

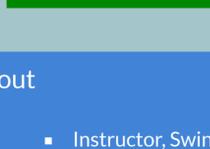
Embedding the Community of Inquiry Framework within Discussion Boards in Online Higher Education

Ameena L. Payne

Poster is [best viewed in browser](#) due to interactive elements.

Acknowledgement of Country

I acknowledge the Traditional Owners of Country. I pay my respect to all Aboriginal Elders, past and present.



About

- Instructor, Swinburne Online
 - Fellow, Advance HE
- Fellow, Higher Education Research and Development Society of Australasia (HERDSA)
- Student, Master of Education (Research Intensive)

[VIEW ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS & AFFILIATIONS](#)

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Hi folks! Thanks for making time to view this poster. I'm Ameena! I'm an educator at Swinburne Online where I facilitate fully online first-year foundational units in the disciplines of education and business. My students are mature age. In other words, they are 25 years or older entering university based on work experience. They are commencing with a wide range of backgrounds, academic, work and life experiences, but the one common theme is that they have had a significant amount of time away from the academic environment.

I have received several teaching excellence commendations due to my work as a vocational and higher education instructor and will be completing my Master of Education via Research Intensive this November which is cloud-based, or fully online.

I say all that as it relates to empathising with the student experience. I often share my own position as an online student, with my students. This will tie into a key element of the Community of Inquiry, social presence, and strategy #2, storytelling; this also relates to a concept called [intellectual candour](#) (Molloy & Bearman, 2018) - the balancing of vulnerability and credibility.



Introduction

Digital is no longer a buzzword but resides at the heart of higher education. Online learning is changing the ways in which institutions, academic staff and students engage and communicate.

Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, the twenty-first century was already seeing a shift to fully online higher education. Yet, the danger is that in our shift to online learning, digital environments will simply uphold the status quo. The proxy measures of "engagement" are active presence and involved participation.



Did you know?



According to the Social Research Centre's [2021 report](#), positive ratings for student engagement of fully online (external) students in 2020 sat at a mere

33%

Through the lens of the [Community of Inquiry](#), the poster introduces strategies to engage students within discussion in the digital realm.

[Students in general](#) say a critical issue in online higher education has been a lack of adequate support, interaction and engagement with academic staff and peers. In Australia, [the data tells us](#) that students over the age of 25, those who study fully online, [Indigenous students](#), low SES, regional students and those with reported disability share [the lowest ratings of engagement](#).



A [discussion forum](#) is an information communication tool that can support structured and semi-structured learning. They are asynchronous, interactive spaces for students to digitally connect, academically and socially, with their peers and their e-moderator.

Community of Inquiry

The illustration below shows how the three types of presence overlap to provide a balanced and optimised educational experience. The concept of presence in online teaching builds on the body of work of John Dewey, Arthur W. Chickering, Zelda F. Gamson, and many others studying the psychological and sociological aspects of teaching, learning and computer mediated communication.

Social presence is demonstrated by "communication behaviours that enhance closeness to and nonverbal interaction with another" (Rourke et al., 2001, p. 3).

Social Presence

[Learn more](#)

Reflecting "high-order knowledge acquisition and application", cognitive presence is most associated with critical thinking (Garrison et al., 2001, p. 6).

Cognitive Presence

[Learn more](#)

Anderson and colleagues (2001) define teaching presence as the design, facilitation and direction of cognitive and social processes for the purposes of realising personally meaningful and educational learning outcomes.

Setting Climate

Selecting Content

Teaching Presence

[Learn more](#)

Supporting Discourse

OPTIMISED EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

The [cognitive theory of multimedia learning](#) assumes that the way that we perceive, interpret and use information includes dual channels for visual/pictorial and auditory/verbal processing.

We should use multi-media in illustrative and organisational ways to gain students' attention and to add visual appeal.

The Socratic approach to questioning is based on intellectual, introspective dialogue. The aim is to scaffold critical and dialectical thinking.

A summary is a discussion board post which acknowledges student contributions.

Summarising and weaving

[Learn more](#)

Weaving expands upon the conversation and add value to participants contributions.

Multi-media

[Learn more](#)

Socratic questioning

[Learn more](#)

Dialogue is crucial to the student experience. Storytelling should incorporate personal or professional experiences that align to concepts being taught.

Affiliative humour and storytelling

[Learn more](#)

Reframes aim to reproduce the material in an interesting form, picking out the main points and posing a discussable prompt.

Reframes

[Learn more](#)

The Student Voice



Ameena was engaging and thoughtful in her responses and feedback. In discussion boards, she tailored her responses to each of us individually, and gave us insights and observations to think about to broaden our learning. She provided a lot of guidance and I felt like she was readily available for questions or assistance. She was prompt with her responses [...] I really loved how she engaged through video, and the way she laid out how posts, with colours and gifs etc was quite engaging and made me look forward to reading them.

Ameena is very engaging and active. She replied promptly to the students. She also encouraged us to think outside the box to work things out and didn't just feed us answers but guided us in the right direction. Her knowledge of resources is also extensive and helpful.

Ameena was amazing at engaging everyone in discussion and she provided a lot of additional sources for constructing our learning, she was always quick at responding to questions.

Paper:

[Student Success Journal](#)

Presentation:

[AdvanceHE Student Engagement Conference](#)

[Workshop \(slides\):](#)

[AdvanceHE Curriculum Symposium: Post-Pandemic Curriculum](#)

[GET IN TOUCH](#)

Thank you for viewing!

Enjoy the rest of the conference!