

Rubric: Design an Activity to Promote Social Presence

Description:

Social presence is the ability of learners to project their personal characteristics to others. It is accomplished through affective, interactive, and cohesive talk. For social presence to support online courses, it must support learning, and not just be socializing for its own sake. Learners will feel they are in an environment that is supportive of asking questions and exploring ideas.

Alignment:

This rubric would provide guidance on the elements to include in a social presence activity as well as permit learners to self-assess or to have others assess their performance. In addition, the tool could be used by an instructor to provide feedback on the adequacy of the social presence activity.

Note: The activity designed may not meet every goal in the matrix below; however, it should contain aspects of each criterion.

Criterion	Exemplary	Effective	Baseline
Interpersonal	Expresses emotions, expressions of vulnerability, use of humor or irony; acknowledges success, redirects lost focus	Encourages personalization of learner profile or messages (such as including pictures)	Encourages the use of reflection and personal disclosure; participant bio or introduction
Open	Continuations of discussion threads, refers explicitly to others' messages, quotes from others' messages, expresses appreciation or agreement; uses assuring tone; explicit statement of the safety of openly sharing and mutual respect; rules for etiquette	Utilizes recaps and summaries of responses and participation as it relates to content	Asks open-ended questions; instructor responds to messages; encourages reading and responding to others' posts
Cohesive	Fosters a sense of group belonging by referring to the group as an inclusive, safe space for disclosure, questioning, and learning; assures learners they are not alone; assures learners their work will be recognized and respected	Refers to others by name; assures learners there are others with whom they can connect	Refers to the course participants as a 'group'; uses inclusive language ("we", "us", "our"); uses greetings and closures