



Understanding Presence in Online Language Learning

One of the central components of the Community of Inquiry framework is the relationship among different types of presence in an online community – teacher presence, social presence, and cognitive presence. Learning how to create and encourage these relationships will be key activities for facilitators hoping to build community in an online space.

Building community is an important part of online learning because it helps to combat feelings of isolation that a learner can experience while learning in an online environment. The reflections listed below have been adapted from a survey posted on the [Community of Inquiry website](#) and can help your understanding of presence in online environments.

Thinking about presence online is often a matter of putting yourself in a mindset for fostering community in an online space. Each of the reflections describe a salient action for promoting the three types of presence, and they can guide your actions as a facilitator in helping to develop community.

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For more information visit the [Community of Inquiry website](#) and explore the readings and resources.



Teaching Presence

DESIGN AND ORGANIZATION

- The facilitator clearly communicated important course topics.
- The facilitator clearly communicated important course goals.
- The facilitator provided clear instructions on how to participate in course learning activities.
- The facilitator clearly communicated important due dates/time frames for learning activities.

FACILITATION

- The facilitator was helpful in identifying areas of agreement and disagreement on course topics.
- The facilitator was helpful in guiding the class towards understanding course topics in a way that helped learners clarify their thinking.
- The facilitator helped to keep course participants engaged and participating in productive dialogue.
- The facilitator helped keep the course participants on task.
- The facilitator encouraged course participants to explore new concepts in this course.

DIRECT INSTRUCTION

- The facilitator helped to focus discussion on relevant issues.
- The facilitator provided feedback that helped learners understand their strengths and weaknesses.
- The facilitator provided feedback in a timely fashion.

Social Presence

AFFECTIVE EXPRESSION

- Getting to know other course participants gave learners a sense of belonging in the course.
- Learners were able to form distinct impressions of some course participants.
- Learners had a sense that online or web-based communication is an excellent medium for social interaction.



OPEN COMMUNICATION

- Learners felt comfortable conversing through the online medium.
- Learners felt comfortable participating in the course discussions.
- Learners felt comfortable interacting with other course participants.

GROUP COHESION

- Learners felt comfortable disagreeing with other course participants while still maintaining a sense of trust.
- Learners felt that their point of view was acknowledged by other course participants.
- Online discussions helped learners to develop a sense of collaboration.

Cognitive Presence

PROMPT

- Content, discussion, and questions posed in the course increased learner interest in course issues.
- Course activities piqued learner curiosity.
- Learners felt motivated to explore content-related questions.

EXPLORATION

- Learners utilized a variety of information sources to explore problems posed in this course.
- Brainstorming and finding relevant information helped learners resolve content-related questions.
- Online discussions were valuable in helping learners appreciate different perspectives.

INTEGRATION

- Combining new information helped learners answer questions raised in course activities.
- Activities helped learners construct explanations/solutions.
- Reflection on course content and discussions helped learners understand fundamental concepts in this course.



RESOLUTION

- Learners can describe ways to test and apply the knowledge created in this course.
- Learners have developed solutions to course problems that can be applied in practice.
- Learners can apply the knowledge created in this course to their work or other non-course related activities.

Content based on the COI Survey - <https://coi.athabascau.ca/coi-model/coi-survey/>

