Suggestions for Distance Learning Learning Communities

(For additional information contact cpastors@att.net.)

service activities

Your learning community could provide support to those experiencing concerns related to the current pandemic through a local food bank or other organization.

Members of your learning community could participate in a pen pal program with an elementary or middle school, veterans center, or other organization.

Members of your learning community could "adopt" a nursing home to provide residents with letters, activities, virtual post cards, etc.

The Center for Digital Civic Engagement offers practice considerations and strategies for including service-learning in online courses: https://cdce.wordpress.com/service-learning-inonline-courses/

Peer mentor assessment--asked them what went well with the session, what could have gone better and what they would do differently if they did it again (change how they planned or the structure itself)

https://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching/assessment-andevaluation/

A pre/post-test about campus resources could help you identify potential services on campus to discuss in your learning community.

virtual zoom meeting with student orgs, department chair, and students and utilize breakout rooms to provide student orgs the opportunity to talk more with students!

Digital scavenger hunt

I'm planning to build groups of 3 students, where these students will share amongst themselves their goals and challenges from the week. I will be giving participation points for these interactions and looking for feedback from these triplets to contribute to group

discussion/motivation during weekly class sessions.

other online gaming options that they may be
able to run for student to be able to interact virtually

Rather than calling things module 1, 2, 3 - get creative with titles:
mission, innings, stages, video game levels, superheroes, etc.

Online Town is a video-calling experience that lets multiple
people hold separate conversations in parallel and lets you walk in,
out and around those conversations just as easily as you would in
real life. (Free) https://theonline.town/

https://www.presence.io/blog/53-virtual-activity-ideas-tokeep-
college-students-engaged-during-covid-19/
Highlights:
- One-word Stories
- 5 Things
- Short Story, Poem, Quote, or TedTalk of the Day

providing opportunities for creating study groups with
other students in their LC is of great importance

Keeping videos 5 minutes and shorter has been really helpful in
terms of getting students to watch them all the way through.

It's helpful to have a few assignments due each week and all types
of assignments due on the same day (ex: discussion posts due
Mondays; responses due Wednesdays)

weekly discussions

https://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/effective-teachingstrategies/
engagement-to-autonomy-four-strategies-for-faceto-
face-or-online-learning-in-rst-year-experience-courses/

https://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching/teachingformat/
blended-learning-and-the-ipped-classroom/

after returning an assignment make a
post addressing common class-wide issues in the assignment with
screenshots/examples. For me, this takes the place of what I
would do in a F2F class the day after an assignment is returned.
Can also be done via video.

Our students do a career themed semester group project that focuses on ways they can get to their future career (minors/double majors, tech electives, internships...etc). I would like to see this still included but if needed moved to an online platform where students can still create and share some sort of project and learn from their peers.

have my freshmen journal weekly to be introspective about their learning, their goals, etc

Get students reading articles and provide a space with mediation so that students can continue to ask questions and feel supported.

Zoom active learning strategies from NYU Steinhardt: https://sites.google.com/nyu.edu/nyu-steinhardttoolkit/instructional-activities/zoom-activities?authuser=0

Curated list of instructional techniques and suggestions for use in online synchronous, online asynchronous, and physically distanced classroom settings: https://docs.google.com/document/d/15ZtTu2pmQRU_eC3gMccVhVwDR57PDs4uxlMB7Bs1os8/edit#heading=h.x0t12nf8esep

List of instructional strategies created by the Center for Teaching at Vanderbilt University: https://cft.vanderbilt.edu/2020/06/active-learning-in-hybridand-socially-distanced-classrooms/

A crowdsourced list of online teaching tools/technology: https://docs.google.com/spreadsheets/d/1skxI8D70Ed34x6cjjVxCGzIZro64efQRTZXOdEt_7eg/edit?cid=cqt&source=ams&sourceId=3308115#gid=261107201

One idea could be structuring reflections as a "what", "so what," "now what" format. Have them think about an activity/reading/resource and answer those questions. "What" - what was the activity/resource/etc. "So What" - what is important/interesting about doing/learning about this. "Now What" - what are you going to do moving forward with what you learned.

During midterm week, I find it helpful to post a midterm check-in survey (students can complete for extra credit). This allows

students to reflect on their work and engagement with the online class. It also gives instructors some more candid and immediate feedback to be implemented into the rest of the semester. These are the questions I use:

1) At this point in the semester, are there any course concepts that are unclear? Please name them.

2) What questions do you have about our course in general (topic, policies, etc.)?

3) What can you do to improve your work during the second half of the semester?

4) What can I do to help?

Zoom breakout rooms can be used for think, pair, share activities.

Need to provide more structure to student teamwork expectations to balance responsibilities among members, if students are all working remotely
I've found Group Contracts to be really helpful with this.

Do a quick Google search for "good questions for getting to know someone" and share this list (in full or selected questions) with your peer mentors and encourage them to utilize the questions during 1:1 meetings early on.

A tool where each participant records their own response to a prompt. Asynchronous popcorn - esque.
https://info.flipgrid.com/

Doing an activity and have them do a TTYP in a breakout could be random or pre-assigned so they are consistently talking to different people.

To avoid awkward silences that usually occur in a space have students call on the next person so that everyone gets to talk and everyone starts learning each others names.

In synchronous course meetings, assign students to one of several break-out sessions to chat amongst themselves

Make use of mentimeter.com, an interactive presentation software (menti.com)

Use two-minute intro videos about themselves. Have them respond

to at least X other videos.

Use flipgrid – Educator Dashboard re free video discussion (admin.flipgrid.com) for 10 minute lectures. Have students comment in 15 second – two minute bits (see flipgrid.com/lcsummit)

To help "humanize" yourself online, put your camera on as you prepare for each session.

At the end of each online session, ask for "two likes and a wish" for what took place during that session.