Clear Space for Learning

Redesigning an Online First-year Writing Course

Department of Writing and Rhetoric
Oakland University
May 14-15, 2014

Cast

- Marshall “Snidely” Kitchens - The Man in Charge!
- Laura Gabrion - Very Special Lecturer!
- Christina “Sonic” Moore - The Professor Known as Best Presenter!
- Shaun “Knuckles” Moore - The Professor Formerly Known as Best Presenter!
- Sheryl “Tails” Ruszkiewicz - Pirate Skills!
- Rebecca Rivard - Ninja Skills!

Course Redesign Project

First Year Writing Online

Marshall Kitchens, Chair
Department of Writing and Rhetoric
Oakland University

Preparing Educators for Online Writing Instruction: Principles and Processes

1. **Investigation**
2. **Immersion**
3. **Individualization**
4. **Association**
5. **Reflection**

Hewett and Ehmann, 2004
National Council for Teachers of English

technorhetoric.net/10.1/praxis/hewett/

High-Impact Educational Practices:
What They Are, Who Has Access to Them, and Why They Matter

First Year Experiences
Writing Intensive Courses
Collaborative Assignments and Projects
Undergraduate Research
Global Learning
Community-based Learning

George D Kuh, 2008
Association of American Colleges and Universities

aacu.org/leap/hip.cfm

Measures in Engaging Online Students in First-year Writing

Consistent Structure and Open Communication

Laura Gabrion

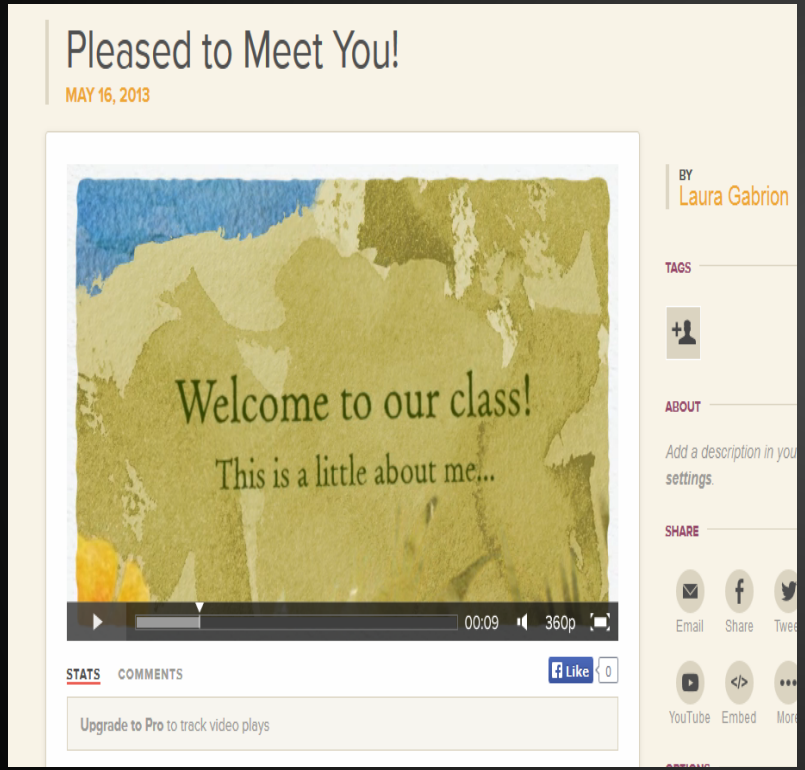
Discussion Questions

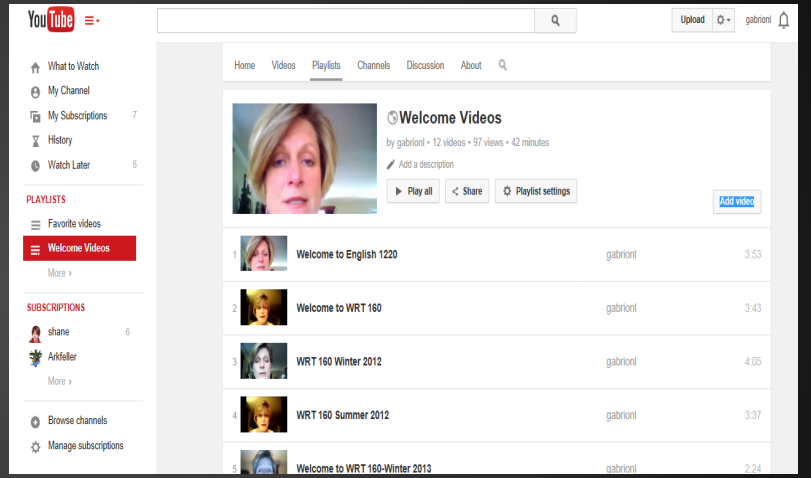
- What do you know about your online students?
- How does this factor into your course design?

Structure in the Online Classroom

- Begin with an interactive welcome forum
- Maintain an organized approach to content delivery
- Include weekly reminders
- Provide students with opportunities to ask questions or express concerns
- Use communication in an encouraging and inviting manner

“Getting to Know You”

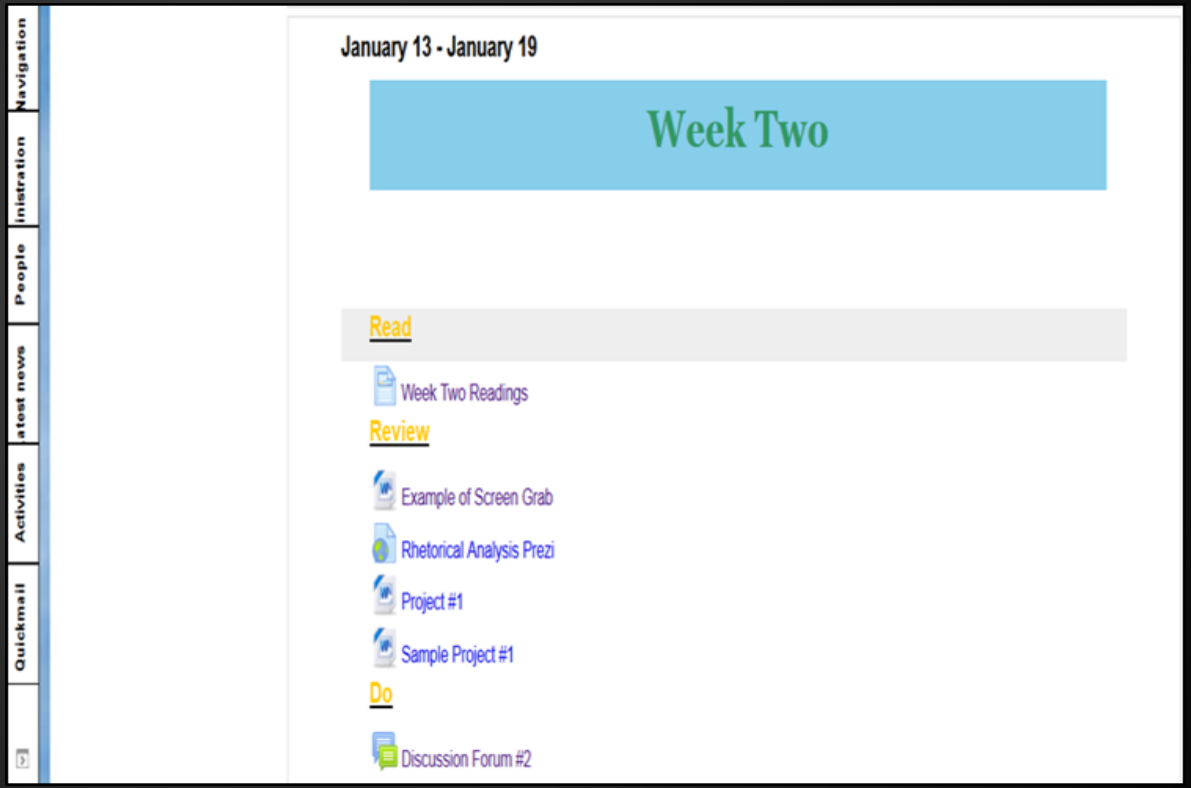




“At the beginning of the course, you will need to spend time interacting with individual learners…” (Stavredes, 2011).

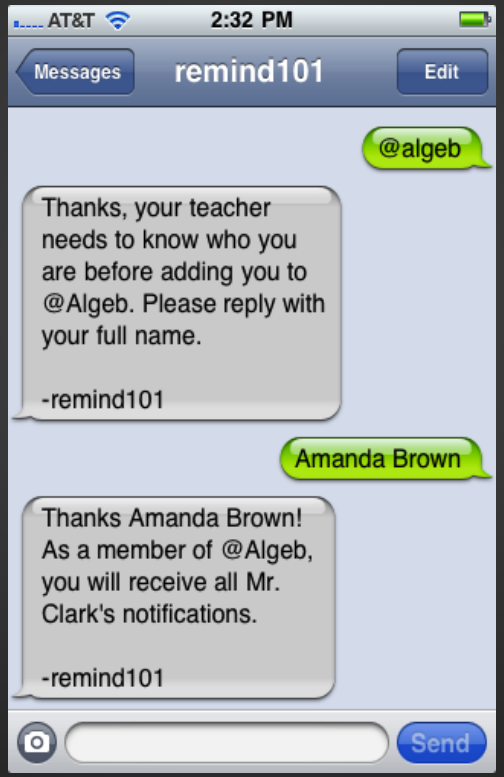
Organizing the Online Classroom

"...a well-constructed course is one that is logical in its design, easy to navigate, and inviting to the user" (Palloff & Pratt, 2001).



Communicating in the Online Classroom

"If the students feel disengaged with the online setting, then any gains made by the convenience and flexibility of online education are for naught" (Surry, Stefurak, & Gray, 2010).



Directed Student Learning Using Completion Tracking

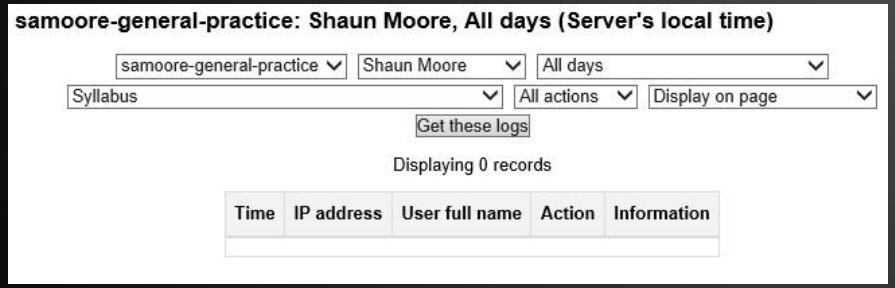
Shaun Moore

Discussion Questions

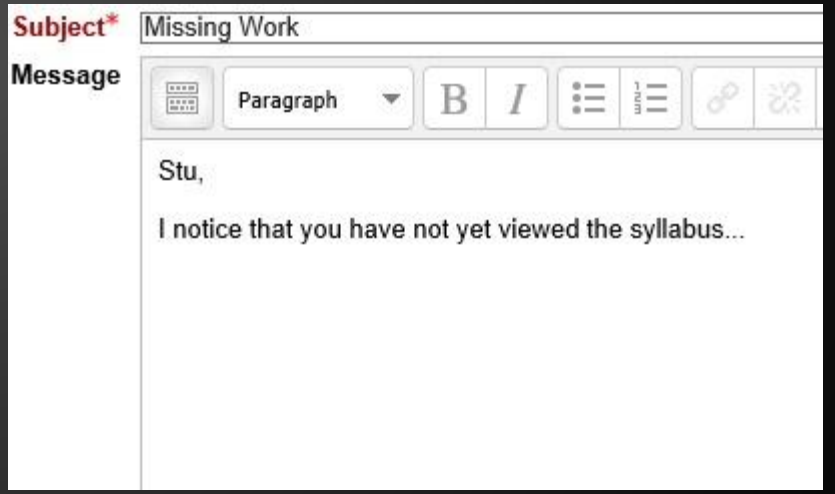
- How important is sequential learning in your online format?
- How do you know when students have engaged in your online content?

Inspector Moore

Moodle Logs



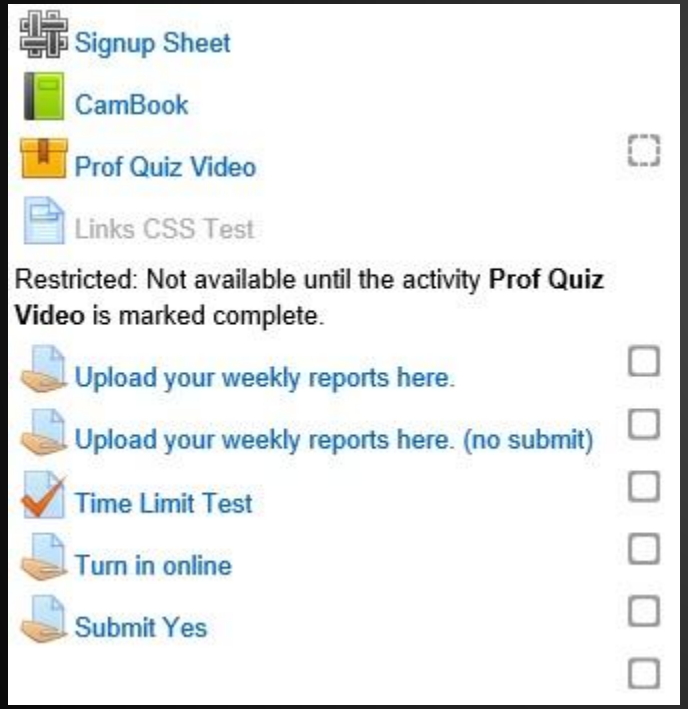
Badgering Emails

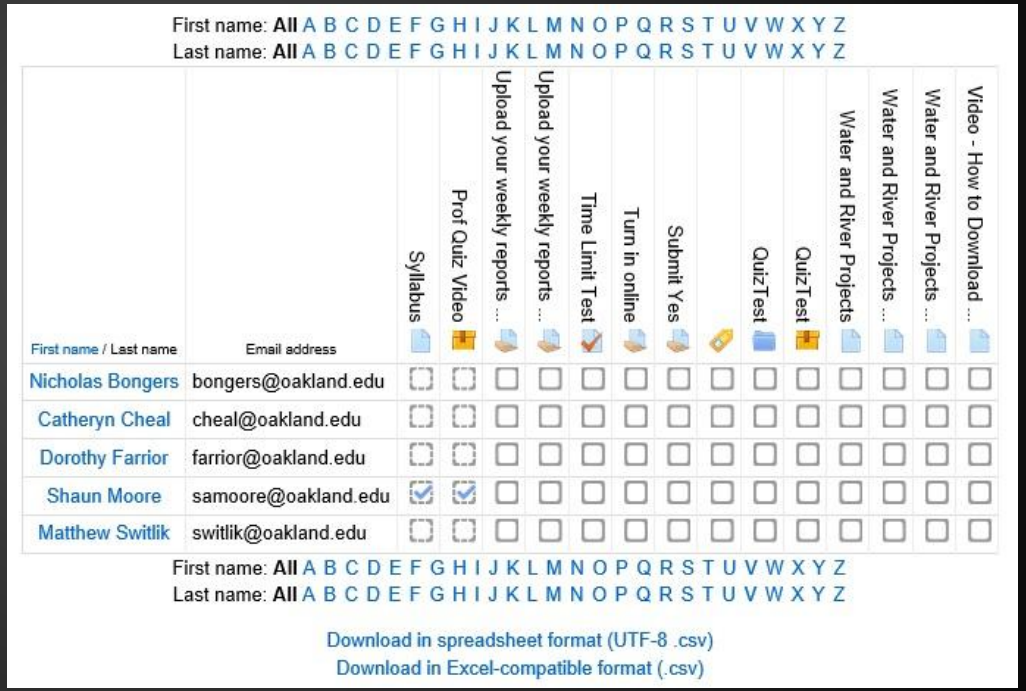


Completion Tracking

- Enables activity completion for all activities and resources.
- Allows the teacher to set completion criteria in a specific activity's settings.
- A check (tick) appears for the activity when the student meets set criteria.
- A criterion might be viewing, receiving a certain score or a student marking it as complete.

Completion Tracking Example





Limitations

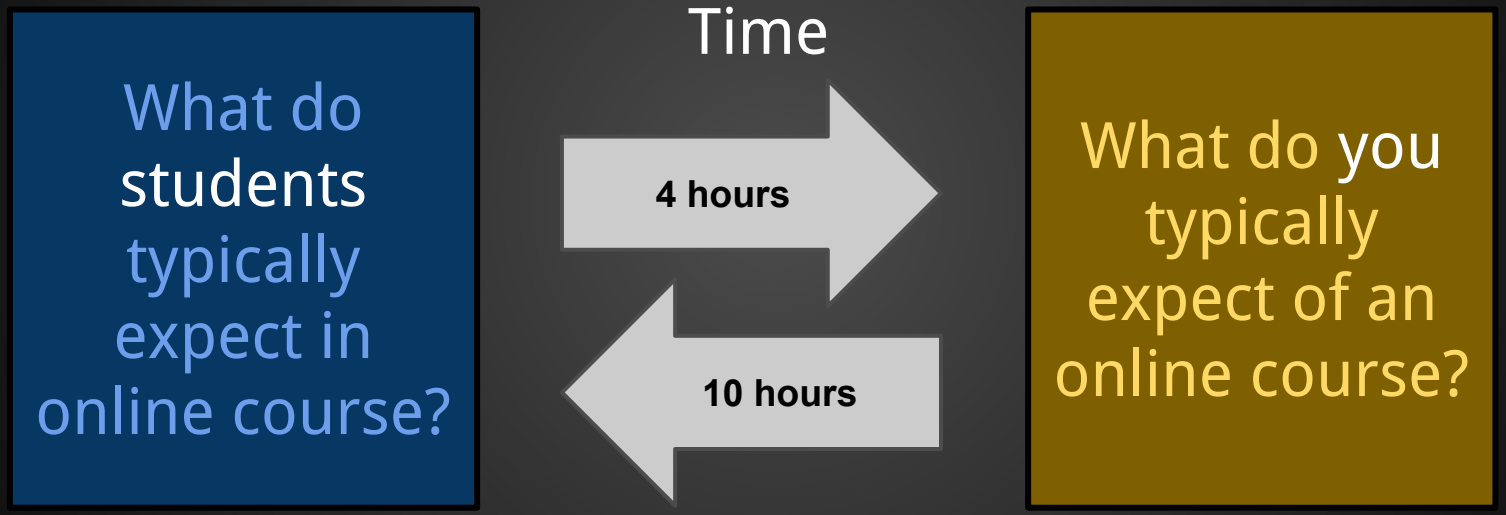
- Cannot guarantee that students are completing the item in all cases.
  - Can with activities like forums, quizzes, assignments.
  - Cannot with resources like videos, pdfs, links to webpages.
- If limits span between weeks, it could be confusing to students what they are required to do to open something up.

Setting Student Expectations

Christina Moore

Setting Student Expectations

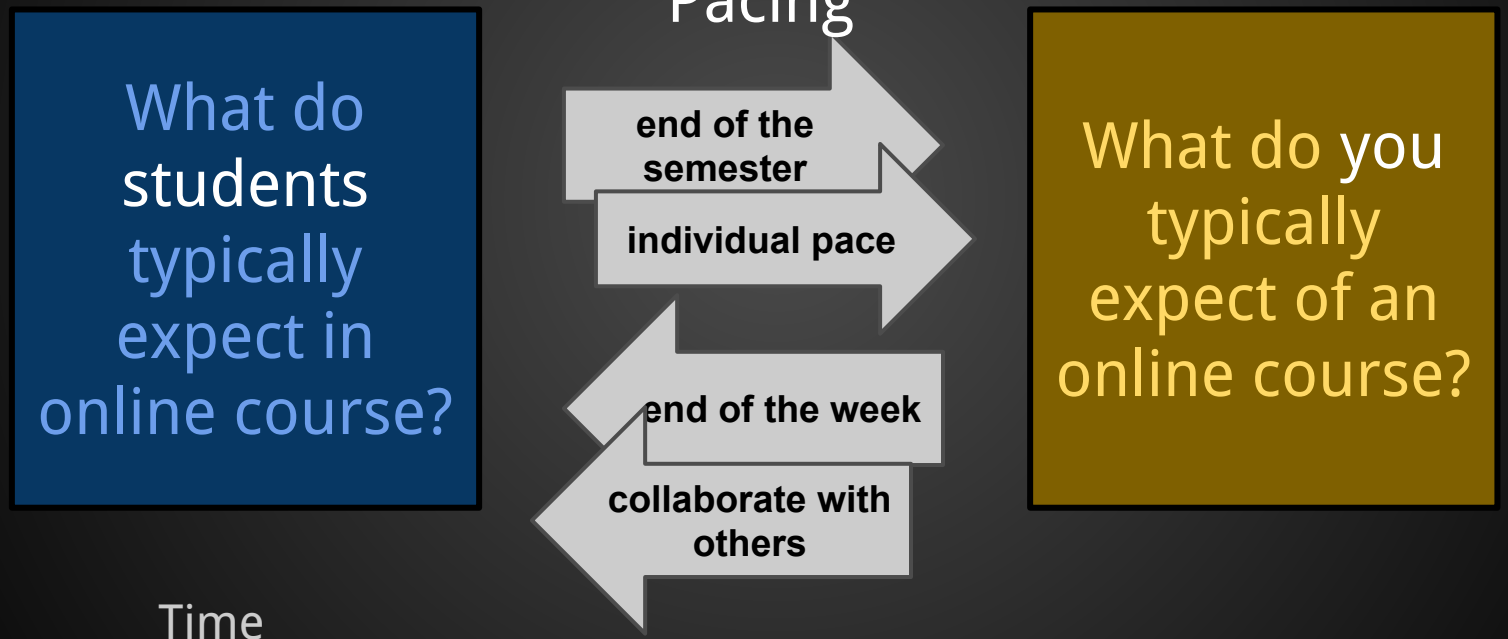
Discussion Questions



Setting Student Expectations

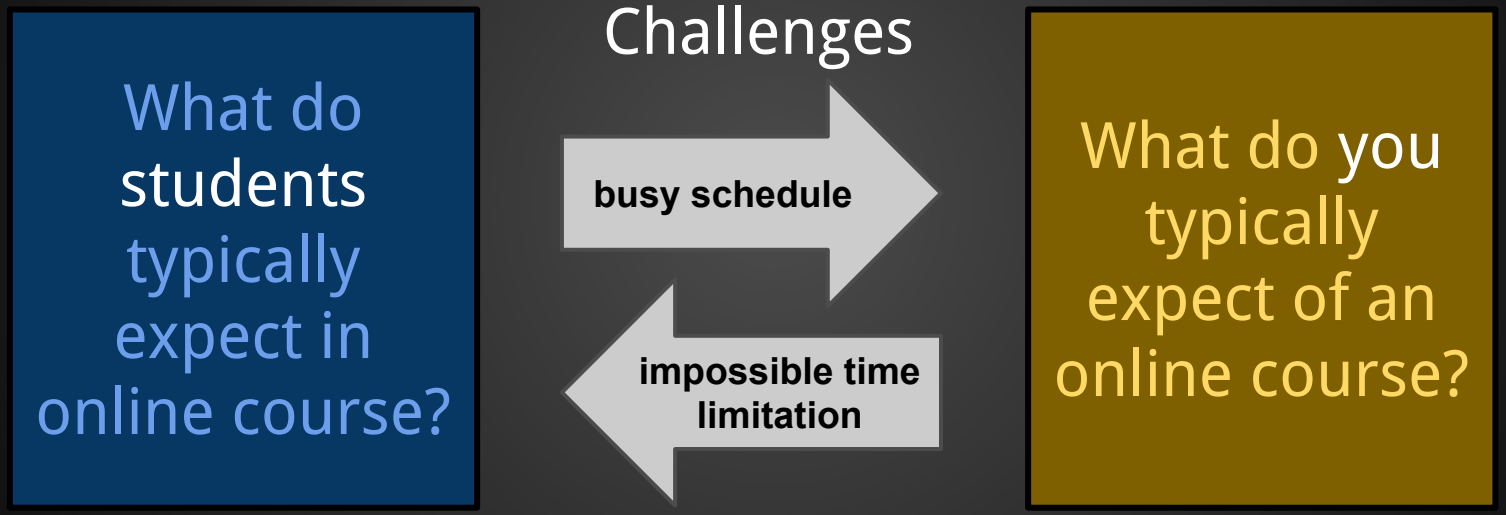
Discussion Questions

Pacing



Setting Student Expectations

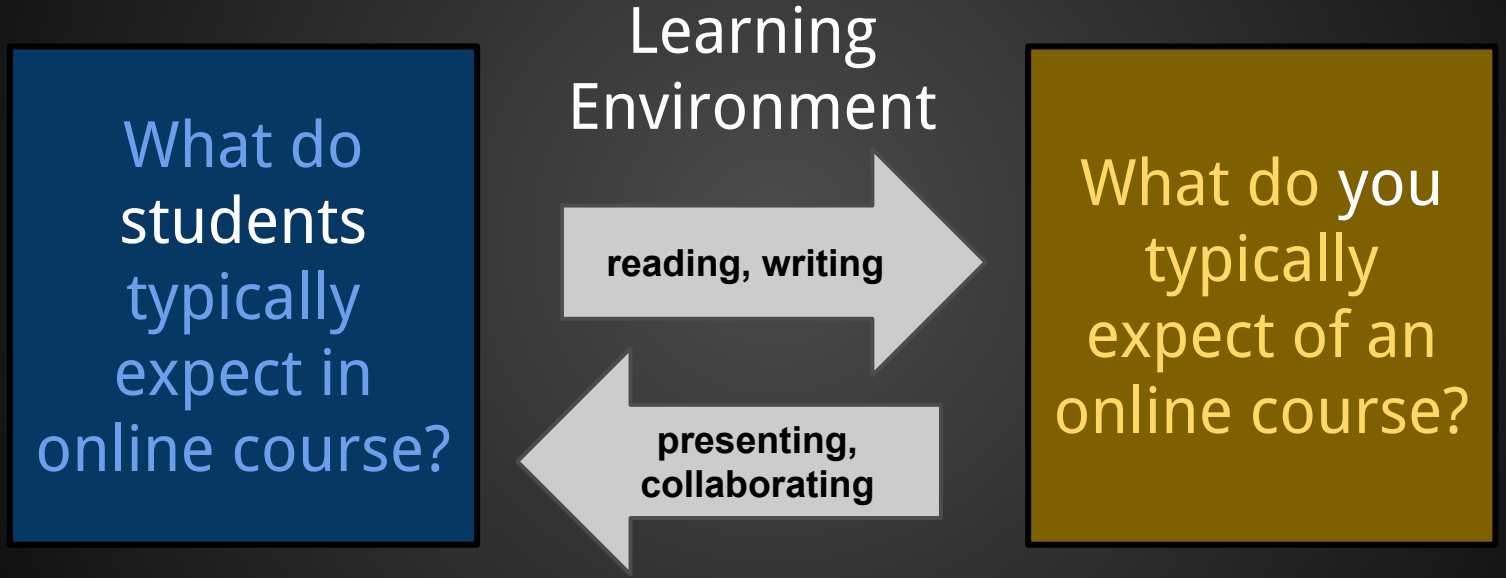
Discussion Questions



Time Pacing

Setting Student Expectations

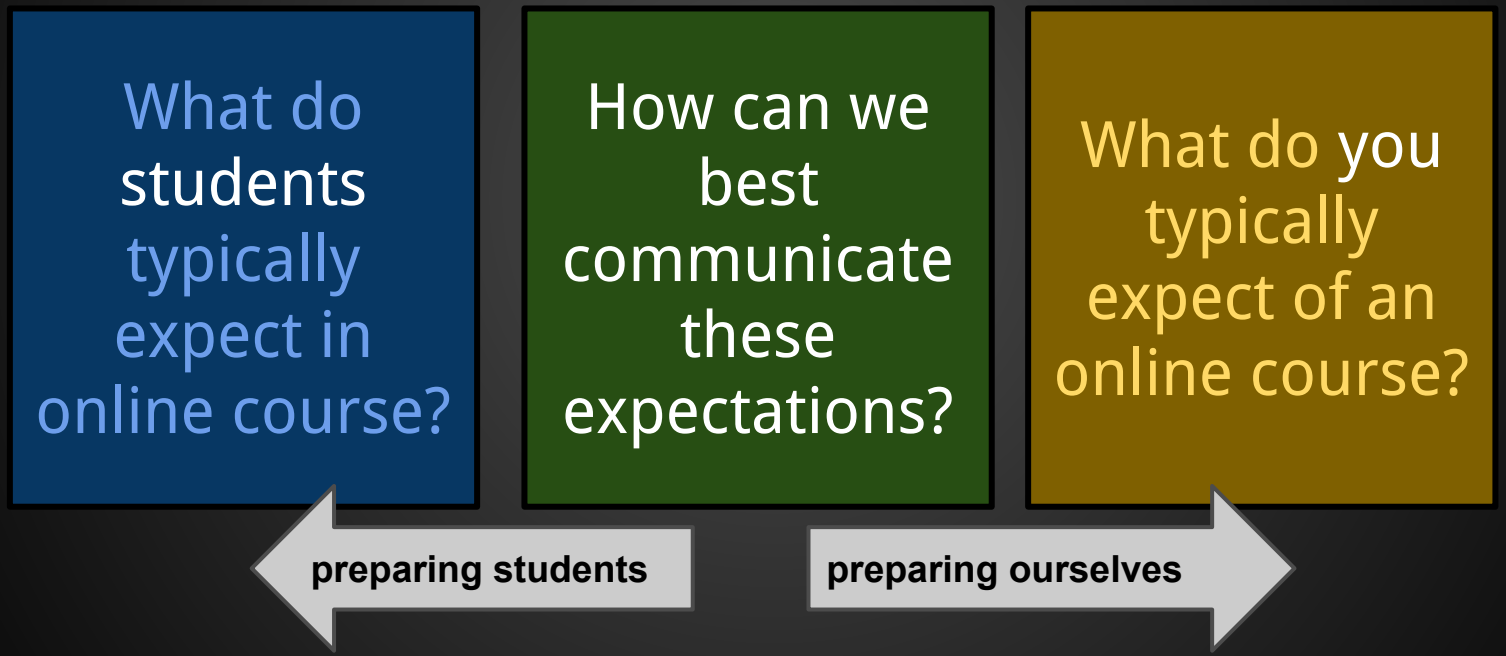
Discussion Questions



Time Pacing Challenges

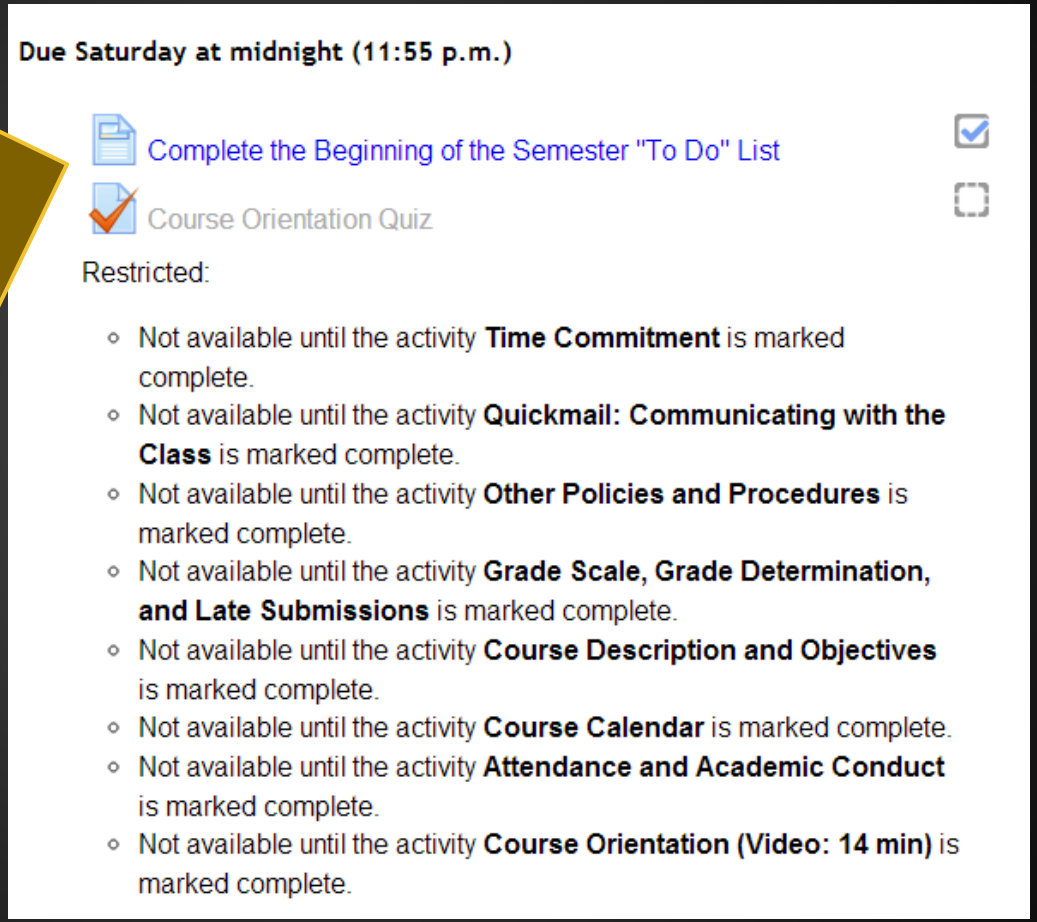
Setting Student Expectations

Discussion Questions

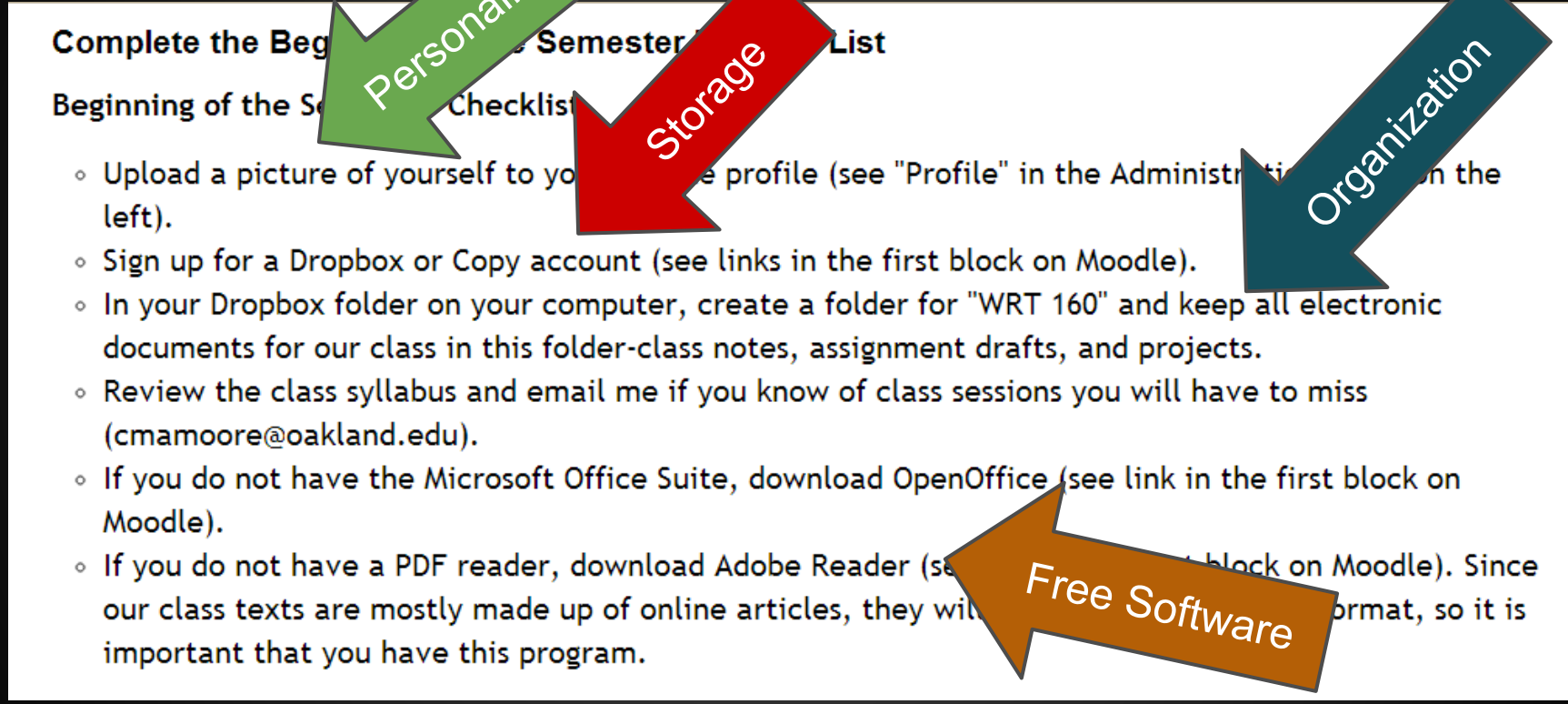


A Student's Pass Into the Class

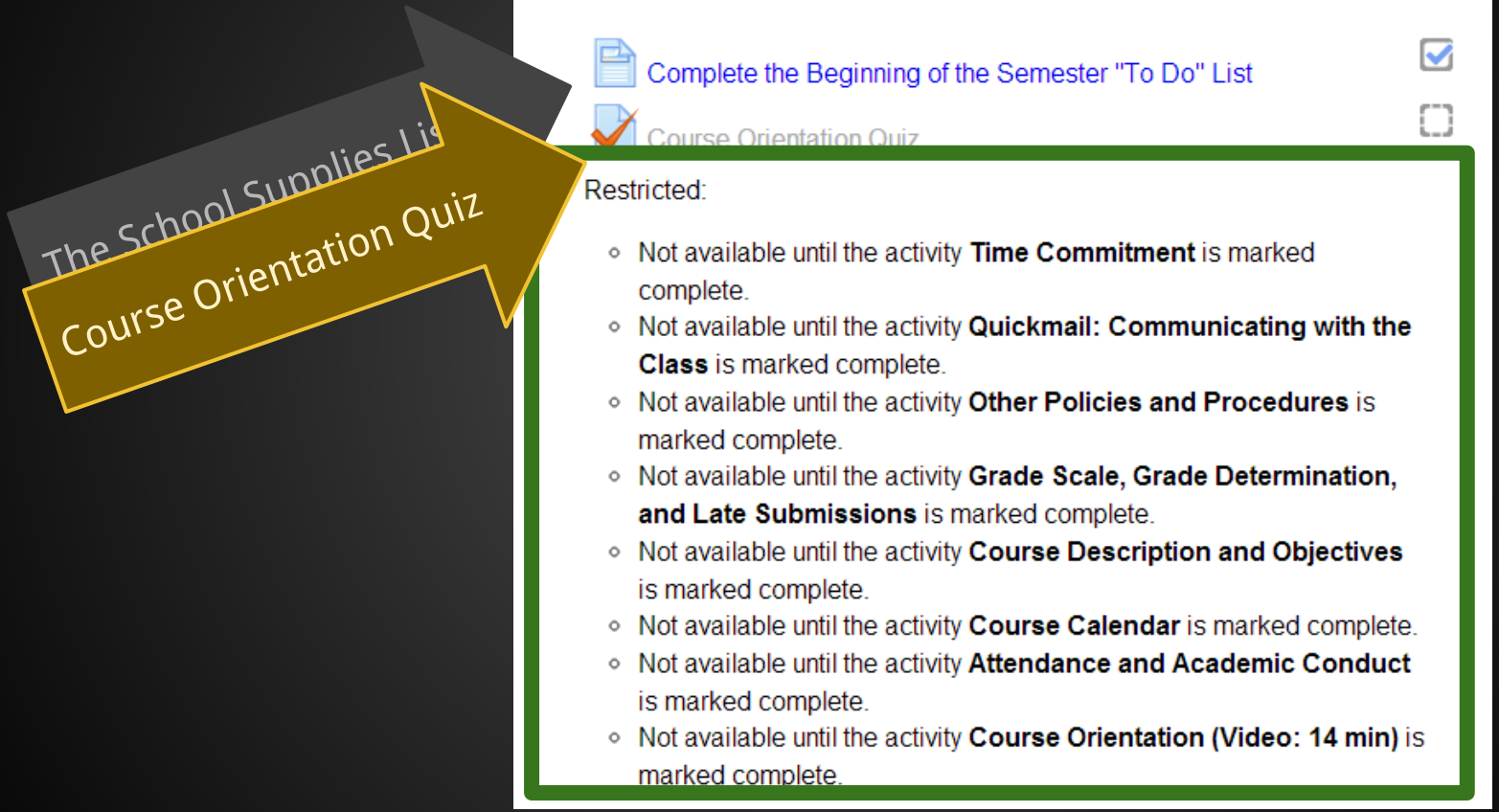
The School Supplies List



The Digital School Supplies List



A Student's Pass Into the Class



Orientation Goals

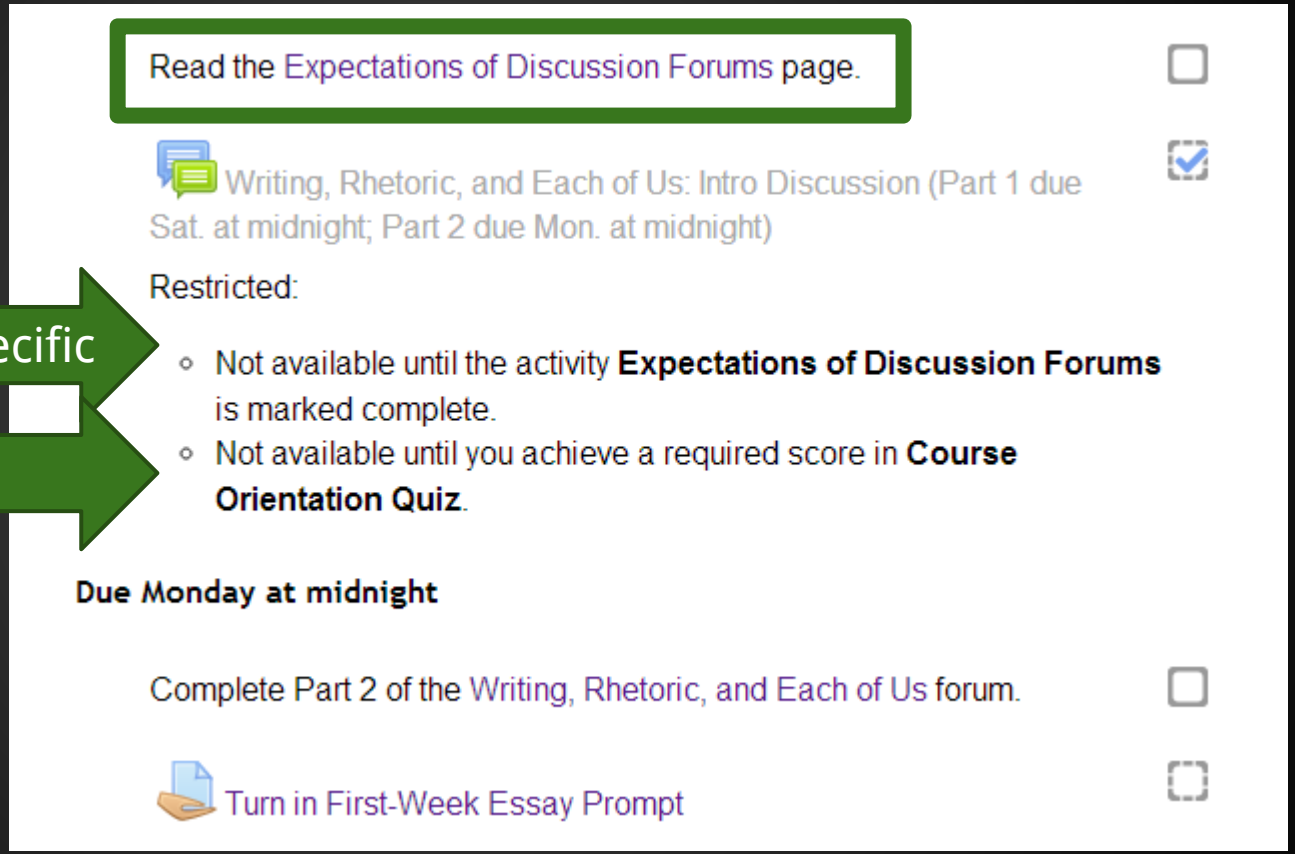
If you have issues using Moodle or an assignment is not working correctly, who can you contact for immediate assistance when I am not available?

Select one:

- a. University Technology Services, who is available through Kresge Library
- b. none of these
- c. Moodle Help, the link for which is in the top-left corner of our Moodle page
- d. a Kresge librarian

Situations for Support Services

A Student's Pass Into the Class



Measurements of Success

Reduced rate of questions with st

Less tech troubleshooting

Earlier drops before deadline

Self-regulated “early alert” measures

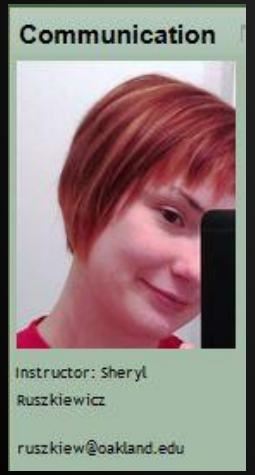
Improved evaluations

...as you can see I am a little behind. I came down with the stomach bug I...I will work my butt off to make sure everything gets caught up I promise. I understand that my grade will be affected.

I would ...say that I am usually not like this, but that is a lie! I always have trouble with classes right away. Usually I give up on the class altogether honestly. I have taken this exact class three others times between two different schools. I find this course really challenging for some reason, but the problem really lies in the fact that I give up on it after only a week or two.

Instructor Visibility and Classroom Community

Sheryl Ruszkiewicz



Creating an Online Community

Garrison (2007) discusses three elements of online community:

- Social presence
- Teaching presence
- Cognitive presence

Garrison, D. R. (2007). Online community of inquiry review: Social, cognitive, and teaching presence issues. *Journal of Asynchronous Learning Networks*. 11(1). 61-72.

Social: “Safe space” and Collaboration

How do I create social presence?

- Mini-biographies
- Group assignments
- Peer review and Dear reader letters
- Responding to students

Teaching: Share meaning, focus discussion

How do I create teaching presence?

- Share interest and self with students
- Photos, audio, and/or video
- Font and color choices
- Strategic discussion feedback

Cognitive: Connecting Knowledge

How do I create cognitive presence?

- Prior knowledge
  - “What do you know about…”
- Connect activities/assignments
  - “In your last assignment…”
- Personalized comments
  - “On your next assignment…”

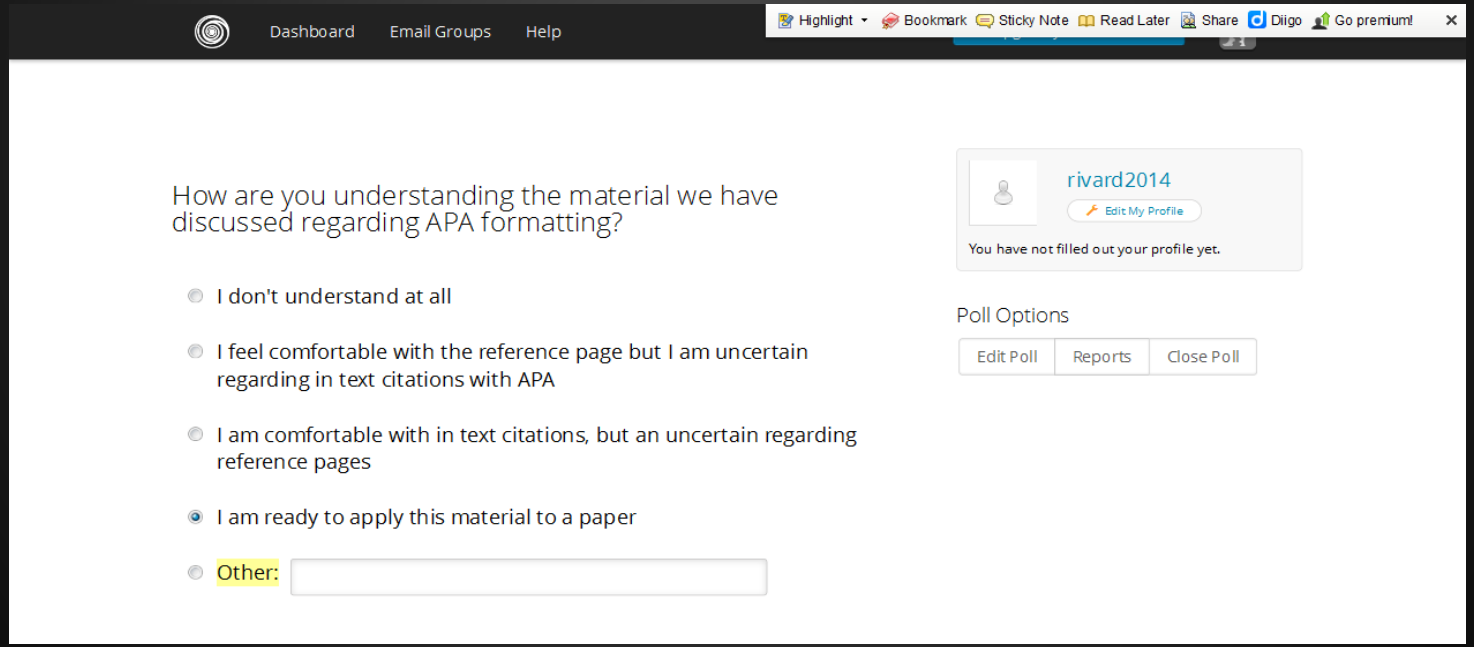
The Pedagogy of Proctological Online Support

Rebecca Rivard

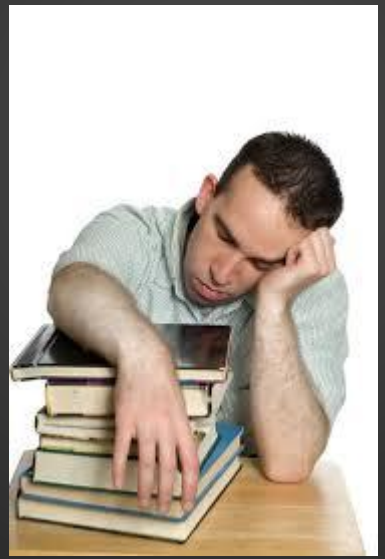
How do you usually confirm in a traditional classroom whether your students are understanding the material?

Anonymous polls

“the instructor must engage students in other digital-only ways to ‘take the emotional temperature’ (Hardiman, 2012, pg. 45) of the class and increase interaction with the students”



In what ways do you help to re-direct or keep the students on track and motivated when you never physically see them?



Keller's ARCS model for email and texting

Attention

Relevance

Confidence

Satisfaction

Hello Chris,

You will want to review the video regarding paraphrasing, summarizing and quoting to catch up on the work you missed this week.

There is an assignment due February 9th regarding this practice which is worth 10% of your final grade.

Please email me if you have any questions regarding this or any other assignment.

Let's work to get you back on track.

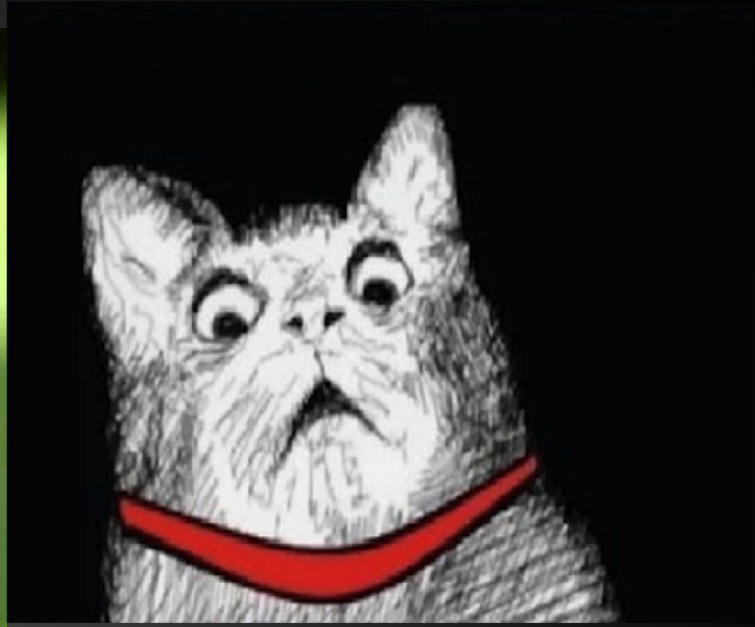
Keller, J. (2004). Development of the ARCS model of instructional design. *Journal of Instructional Development, 10* (3), 2-10.

Avoid “passive withdrawal” (Simpson 2004)

possible intervention points:

- post initial assessment
- non submission of assignment/test
- failure of an assignment
- pre-exam or paper to remind students of details or assignment specifications

Simpson, O. (2004, 19 1). The impact on retention of interventions to support distance learning. *Open Learning*, 79-96.



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Limitations

- loss of personal responsibility on the student’s part (have clear boundaries)
- you can’t save all of the students all of the time