

Creating Community in Canvas

Creating a sense of community in Canvas will be an important part of making this transition successful for your students. As we enter this time of social distancing, many students may feel isolated from each other, and many may also be new to interacting with their peers in an online course. Providing students with an opportunity to reconnect with their classmates and ask questions about their new learning format will go a long way toward addressing needs for interaction and support.

We suggest the following strategies:

- Establish a [netiquette policy](#) with guidelines for online interactions and share it you're your students.
- Create a “Meet & Greet” discussion board on Canvas where students can reconnect with their classmates and introduce themselves to classmates they don’t know already.
- Create an “Ask a Question / Answer a Question” discussion board where student can ask questions about the format of the online class, course content, or technology. Encourage students to respond to each other’s questions when they know the answer!

Sample language for the discussion boards follows – feel free to adapt for your needs!

Sample language for a Meet & Greet Board

Hello everyone and welcome to our Meet & Greet Board!

This is a space for you to reconnect with your classmates in [*your course name*] as we work together to move through the transition to online instruction. It is important for all of us that we continue to have a sense of a community, and I want you to have space here in Canvas to do that. Please feel free to share any or all of the following as a starting point:

- Your name and major
- Your previous experiences with online learning (if any)
- A picture of your pet(s), your favorite animal meme, or a song you've been listening to lately (just the name is fine or find it on YouTube and link it here!)

Be sure to take the chance to say hello to someone you already know or introduce yourself to someone new by reading and commenting on others' posts! It is also a great opportunity to get comfortable using discussion boards in Canvas if you haven't before.



In order to continue to have positive interactions with each other online, please be sure to follow our class netiquette guidelines. *[you can use our [netiquette starter guide](#) to create your own guidelines -- post them as a [page in Canvas](#), and [link to it here](#)].*

If you have a question you'd like to ask about how the course will run online, about our content, or about technology, please share that on our Ask a Question/Answer a Question board. *[if you have one -- we recommend it!]*

Sample language for an Ask a Question / Answer a Question Board

Hello everyone and welcome to our Ask a Question/Answer a Question Board!

This is a space for you to ask questions about [your course name] as we work together to move through the transition to online instruction. I realize you may have questions about:

- How the course will run online
- Our course content and assessments
- How to use Canvas or other technology issues

I encourage you to not only ask questions but also respond to each other's questions if you know the answer. This will help us continue our sense of community here in Canvas. Be sure to [subscribe to this discussion board](#) so you will receive notifications when someone posts. [This guide](#) will walk you through how to check your notification settings, too.

If you have a question about your specific grade in the course or any other personal matters you would like to discuss or share with me, please contact me *[at your email/via the Canvas inbox]* to discuss it rather than on this discussion board.

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