THE PATH TO ONLINE LEARNING COMMUNITIES

THE BUILDING BLOCKS

Socio-cultural context
Learning context
Institutional context

THE SUPPORTING BLOCKS

Engagement
Collaboration, Co-learning

Imagination
Reflection & critical learning

Alignment
Writing manifests shared goals, standards & community

THE MEMBERSHIP BLOCKS

Joint enterprise
A collective understanding of what the community is about, its purpose

Mutual engagement
Interdependence & establishing norms, expectations & relationships

Shared repertoire
Using communal resources such as language & artifact tools

THE BLOCKS IN ACTION

- Offer students an opportunity to reflect on their experiences
- Provide useful external resources, such as open educational material & TED Talks
- Involve students in extracurricular activities which reward their learning in the course
- Provide students with opportunities to practice transferrable skills that they are likely to encounter in the course, such as teamwork
- Use specific tools and technologies that will be used in the course
- Get students to expand on some of the basic rules/behaviours you set—like creating their own rules
- Encourage independent research
- Plan online social activities in dedicated online area
- Link them indirectly to your course flow
- Encourage co-creation through Wikis, Padlet, Zotero, etc.
- Create discussion groups on topics related to course
- Supplement these with fun activities
- Use online social introductory forum activities in a visual form, for example place/self-photos of accomplishments, hobbies, expectations, previous learning experiences
- Introduce tools to aggregate the visual and textual elements of the messages
- Try incorporating mechanisms that focus on mapping students’ digital competencies and learning styles. Make this a larger part of the course and online experience rather than preset it as disconnected skills sets

References:

This infographic was created in collaboration with Dr Konstantina Martzoukou, Teaching Excellence Fellow, Robert Gordon University, UK

‘The Path to Online Learning Communities’ by OneHE is licensed under CC BY-NC-ND 4.0