Community of Inquiry Framework for Teaching Online

Online teaching can provide faculty and students with opportunities for growth. A significant determinant of student retention in a distant or online environment is faculty mediated community building. Faculty can help nurture and sustain students' sense of community or connectedness through the creation of a *Community of Inquiry* (Garrison, Anderson & Archer, 1999). Community of Inquiry is a framework that defines three types of presence necessary for students to have a high-quality educational experience online. Strong senses of presence in an online environment is a significant indicator of student success.

The three types of presence include: social, cognitive and teaching:

Social presence: The presence you establish as an instructor by projecting your "real" self into an online environment in an effort to create a sense of connectedness. Social presence is more than showing your face in a synchronous environment or responding to questions posed via email; rather it's your intentional effort to present your instructor personality through a variety of multimedia options. The social presence you create should set the climate for teaching and support the discourse necessary for cognitive presence.

Examples of social presence:
- Welcome video at the beginning of a course
- Video or audio feedback on assignments and/or assessments
- Quick replies to student questions via email or learning management system with social cues, such as emojis or gifs
- Storytelling

Cognitive presence: Instructors-establish cognitive presence in interaction with students as they work together to create meaning through continued communication. A cognitive presence is informed by the social presence and vice versa. In an online environment, it is important create opportunities for students to communicate and engage with each other beyond the surface. A course with high cognitive presence challenges students to integrate knowledge from other content areas and lived experiences that promotes sustainable discourse.

Examples of cognitive presence:
- Small group case-study assignments
- Synchronous debates
- Multiple opportunities for practice
- Problem-based discussion boards
- Audio recorded peer feedback

Teaching presence: An instructor establishes teaching presence through their course design and teaching methods. A teaching presence is informed by the social and cognitive presence. Social presence and teaching presence intersect to create a welcoming and supportive learning

environment, while cognitive presence and teaching presence intersect to regulate learning and determine the course content. Teaching presence includes all of the components the instructor uses to design and facilitate the learning experience.

Examples of teaching presence:
- High structured active learning
- Types of readings and diversity of authors
- Use of classroom response system
- Utilizing student questions to support teaching of content
- Segmented video recorded lectures (10 minutes or shorter)

Reference:

Garrison, D. R., Anderson, T., & Archer, W. (1999). Critical inquiry in a text-based environment: Computer conferencing in higher education. *The internet and higher education*, *2*(2-3), 87-105.