

TOPkit DIGEST

Bringing TOPkit Digest To You

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COVID-19

#KeepTeaching Movement



You are not alone in your efforts to support faculty and programs as higher education institutions transition to remote instruction. You are not alone in the struggle to relay pedagogical and technical know-how to faculty in the most expedient way possible. Know that we are behind you in your efforts to lead the charge of the #KeepTeaching

movement, because we, too, fully appreciate the importance of our students' need to keep learning in the face of this national emergency. In this issue of the TOPkit Digest, we offer key tips to sustain your momentous efforts.

“As we work to create light for others, we naturally light our own way.” ~ Mary Anne Radmacher

VIDEO TIP

Social Presence - Why It's Important in Online Courses

| Social Presence |



Professors utilize video to increase social presence in online courses. Social presence increases student-student interactions, student satisfaction, perceived depth of learning.

MUST-READ ANNOUNCEMENTS

Perhaps you're considering the Institute for Emerging Leadership in Online Learning (IELOL) 2020 for optimizing your leadership capacity. This is an excellent time to [apply](#).

Register for the [Online CoLAB Networking Event](#), 04/14/20, from 2:00 p.m. - 3:30 p.m.

A speed networking event that connects instructional designers and technology professionals! The event will:

- Create a safe and engaging online environment in which participants can meet each other, exchange ideas and build foundations to start conversations and collaborations;
- Spark collaborations, creativity, innovation and partnerships;

Support the participants' engagement in the TOPkit Community.

TOP TIPS

Humanizing Online Learning with Social Presence



The most effective courses are not necessarily polished nor riddled with high-tech tools, but the courses that make a difference in students' lives are those facilitated by genuinely caring faculty, and it shows. Students just want to know that their faculty members care about them. TOPkit Workshop 2020 keynote Michelle Pacansky-

Brock articulated this message of humanizing online education. We hope you take to heart these timely tips embodying this philosophy.

#1 - Utilize Video and Audio Discussion Boards.

Idea! Instead of typing ideas, let students create 30-second video responses in Flipgrid to a topic to increase interactivity and community, and allow students to show who they are.

#2 - Encourage Personal Reflection And Disclosure.

Idea! Create a weekly “check-in” discussion with the Jelly Baby Tree. Gauge how the students were feeling in terms of their involvement with the course, how well they felt they were being supported, and how they perceived themselves in terms of how well they were balancing their various academic, professional and personal commitments.

#3 - Show Students Your Brilliant Personality!

Create asynchronous weekly videos guiding students through the course content. Humor, emotions, self-disclosure through content and announcements are ways of interjecting allusions of physical presence. (Paquette, 2016)

#4 - Use Self-Reflective Topics to Break The Ice.

Have students take a personality test as an icebreaker and reflect on the result and how it affects their learning. MBTI-style tests can be helpful in aiding teachers in learner differences and the learning process.

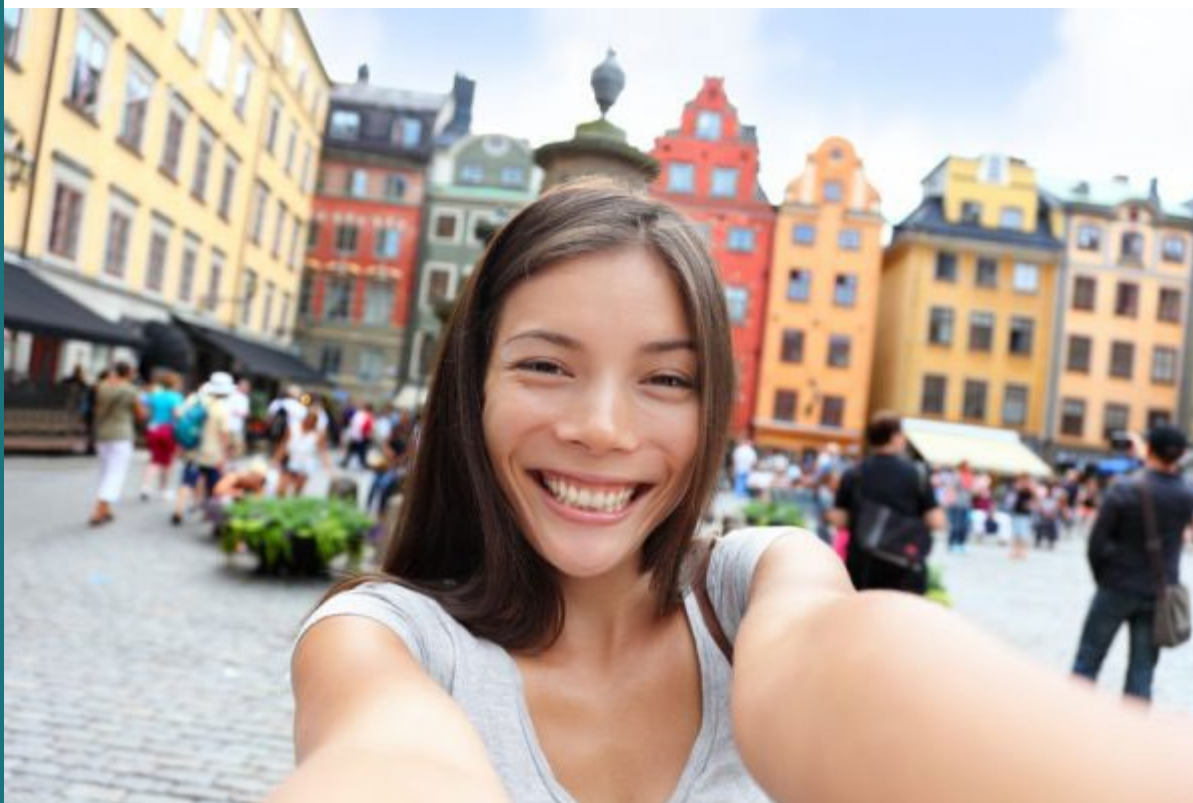
#5 - Provide Timely, Respectful, and Caring Feedback.

All students want to feel like their assignments are not just being graded, but really seen and evaluated. Feedback is an excellent way for teachers and students to connect. This includes ensuring feedback is 1) timely, 2) respectful and thorough, and 3) personalized and caring to show that you care about their outcomes in the course.

Charlotte Jones-Roberts, M.A., Instructional Designer, University of Central Florida

FROM THE COMMUNITY

Building Community with Creative Videos



With so many topics suggesting the use of video as an effective means of building community, making a course personal and reducing redundancy I thought I would share a resource on video production. Producing creative quality videos for courses does not necessarily require loads of equipment and studio facilities. This Canvas based open access workshop offers tools, strategies and ideas on how to develop creative (not boring) video for courses. Check out this [Creative Video Workshop](#) to get content ideas for your own workshop!

Alex Bitton-Bailey, Academic Innovation Specialist, University of Florida Center for Teaching Excellence

Explore Using Videos



TOP COMMUNITY TOPICS

- [TOPkit Workshop](#)
- [Checklists & Rubrics](#)
- [Sample Course](#)
- [About Us](#)
- [Introduction to Faculty Development Models](#)

References

Paquette, P. (2016). Instructing the instructors: Training instructors to use social presence cues in online courses. *Journal of Educators Online*, 13(1), 80-108.

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Teaching Online Preparation Toolkit

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