

# Building a Social Presence for online learning

A knowledge of strategies for enhancing learning in blended and remote environments can enable you to:

- Achieve social interaction at a distance.
- Enable remote learners to participate in collaborative activities.
- Identify technologies for virtual group work.
- Evaluate those technologies.

Take this poll!

How do you feel about social interaction in distance learning? Take **this poll** and view the results (not for research or dissemination).

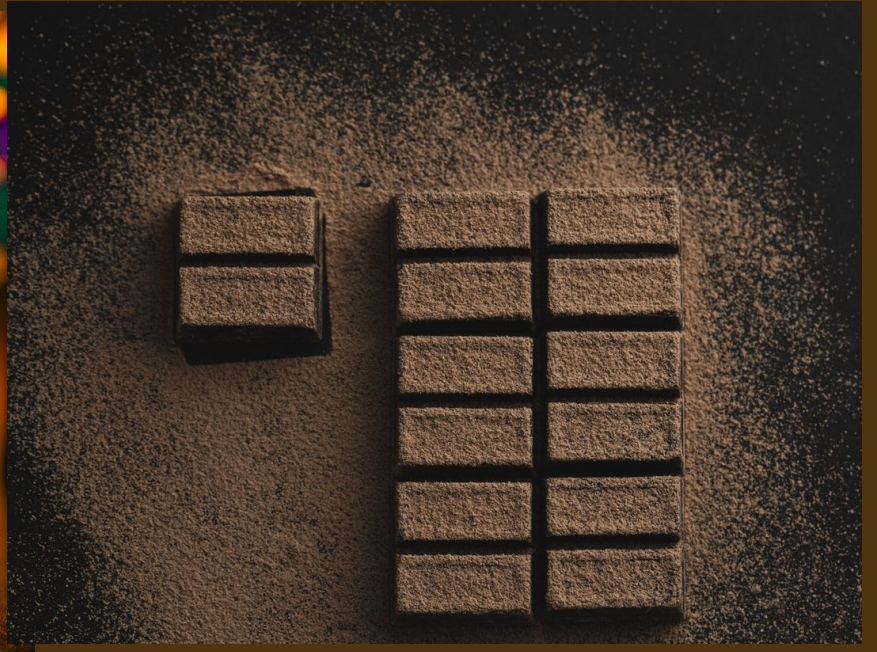
## Mindset fix needed?

Wherever you reside on the scale of acceptance of online learning, you may benefit from a growth mindset to encourage you to persevere. Watch the video at right which summarizes the seminal work of a prominent expert, Carol Dweck.



## Ideas for engaging activities for webcasted classrooms

IDEA	VALUE
Welcome the laptop to the classroom	Within reason, students can contribute information on-the-fly to an academic discussion
Used shared documents	Google Apps or MS Office 365 documents for collaborative work.
Zoom breakout for remote students	Virtual "rooms" where handfuls of students can work on projects
Let students use smart phones	As with laptops, students can mine the cloud for insights and ideas.
Call "time outs" on use of tech	Turn the classroom into a pure seminar by having students disconnect



## Web conferencing tips

- Make eye contact with the camera lens as you would with the eyes of a student.
- In a web conference, mute all microphones to avoid feedback.
- Be seen! Semiotics (non-verbals) are important even via video camera!
- Ask your students to turn their cameras on as well so you can see their non-verbals.
- Turn off cameras if bandwidth is not enough and the meeting slows down too much.

## Chunk lessons

- Keep lectures short and break up with active learning activities & experiences.
- Be consistent with lecture/activity format from lesson to lesson.

## Use scenarios; case studies

Sequence of events:

1. Present the facts of the case in an on-demand multimedia presentation.
2. Describe the task that each group is to complete.
3. Use other directed, self-paced methods to spur critical thinking, such as group discussions.
4. Monitor the group activity.
5. Have the group submit their findings (written work; live presentation, or both).
6. Create opportunity for reflection.

## Asynchronous Discussion Tips

1. Write open-ended questions for a variety of answers, not just one "right" answer.
2. For self-introductions, respond to each student to establish a presence.
3. For later discussions, weigh in less frequently; let the replies build.
4. Challenge, be contrarian, ask follow-up questions, engage.
5. Listen with your "eyes" to the students' voices.

## Asynchronous Learning Groups

- Provide direction on how to access groups.
- Make the students demonstrate access.
- Make use of group features such as -- collaborative documents, -- discussions, -- web conferencing.
- Assign written work for groups submission.
- Assign asynchronous discussions to groups.
- Use collaboration boards (e.g. [webwhiteboard.com](http://webwhiteboard.com), [free sign-up](http://free sign-up))
- in Canvas, use Nearpod (which has collaboration tools and whiteboards)

