discussions
- Guidance & support
  - Clear expectations
  - Supportive guidance

## CATEGORIES & INDICATORS OF PRESENCE

Elements	Categories	Indicators
Teaching Presence	Design & Organization	Setting Curriculum & Methods
	Facilitating Discourse	Sharing Personal Meaning
	Encouraging collaboration	Sharing expectations Avoiding misconceptions
Teaching Presence	Direct Instruction	Focusing Discussion
	Confirming understanding	Defining & initiating topics
	Visibly present in course site	

(Adapted from McKerlich, Riis, Anderson, & Eastman, 2011)

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## TOOLS FOR TEACHING PRESENCE



(Adapted from Wegmann & Chen, 2011)

## STRATEGIES ACROSS ADULT GENERATIONS



- What will work for you with everyone?
- Ask for professional experiences
- Change activities often
  - Attention span is 15 - 20 minutes
- Tap into technological savvy and interest
- Create structure
  - Assign group roles for the first few team projects

(Baker College)

## STRATEGIES ACROSS ADULT GENERATIONS



- Work to foster a team environment
  - Consider the use of formal groups with clearly defined roles that are rotated
  - Enforce individual accountability for group projects
    - Require individual work as well
  - Require participation in some form
  - Find the right mix of guidance, structure, and visibility for all groups
    - Encourage discussion between group members
    - Recognize excellent performers individually



## CHAT

**What types of activities tend to be the most problematic for you when engaging learners?**



## TAKEAWAYS

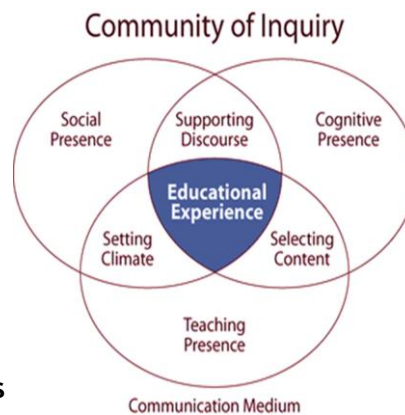
- As people mature, their self-concept moves from being dependent to increasingly independent
- Mature individuals' increased reservoir of experience is suitable for the basis of learning.
- Their readiness to learn is associated with the developmental tasks of their social role.
- Their learning is more performance-centered as they immediately apply what they have learned to real-life challenges.

Source: pearsonclassroomlink.com



## TAKEAWAYS

- Collaborative
  - Tech-powered
  - Relevant
  - Applicable
- Use Strategies for:
- Social Presence
  - Teaching Presence
  - Cognitive Presence
  - Generational Learners



 **RESOURCE**

  
**Online Tools & Taxonomy Resource**  
<http://teach.ucf.edu/pedagogy/ottr/>

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 **RESOURCE**

**Faculty Seminars in Online Teaching**  
<http://teach.ucf.edu/professional-development/faculty-seminars/>

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## RESOURCE

Teaching Online  
**Pedagogical Repository**

[https://topr.online.ucf.edu/index.php/Main\\_Page](https://topr.online.ucf.edu/index.php/Main_Page)



## QUESTIONS

**Dr. Denise Lowe**  
Instructional Design Team Lead  
University of Central Florida  
[Denise.lowe@ucf.edu](mailto:Denise.lowe@ucf.edu)  
407-823-4272







## EVALUATION

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