

## Student-Instructor Interaction

*Learner-instructor* involves feedback and guidance to the learner from the instructor (Moore, 1993).

Key elements of instructor interaction:

- Need for social PRESENCE.
- Base one-to-one interaction on prior learning; knowing students preferences, abilities, and skills can help determine which communication modes to offer and to direct students.
- Clearly communicated channels of communication that are reliable and consistent.

## Types of Instructor Interaction

	Function	Some Examples	Delivery methods
<b>1. General Communication</b>	To inform about class activities, events, changes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Announcements</li> <li>• Directions</li> <li>• Information about course or technology</li> <li>• Change in schedule/activity</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CMS</li> <li>• Announcement</li> <li>• Email</li> <li>• Instant Messaging</li> <li>• RSS</li> </ul>
<b>2. Instructional Directions and Guidance</b>	To explain, illustrate, direct, scaffold, model, or respond.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Embedded directions</li> <li>• Assignments</li> <li>• Demonstrations</li> <li>• Lectures</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Document</li> <li>• Video</li> <li>• Podcast</li> <li>• Chat</li> <li>• Discussion</li> <li>• Animation</li> <li>• Digital Presentation</li> </ul>
<b>3. Performance Feedback</b>	To give information regarding accomplishment of objectives, participation, communication	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assessment</li> <li>• Critiques</li> <li>• Encouragement</li> <li>• Congratulation</li> <li>• Recognition of special accomplishment or ability</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• CMS Quiz/tests</li> <li>• Discussion/chat/wiki/blog posts</li> <li>• Individual rubric</li> <li>• Email</li> <li>• Instant Messaging</li> <li>•</li> </ul>
<b>4. Facilitation</b>	To provide just-in-time or just-in-need feedback or oversight of	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion moderation</li> <li>• Participation in group work</li> <li>• Periodic 'visits' with</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Recorded activities (chats, IM, VOIP, etc.)</li> <li>• Polls/surveys to determine status of work</li> <li>• Formal instruments</li> </ul>

	learner actions.	individuals or groups	
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## Instructor Interaction Strategies and Time Savers

	Suggestions	Benefits	Limitations
Assess quality of Interaction, see Rubric <a href="http://www.westga.edu/~distance/roblver32.html">http://www.westga.edu/~distance/roblver32.html</a>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Randomly assess students over course of semester; this reduces load on instructor and makes students aware that they will be assessed sometime.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly sets expectations for behavior.</li> <li>May increase participation and improve communication skills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May not be applicable to all interactions.</li> <li>Can be burdensome for instructor in courses with many students.</li> </ul>
Set up an anonymous Help Forum	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If setting up in a CMS, introduce first week of course and set to receive automatic email notification if possible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Allows student to ask questions they may be reluctant to ask publically.</li> <li>Students can answer each other's questions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Someone must review regularly.</li> <li>Must be adopted to be useful.</li> </ul>
Provide a Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ) area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop a web page, document, PDF, etc. based on questions received over time.</li> <li>Divide into categories, e.g. technical, assignments, reaching instructor, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can eliminate calls or email to instructor.</li> <li>May reveal pedagogical or technical concern that needs revision.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Students may ignore and be repeatedly directed.</li> <li>May not answer all questions.</li> </ul>
Prepare a set of pre-written responses to FAQ that can be copied into a reply	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prepare a document with standard responses for repeated queries or concerns regarding assignments, grading, attendance, participation, etc.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lessens time needed to compose individual messages.</li> <li>Provides consistency and uniformly reinforces.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May not be specific enough for all questions.</li> </ul>

	<b>Suggestions</b>	<b>Benefits</b>	<b>Limitations</b>
Integrate self-graded assignments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Useful when using rubrics or criterion specific tasks that can be easily reviewed.</li> <li>Have students turn in assignment first, then their assessment.</li> <li>Do not over use.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Engages the learner with responsibility.</li> <li>Encourages reflection.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some students may not take seriously.</li> <li>Some students may not be prepared to assume this responsibility.</li> </ul>
In system (CMS) quizzes, set to release correct answers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Useful for formative assessments.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Increases learning through immediate feedback.</li> <li>Lessens need for instructor feedback</li> <li>Increases retention</li> </ul>	
Provide protocols for chats and discussions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide a few days before first activity.</li> <li>Review or quiz to reinforce.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Relieves anxiety for some learners.</li> <li>Sets clear expectations</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May annoy experienced texters – ask these students to assist in helping others.</li> </ul>
Assign students as moderators for discussions, chats, group work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helpful for a regular activity</li> <li>Share expectations and guidelines.</li> <li>Model before implementing.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Gives learners ownership over activity.</li> <li>Increases communication and interaction skills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Not all students may be prepared – you may have two moderators.</li> <li>A moderator may be ‘missing’ or have poor connectivity.</li> </ul>
Random selection of assignment feedback/assessment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Works best for weekly tasks, such as quizzes, journals, short writing tasks.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helps focus student preparedness.</li> <li>Alleviates instructor workload.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If not consistently random, students will take advantage and not prepare.</li> <li>Some students may need or require more feedback.</li> </ul>
Administer periodic polls and surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use to determine learner satisfaction.</li> <li>Use for pre/post assessment.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Helps to determine status quo, areas of confusion, and engage learner</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Can be ignored or overlooked.</li> <li>Less likely to be useful in courses with high levels of interaction.</li> </ul>

	Suggestions	Benefits	Limitations
Offer regularly scheduled office hours via chat, phone, discussion, or video.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consider offering a 'getting to know you' office hour early in the semester.</li> <li>• Consider two short periods rather than one long period of time.</li> <li>• May be best to schedule between synchronous events when questions are more likely.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personalizes interaction.</li> <li>• Communicates instructor involvement.</li> <li>• Provides an opportunity to determine status quo of course.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some students may not prefer this type of interaction.</li> <li>• Times may conflict with student schedules.</li> </ul>

## Student- Student Interaction

*Learner-learner* interaction involves processes that result in clarifications and knowledge construction (Moore, 1993).

### Student Interaction Framework

	Some Benefits	Some Pedagogical Applications	Some Limitations
<b>One-to-One</b> (Harasim, 1989)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops communication skills.</li> <li>• Provides support and feedback.</li> <li>• Reduces cognitive load/</li> <li>• Engages and makes learner responsible.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Observation</li> <li>• Interview</li> <li>• Peer Critique</li> <li>• Joint assignment/project</li> <li>• Study team</li> <li>• Mentor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires self-regulation.</li> <li>• Requires good digital communication skills.</li> <li>• May feel isolating for some learners.</li> </ul>
<b>One-to-Many</b> (Harasim, 1989)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develops presentation/communication skills.</li> <li>• Creates sense of ownership and accountability.</li> <li>• Provides opportunity for peer critique.</li> <li>• Encourages self-confidence.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Presentation</li> <li>• Moderation</li> <li>• Discussion/Chat</li> <li>• Games</li> <li>• Simulations</li> <li>• Role Play</li> <li>• Poll/survey</li> <li>• Observation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires communication and technical abilities.</li> <li>• Takes time for an entire class to present.</li> <li>• May not be comfortable for all learners.</li> </ul>
<b>Many-to-Many</b> (Harasim, 1989)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Engages and makes learner responsible.</li> <li>• Develops responsibility and task specific skills.</li> <li>• Develops communication and interaction skills.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discussion/Chat</li> <li>• Study team</li> <li>• Debate</li> <li>• Collaboration/Cooperation</li> <li>• Simulations</li> <li>• Games</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Requires oversight of individual contributions.</li> <li>• Requires learner motivation and self-regulation.</li> <li>• Can be chaotic if not carefully planned.</li> </ul>

## Group Work

Group processes require roles and boundaries (Stevens-Long, 1994). When utilize group designs be sure to:

- Define *roles* and *expectations* for the behaviors assigned to the roles. Roles may be differentiated (as in cooperation) or the same (as in collaboration).
- Articulate the *amount* and *flow of information* between group members and from those individuals or sources outside the group.

**Collaboration** - Students working in groups with assigned *tasks*, specific standards of accountability, a clear procedure that clarifies tasks and outcomes, and a strategy for oversight of parts as relate to the whole.

- Individual parts contribute to a larger outcome
- Learners work independently to produce **one piece** of a product.
- Learners negotiate tasks and processes, e.g. deadlines, editorial reviews, meetings, formats, etc.

**Cooperation** – Students working in groups with assigned *roles*, specific standards of accountability, and a clear procedure that clarifies roles and outcomes.

- Roles relate to processes that further completion of a task, e.g. monitor, facilitator, editor, writer, illustrator, project manager, summarizer, technician, etc.
- Learners work together to produce one product.
- Learners negotiate tasks and processes, e.g. deadlines, editorial reviews, meetings, formats, etc.

## Strategies to promote learner-learner interaction

- Design meaningful interaction that is relevant to instructional outcomes. Interaction should fulfill or lead to a next step, assignment, or completion of objective.
- Use protocols. Although many students are avid users of instant messaging and other text communication devices, this does not mean they are prepared to interact with others to learn in a virtual context. Provide drafts of protocols to students and allow them to edit and revise to increase their buy-in of the protocols.
- Assign moderation duties. Rotating moderation tasks involves students and makes them aware of the discussion flow, frequency, and quality. Students who are not moderating attend more because they know they will assume moderation in future.
- Limit time and scope. Texting can be tiring and may not involve all students equally, particularly second language speakers, those with poor keyboarding skills, non-verbal learners, and students with attention distractions. Chats, discussions, group work should have specific parameters and be broken down into manageable chunks.
- Encourage, acknowledge, and provide modeling and scaffolding for appropriate interaction. Prior experiences of the learner may be mixed. The instructor should provide examples and feedback when necessary.
- Set up areas for students to work formally and communicate informally. Social interaction greatly contributes to learning, whether or not it is related to what is being studied. Ask students if they want a student directory, or a Who's Who area where they can share personal and contact information.
- Personalize interaction. Make sure personal introductions are made immediately, and consider how interactions can be personalized. If possible and allowable, encourage learners to post pictures or other identifiers that contribute to their social presence.
- Use a variety of pedagogical approaches for working together. Teams can consist of two or more individuals. Group activities may be brief (a callout discussion during a synchronous chat) or sustained (a study group that discusses readings every week).



## Chat Conventions

Please review and abide by the following chat conventions. These are intended to facilitate a dialogue, not to be constrictive. We all enter into a chat with different experiences and expectations. Conventions are an attempt to 'level the playing field.' If you know other strategies, please suggest them!

All course chats will be structured with a specific learning objective. This requires attentiveness. You may be asked to participate by name, just as you would in a classroom. As in face-to-face courses, some individuals may prefer to 'listen' and be less comfortable with participation. Other times Internet connectivity or keyboarding ability may make it difficult to keep up with the flow of the conversation. If this is the case, you are welcome to 'lurk' but we hope this won't be the case. We want to have an opportunity to hear your thoughts and ideas.

Unless other wise noted, all chats will take place in the following area: \*\*\*\*\*.

Consider the following before participating in our chats.

- TYPING ALL IN CAPS is considered shouting and rude.
- If you send a message to someone and they don't answer, they may be typing to someone else, away from the computer, or have a slow connection; give them time to respond. A good rule of thumb is to count to 10 before sending a message.
- No profanity or personal criticism is allowed.
- If you want to post a long sentence, start it with about 10 words followed by ... then enter your message. Immediately start the second part with ... and continue your thought. When this occurs we should all wait until the thought is completed before responding.
- It is very frustrating when people 'talk' at the same time, carrying different conversation threads or personal conversations. If you carry on a personal conversation, you can leave the chat room and talk in another area, or you can privately message with whom you are conversing. This is particularly frustrating for new chatters, so those of us used to 'overtalk' should be considerate.
- Do not 'flood' by sending the same message over and over again.
- If you want to direct a question or comment to someone specifically, begin your statement with their name. You can address your instructor as \*\*\*\*\* whatever is most comfortable for you.
- When the chat flows very fast, abbreviations and emoticons (e.g. :-)) are sometimes used. However, it is important to make sure that everyone knows what these abbreviations and emoticons mean before using them (see <http://www.computeruser.com/resources/dictionary/emoticons.html>).
- The chats for this course are objective driven. Instructions are provided and parameters given so it is important to attend to directions and ask for clarification when you are confused since we cannot see your puzzled expressions!

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