

TEACHING PRESENCE GUIDELINES FOR PRACTICE

Elements of teaching, social and cognitive presence

A Community of Inquiry Framework (Garrison & Anderson 2003) incorporates the elements of teaching, cognitive and social presence. This Framework has been adapted here to indicate how teaching presence within online **collaborative** learning involves design and organisation, facilitation discourse and direct instruction.

1 Design and organisation (teaching presence)

1.1 Social Presence

- A feeling of trust and being welcomed
- A sense of belonging to a critical community
- A sense of control
- A sense of accomplishment
- A willingness to engage in discourse
- A conversational tone
- A questioning attitude

1.2 Cognitive Presence

- Consideration of assessment of cognitive development and knowledge at the entry level
- Organisation and limitation of curriculum
- Selection of appropriate learning activities
- Provision of time for reflection
- Integration of small discussion groups and sessions
- Provision of opportunities to model and reflect upon the critical thinking process
- Design of higher-order learning assessment instruments

2 Facilitating discourse (teaching presence)

2.1 Social Presence

- Acknowledge and welcome participants as they enter a discussion
- Be encouraging, gentle and supportive while directing discussion
- Project your personality as a teacher and allow students to get to know you as a person to the appropriate degree
- Suggest that students log on at least three times a week
- Encourage students to acknowledge individuals when responding to specific contributions
- Laud contributions when appropriate
- Be conversational and not too formal in communications
- Encourage 'lurkers' to participate

- Express feelings but avoid flaming
- Be cautious using humor at least until familiarity is achieved
- Encourage students to inform the teacher by email of tensions or anxiety

2.2 Cognitive Presence

- Focus discussion on key issues
- Provide stimulating questions
- Identify puzzling issues arising from responses
- Challenge ideas and precipitate reflection
- Moderate but not overly direct discussions
- Test ideas theoretically or vicariously through application
- Move on when discussion ebbs or has served its purpose
- Facilitate metacognitive awareness

3 Direct instruction (teaching presence)

3.1 Social Presence

- Shape discussion but don't dominate
- Provide feedback with respect
- Be constructive with corrective comments
- Be open to negotiation and providing reasons
- Deal with conflict quickly and privately

3.2 Cognitive Presence

- Offer alternative ideas and perspectives for analysis and discussion
- Respond directly to and elaborate on inquiries
- Acknowledge uncertainty where it exists
- Make connections among ideas
- Construct frameworks
- Summarise discussion and move the learning on
- Provide closure and foreshadow further study

Guidelines for practice: Teaching presence – adapted from

Garrison & Anderson's (2003) *E-Learning in the 21st Century: A Framework for Research and Practice*, RoutledgeFalmer, Taylor & Francis Group, pp 75-91