

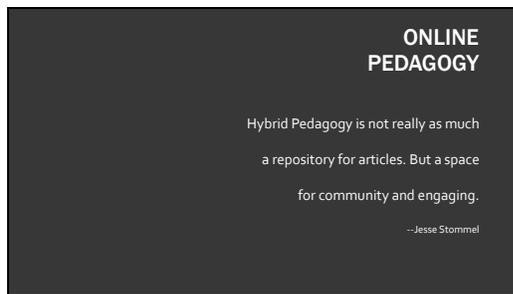
# Building Community

## Slide 1



In this presentation we will be talking about community building in an online class.

## Slide 2



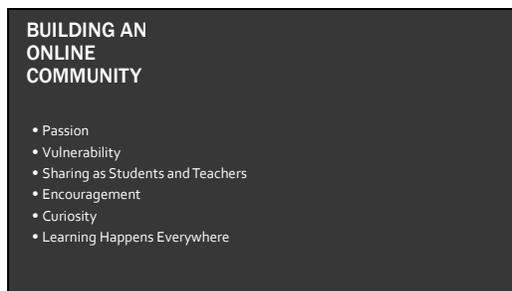
The online classroom is still a space for learning and being engaged, even captivated by the experience and growth

### Slide 3



One of the biggest benefits of a physical classroom is social interaction. The energy and encouragement that students gain from social interaction is invaluable. Something nearly miraculous happens when the ice is broken and students see themselves as valued contributors, even colleagues with ownership in the classroom. These aspects that almost naturally unfold in a face to face classroom offer students a sense of community through the attention, interaction, and instant feedback they receive from their peers and professors. Isolation is the biggest challenge with online learning. If students feels that no one is paying attention to them, they will stop logging in and ultimately do poorly or fail the course. Building a sense of community in an online classroom is an essential piece of successful online teaching.

### Slide 4



First, let's lay a foundation of important principles in community building and leadership. Passion in teaching and your field is one of the most effective and powerful tools in teaching. It translates directly into student interest and ultimately success. Your enthusiasm will inspire your students. Think of teaching more as the lighting of a fire than filling a bucket.

Vulnerability, or the ability to make mistakes as both a student and instructor allow for a comfortable online learning environment where failure is confronted as part of the learning experience that even TAs

and faculty learn from. This is challenging because traditional mental models do not allow for “failure” as part of the learning experience. This is something that we can model for students. Mistakes happen, they are part of learning.

Sharing happens when we perceive students as colleagues in this teaching and learning experience. When given the opportunity students can often share things with us that are enlightening, that even allow us to see material we already know in a completely new way. Opportunities for sharing allow student to feel valued. This is imperative in an online setting.

Encouragement by peers and teachers is a far greater motivator than points. In an online classroom where anonymity can easily become the norm, encouraging students, and encouraging them to encourage each other is a powerful community building tool.

Fostering curiosity is at the heart of all learning. Curiosity did not kill the cat instead it inspires it to learn. Curiosity should be encouraged and cultivated in all classrooms. How many skills have been self taught because of curiosity and through sheer determination, a desire to simply know and the help of a youtube video? Curiosity is a needed ingredient in our online classrooms and making students hungry for the “next” thing.

After all, learning happens everywhere and the students in online classes can richly contribute to each others’ learning experience.

**Slide 5**



**There are many tools within Canvas to help you develop a sense of community and foster engagement among your students. In the next few slides we will go over some of these. Group assignments and Discussions allow students to work with an either self-selected or assigned group of students allowing them to form deeper connections to the members of the classroom community. They can collaborate on a long or short term assignment or in a smaller more specific discussions.**

**Canvas offers a number of feedback tools including written comments, and/or audio or video direct messaging. These allow you to provide personalized feedback that enhances collegiality.**

**The big blue button allows for you to plan a synchronous activity which is not limited by geographic constraints. You can hear each other talk, share, webcam in, even allow students to present and share.**

**Announcements are a great way to stay connected with students throughout the semester. It allows you to send a message to the whole class providing essential information**

on a regular basis and helps students feel that you are actively engaged in the learning experience. (Announcements do not have to be about Academics they can help make the class personal).

**Slide 6**



Discussions are a powerful tool that can help students make connections to each other and you. Discussions can also allow introverted students to participate more openly. Discussion boards can be done as groups or whole class activities that encourage active engagement. Discussion groups and Forums allow thinking time but require trust and an understanding of netiquette which we will address in a later video.

Slide 7

**TAKE A LOOK AT THIS!**

Brookfield: Critical Incident Questionnaire

- *Question 1:* At what moment in this week's discussion/class did you feel most engaged with what was happening?
- *Question 2:* At what moment in this week's discussion/class did you feel most distanced from what was happening?
- *Question 3:* What action that anyone (whether instructor or fellow student) took in this week's discussion/class did you find most affirming and helpful?

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**TAKE A LOOK AT THIS!**

Brookfield: Critical Incident Questionnaire

- *Question 4:* What action that anyone (whether instructor or fellow student) took in this week's discussion/class did you find most puzzling or confusing?
- *Question 5:* What about this week's discussion surprised you the most? (This could be something about your own reactions to what went on, or something that someone did, or anything else that occurs to you.

Slide 9



Group assignments, when well planned and executed are a good way of getting students to collaborate and gain a sense of ownership in the class. It is a great way to get students to help each other. Group assignment can be designed to take the pressure of having the “right answer” off the students while allowing them to collaborate, teach each, and gain a deeper understanding of the material.

**Slide 10**



There are many feedback tools in canvas including imbedding comments in a students work, writing a comment to accompany to assignment, messaging and more

**Slide 11**



The big blue button is an conferencing tool in canvas that allows you to host a live and synchronous conference. It also allows you to record and save the conference if you wish to do so. Your students can raise hands, respond and webcam in.

**Slide 12**



Announcements are a quick way of reaching all students in a section. You can create a weekly announcement and share important material, tips, reminders, and suggestions in announcements as well as personalize your course and show your “human” side.

**Slide 13**



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**Slide 14**



Take a moment and try this out. Create your own twitter post on community.

**Sources**

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