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Best Practices Discussion Boards

Student engagement is essential for course completion and student satisfaction.

Here are some top tips from peer reviewed literature to help you create engaging discussions for your courses.

1



Frequent and Personalized Interaction

Constructive and critical feedback is engaging for higher order thinking and desired by most online learners.



2



Set Clear Criteria

Set clear expectations about the number of posts, replies, quality, and contribution to deeper learning.

Using a rubric to provide detailed expectations of quality improves engagement.

3



Add Audio Recordings

Adding short 3-5 minute audio recordings to your posts increases your presence in the course and makes you seem "real" to students.

Many learning management systems have this feature built in and ready for use.



4



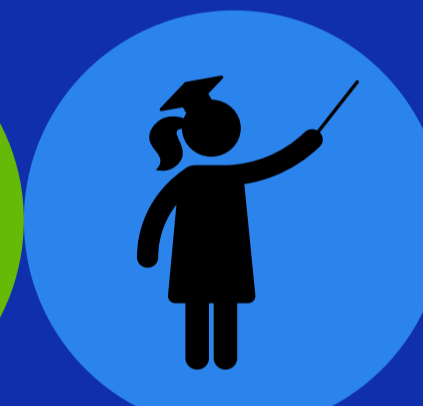
Add Visual Components

By recording videos of yourself, or allowing students to record video responses, you can increase engagement and presence in your course.



With clear expectations set for student leaders, involvement and engagement increase which is directly related to retention of course material

5



Student Facilitators

Identify weekly student discussion board leaders and divide larger classes into small groups to increase social interaction.

6



Create Divergent and Open Ended Prompts

Divergent questions have many possible responses that give room for unique answers from everyone and lead to higher order thinking.



7



Respond with Further Questions

Encourage students to move the conversation forward with questions to foster deeper thinking rather than just agreeing or disagreeing with posts.



8



Planning Increases Success

Plan your discussions to reinforce and deepen the learning for a topic, prepare for final projects or assessments, or share practical examples of a topic.

Instructional Designers can help you align your discussions with the course content



9



Be Yourself

Let your expertise come through in practical stories that provide real-world examples of the topic. Students want to hear about your experiences.



Have the confidence to know that you will succeed in your online courses.