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## Innovative Educators

Supporting Academic & Professional Growth In Higher Ed

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# 10 Strategies to Foster Engagement and Participation in Your Asynchronous Online Course

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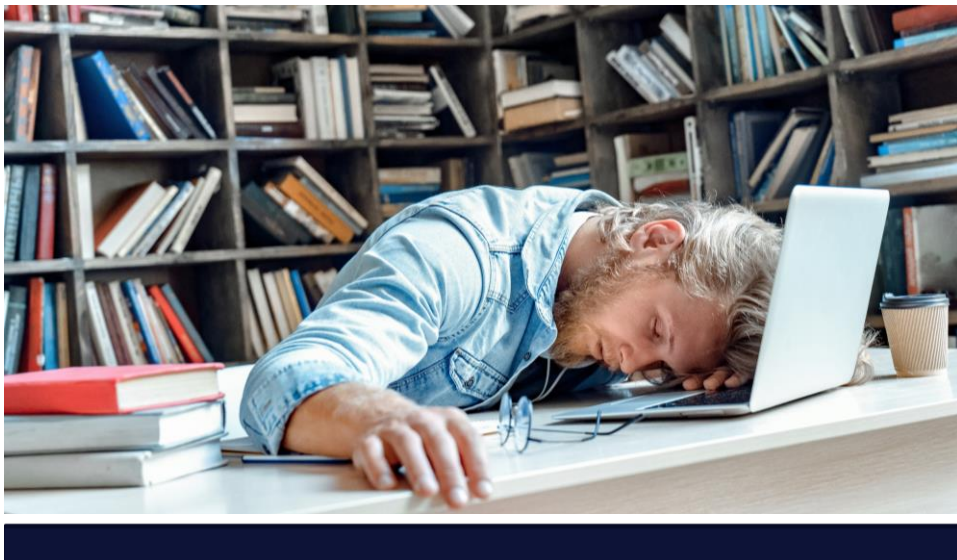


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## The Challenge:



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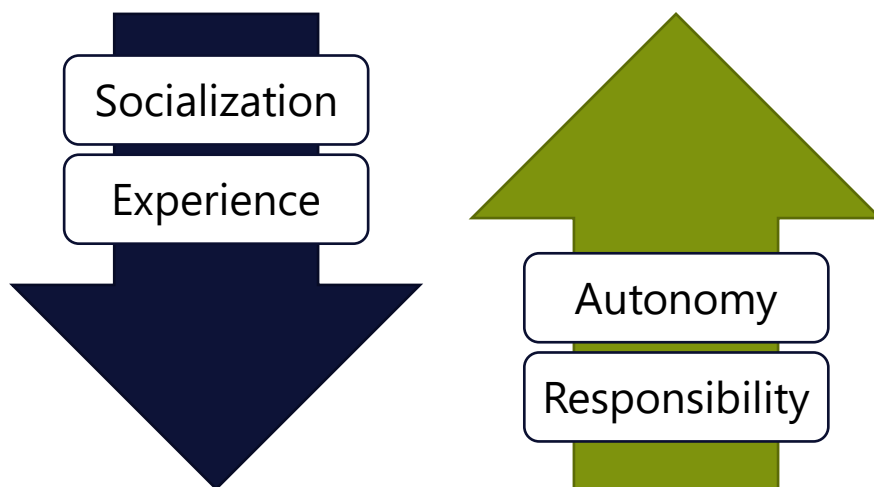
Learning is inherently a  
social experience



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Online Learning is ***Different***



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At the heart of the matter..

Cognitive Overload



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Intensified by...

Lack of Personal Connection



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“Most students respond positively to a well-organized course taught by an enthusiastic instructor who has a genuine interest in students and what they learn.”

~Barbara Gross Davis

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## Students' Core Psychological Needs:

### Competence

- Knowledge, skill or ability to do something successfully

### Autonomy

- Ability to initiative and regulate one's own actions

### Relatedness

- Meaningful connections with others

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**#1**  
**Be Clear**



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## Reduce Cognitive Load

### Consistent Format

- Utilize a module structure
- Consistent pattern of due dates

### Redundant Instructions

- Provide guidance in multiple areas
- Be consistent but use different format

### Quick Responses

- Provide response timeline
- Multiple avenues of communication

### Reminders

- Set automated reminders
  - Utilize due date features
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## #2 Be Proactive



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## Don't Wait for Challenges

### Communicate

- Utilize "push" communication strategies
- Tailor communication strategies

### FAQ

- Provide guidelines for Q & A
- Assign "support groups"

### Provide Guidance

- Course overview, how-to guides
- Assignment guides, rubrics, feedforward

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## #3 Humanize the Experience



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## Core Psychological Need:

### Relatedness

- Meaningful connections with others

*"Students don't care what you know until they know that you care."*

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## Teach with Personality

### Know Your Students

- Use names
- Recognize and appreciate their individual life circumstances

### Be Supportive

- Don't let the fear of being taken advantage of ruin your willingness to care
- Use "let's find a way" mentality

### Connect

- Personalize dialogue
- Appropriate self-disclosure

### Engage

- Be expressive and share your enthusiasm
- Share videos for connection

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Leave **digital footprint** to demonstrate presence:

- Timely responses to emails
- Timely responses to questions
- Engage in discussions
- Regular, meaningful announcements
- Timely feedback and grading

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## **#4**

### **Provide Multiple Opportunities for Success**



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## Core Psychological Needs:

### Competence

- Knowledge, skill or ability to do something successfully



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## Promote Learning Over Testing

### Utilize Formative Assessment

- Provide frequent opportunities to test knowledge
- Classroom assessment techniques

### Integrate Mastery Learning

- Emphasize mastery over memory
- Provide multiple opportunities prior to deadline

### Motivate & Monitor

- Embed assessment with content delivery
- Ensure effective use of instructional content

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## Provide Value-Added Feedback

### Consistent Feedback

- Utilize rubrics
- Integrate feedback banks and text expanders

### Engaging Feedback

- Utilize multimedia feedback
- Offer one-to-many feedback

### Integrate Feedforward

- Reduce reliance on post-assignment, one-to-one feedback

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## #5 Make It Manageable



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## Reduce Overload

### Release Content Strategically

- Utilize conditional content release
- Coordinate class focus

### Scaffold Assignments

- Increase opportunities for feedback and revision
- Create check-points to avoid overload

### Focus Attention

- Provide module overview and summary
  - Utilize outlines or guided notes
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## Connect Information

### Activate prior knowledge

- Preconception check, content, knowledge check, interaction

### Visualize Content

- Show relationships, concept maps, graphic organizers, tables

### Personalize Assignments

- Promote reflection, personal application, career relevance
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## #6 Connect



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## Connect with Students

### Welcoming Tone

- Bring personality into your writing style
- Use writing to create atmosphere

### Authenticity

- Perfection isn't the goal; authenticity is the goal
- Teach "in the moment"

### Learning Communities

- Help students connect with one another

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## Be Responsive

### Set Strategic Deadlines

- Ensure your availability

### Just-in-Time Conversations

- Integrate synchronous interaction as necessary

### Enhance Availability

- Utilize virtual office hours
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## Asynchronous Office Hours

### Designate time at the computer to respond to questions

- Email
- Course Discussion Thread
- FAQ area in LMS
- Collaboration Platform (Slack)

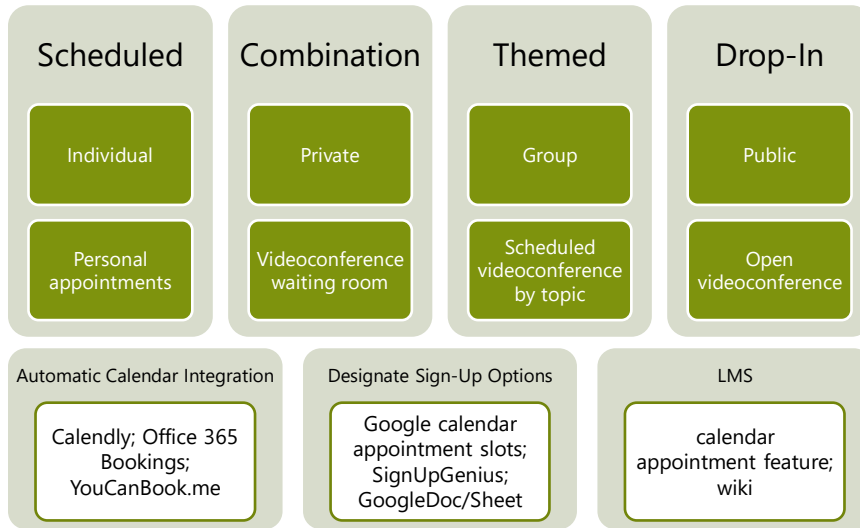
### Establish policy for communications

- Address time zones and preferred communication strategies
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## Synchronous Office Hours



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## #7 Emphasize Relevance, Value, & Authenticity



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## Gen Z Students:

### Visual

- Increased visual processing center in the brain

### Tech Savvy

- Technology an expected tool

### Gamer

- Learn by engaging and problem-solving

### Social

- Embrace hands-on, social learning environments

### Demanding

- Expect on-demand services and information

### Career-Focused

- Knowledge and skills are goal-directed

### Self-Reliant

- Able to find information, tools and resources

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## Create Relevance

### Authentic Learning Outcomes

- Create "real world" value in activities

### Value-Added Activities

- Value, role or purpose beyond the classroom

### Prioritize Immediacy

- Highlight current relevance and value

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# #8

## Provide Choices



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## Core Psychological Needs:

### Autonomy

- Ability to initiative and regulate one's own actions



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## Integrate options in assignment structure:

### Required of all students:

- Weekly Mastery Quiz
- Final Exam Review
- Final Exam

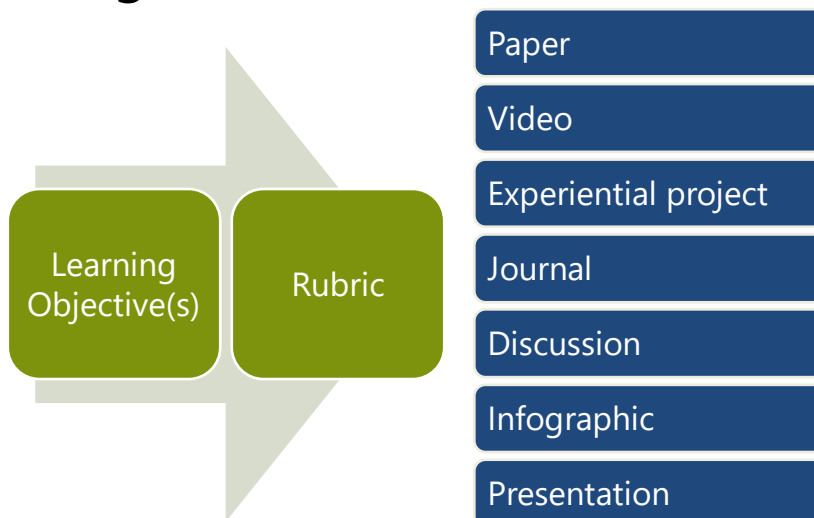
### Choice of one of the following per week:

- Discussion
- Journal
- Research Analysis
- Video Exploration
- Current Event Analysis

Course is divided into 3 blocks; each block contain 5 weeks/chapters. Students select and complete 1 of each assignment type per block.

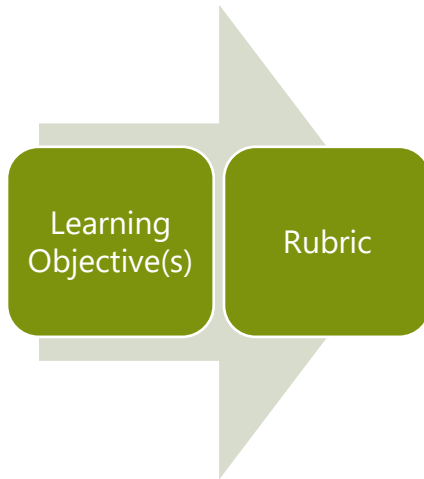
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## Assignment Menu



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# CYO Assignment (Create Your Own)



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## #9 Create Student- Friendly Policies



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## Effective Policies

Focus on the things that matter

If it doesn't interfere with the learning experience, don't get too worried about it



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## Example: Participation Policy Activity

Explain the importance of norms and expectations

Highlight the value of their input in creating class norms and expectations

Brainstorm policies

Review brainstorm list to create final expectations



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# #10

## Be Purposeful



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## Design with Intention

Know your "why"



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1. Be clear
2. Be proactive
3. Humanize the experience
4. Provide multiple opportunities for success
5. Make it manageable
6. Connect
7. Emphasize relevance, value & authenticity
8. Provide choices
9. Create student-friendly policies
10. Be purposeful



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## Questions, Comments and Ideas



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