Building Community: Student-to-Student
Zone of Proximal Development

- **Learner cannot do**
- **Learner can do unaided**
- **Zone of proximal development (Learner can do with guidance)**
Humans = Social beings

• We learn from each other
• We emulate those we admire
• We look at concepts differently when we hear someone else’s POV
• Students more likely to learn

• Students more likely to complete the course

• Students more likely to gain a deeper understanding of material
Online interactions with other students - discussion
Idea
Online #1

Have students post an introduction video
  • Share goals/expectations for the course
  • Identify metacognitive strategies they will employ
  • What they know/what experience they have with the subject matter

Require interaction/constructive comments

Easy to do in Canvas if they have a camera and a microphone
Discussion topics that have no right answer
• How will you prepare for this assessment?
• What is the best way to study this material?
• Share an experience you have had related to this material.
• How does [relevant real world example] relate to this material?
• Have the students think of posting a point, not an answer

• Make replies mandatory, but set a different due date for initial post and replies

• Grade depends on meeting deadlines and achieving standards for quality. Or you must post X original ideas either in original posts or replies
Instructors who post frequently, use students’ names, reference specific ideas posted by students, add personal anecdotes have higher student satisfaction scores.

(Ladyshewsky, R. K., 2013)
Online Courses are NOT Crockpots
Face-to-face = many opportunities for regular, spontaneous interactions

Online = instructor must make opportunities for regular interactions
Frequently post/announce/connect

- Schedule announcements to release periodically
- Plan responses to specific ideas on a post – be prepared to add something
- Use students’ names
- Create a schedule for yourself to post on your discussion boards (M and R at 9 am)
Give timely feedback

- Set and meet expectations regarding feedback on each assignment
- Communicate if unexpected circumstances mean it won’t be met
- Provide feedback at meaningful time where student can use it
Taught by a Computer or a Person?

Connect to you => connect to course
Module/Section on course: Meet your Professor

• Biography
• Photo(s)
• Videos

Video: Why you are interested in the topic you are teaching?
Natural behavior face-to-face
Deliberate behavior online

- Announcement/Discussion 1/8-1/5 of the way through the course
- “Individual” emails
- 3 “no questions asked” extensions on minor assignments
Feedback

Timely & Meaningful

Fair & Helpful
Most Effective Feedback

Lower stakes assignments – immediate

Higher stakes assignments – delayed
• This time – strengths/next time – improvements

• Include clear directions on how to improve

Break up large assignments at points where feedback would be beneficial
Think about points where feedback may be beneficial

Scenario

- Set a deadline for Monday midnight
- Inform students you will have office hours and answer emailed questions/discussion posts on the assignment on Monday from 8-10 am
- You will give feedback before the assignment is turned in – not after
- Benefits of feedback still realized

[Make sure you include this time on your activity calendar]
Streamline Grading

- Specification Grading
- Rubrics
- Audio Feedback