

Building Online Community

Given the lack of a physical presence in an online course, students need a way to connect with other students, and build a sense of an online community. It should be a community of communication, trust, and interaction, which includes you (teacher, guide, and facilitator).

Building the online community, does not happen overnight and it takes work on your part and students too. Consider appointing students to facilitate specific discussion topics, based on their unique skills, knowledge level, or ambition, and reward them for success. When using small and large group activities, have students take positions of leadership such as group leader, time manager, topic focus, technology manager, and archivist.

Remember the online community has lots of potential. It depends on your choice of application(s).

- Professional connections and relationships
- Study community
- Technology issues
- Course issues
- Teaching and learning resource (student life experiences)
- Group and team dynamics
- How to collaborate with others
- Plus others ...