Moving My University Class Online | How Do I Engage My Students in Asynchronous Learning Sessions

Asynchronous learning is the most flexible of all forms of virtual learning because students are not obligated to gather at the same time. This flexibility can present unique challenges to building student engagement. Here are helpful tips to consider:

1. **Offer a few open questions to consider**. Whether students are invited to watch a video clip or mini-lecture, having a lens or frame to watch through is helpful.

   For example: *As you watch this 10-minute video consider these three questions:*
   - *What aligns with what you read in [name]'s article [title]?*
   - *What is [name] offering that pushes your understanding of [idea]?*
   - *What questions are you starting to wonder about?"*

2. **Invite personal meaning-making**. Students are asked to read and write so much. Moving all their course work offline can feel overwhelming. To deepen engagement and learning we need to ensure students see and feel the relevance of the assignments. We need to invite interaction with what they are reading and doing.

   For example, [after watching a video] *"Take a moment to share one way this mini-lecture pushed your thinking about [idea]? Use the Comment feature to offer your thoughts."*

3. **Be responsive**. Students will need to hear from us more than in an in-person classroom. When working online and on their own, doubt can grow, and unease can build. Acknowledge receiving classwork and clarify timelines and expectations.

   For example, *"Thank you for this assignment, Sue. I will be reviewing them all next week and look forward to reading yours."*

4. **Affirm**. Your students are most likely feeling unsure and uneasy about learning with you in this way, because it is new. They are also certainly nervous about meeting the expectations for the course - they want to get a good grade! For these reasons, it is helpful and important to affirm their contributions and work as often as possible. Being specific about your affirmation is even more helpful.

   For example, *"Thank you Ben for sharing these new resources with the group. You have enriched our work and the dialogue!"*