Unlocking the Mystery: Six Essential Keys to Successful Community Building for Blended Learning

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Shall we teach as we’ve been taught?
Challenge by Choice
**Full Value Community Agreement**

- We will have a successful and positive Dialogue in a “safe” environment through a Full Value Community Agreement (FVCA) that provides for:
- “Full Value” means recognizing and valuing anything that makes us an individual and recognizing the same in others
- Be here (for the entire process), Be *here* while you’re here
- Listen actively and attentively.
- All voices are invited, respected and heard
- All experiences are treated as valid
- Participate actively and share opinions in the conversation - engage fully in this process
- Experiment and take risks to share, while engaging in conversation with others

(Pyser & Figallo, 2004)
community, n.

- A shared or common quality or state.
- Life in association with others; the social state. Freq. as *in community*.

- An online facility, such as an electronic bulletin board, forum, or chat room, where users can share information or discuss topics of mutual interest.

(Oxford English Dictionary)
Bowling Alone?
Ways of a Sense of Belonging

Family, friends, neighbors and co-workers
Church or synagogue
Local community, groups or organizations
People meeting and learning online

(Putnam, 2000, p. 275)
The Nature of Groups

Ideas
- Beliefs
- Desires
- Hopes
- Fears

Ways of Speaking
- Levels of Tolerance

Internal Dialogue
- Patterns behavior
- Sense of humor

(Hunter, Bailey, & Taylor, 1995, p. 2)
Culturally Responsive Teaching

- Respect diversity
- Engage the motivation of a broad range of students
- Create a safe, inclusive, and respectful learning environment
- Derives teaching practices from across disciplines and cultures
- Promotes equitable learning
- Norms: explicit shared assumptions, values and purposes

(Ginsberg & Wlodkowski, 2009, p. ix)
Interconnection - Non Linear

- Reality check - Hypercompetitive market place
- Need for e-learning innovation/integration
- Resiliency - adapt to economically volatile business/learning environment
Respect for Learners

- Decision makers in their own learning
- Honest dialogue of learners and teacher
- Knowledge, skills and attitudes meaningful to context

- Learning Needs and Resources Assessment (LNRA)
- Constructivism: Learning appropriate to one’s context

(Vella, 2008, p. 97)
Space and Place for Dialogue

- Communication
- Social interaction
- Participation
Dialogue as Collaboration Tool

People
- Small groups
- Share perspectives

Difficult Issues
- Not debate
- Not about winning

Understanding and Learning
- Builds trust
- Opens perspectives

NCDD (2010)(para. 3-4)
Creating the Ideal Conditions

Trust
- sharing
- not exploited or used against me

Tolerance
- contribution
- not criticized unfairly or bring personal attack

Reward
- benefit from exchange if contribute

(Figallo & Rhine, 2002, p. 114)
Cycles of Engagement: “Online Environment Headset”

- Welcoming/LNRA/Introductions & Cyber Café
- Continuous “Ego Check” at Keyboard, Admit Mistakes and Have Fun!
- Respect (FVCA) and Well Defined Expectations at Onset
- Be Present: Praise, Feedback and Solicit Input
- Responsiveness to Questions and Comments
Community/Knowledge Sharing

Sense of Place
- Trust
- Openness
- Helpfulness
- Collaboration

Conversation
- Return regularly to “check-in”
- Engagement
- Informality

(Figallo & Rhine, 2002, p. 115)
Community as Social Structure

People
- Common interests
- Communicate
- Form relationships
- Establish shared history

Boundaries
- How join?
- How lose membership?

Your communities
- Application to your e-learning?

(Figallo & Rhine, 2002, p. 37)
Online Community Formation

- Agreement or questioning
- Intentional to achieve meaning agreement
- Between students
- Sharing of resources
- Primarily student to student
- Not student to instructor
- Course content
- Personal Communication
- Primarily student to student
- Not student to instructor

(Palloff, & Pratt, 1999, p. 32)
Strength Based Communities

Ownership/Personal Stake

Participation

Social Interaction

Individual Identities

Group Identities

Generative Processes - Knowledge
Principles and Practices

- Safety
  - Sound relationships
  - Respect

- Accountability/Motivations
  - Engagement
  - Teamwork/Group work
Mystery Solved: The Six Keys

- Create ideal conditions
- Respect for learners
- Culturally responsive teaching
- Space and place for dialogue
- Understand the nature of groups
- Co-create strength based community
Questions
References


References


Further Study
Resources (Pyser - I of III)

Book Chapters


Resources (Pyser - II of III)

Writings on Educational Issues


Resources (Pyser - III of III)


Op-Ed Articles