

Humanizing Virtual Learning

Module 1 Intro Video Transcript

How can you get to know who your learners are and identify their diverse needs?

How can you humanize the structure of your course and your assessment plan?

What design strategies really work to create an experience of connection between you and your learners?

In this module, we will explore some key organizational and design strategies that you can use to help create deeper human connections no matter the subject of your course.

Here is what instructors are saying about course design strategies that take the learner into account:

[T]hink carefully about who your learners are and what you want them to get out of the course, and organize it in a way that will be engaging for them. For instance, my first-year course is structured as a series of pathways with the analogy of walking in the woods and encountering different theorists along the way.

~Kristy Buccieri, Trent University

Learners notice, appreciate, and are motivated by instructors who make an effort to connect and share their interest and passion for a topic:

I like the personalization myself [...] it takes away a lot of those "barriers" we get in online courses with our instructors. Puts a person to the name. And those personalities! So much passion for what they do... it's ~~clear~~, and motivating. You don't want to disappoint them."

-Julie, online learner

We'll also discuss some approaches to designing assignments that work to humanize the online learning experience for both you and your learners.

Here is what instructors are saying about assessment strategies that help to humanize learning:

When students understand why they need to do a particular assignment or complete a specific exercise, and [they] see how the assignment/exercise speaks to the learning goals of that course, and how completing it will contribute to the student's body of knowledge and skills, they get motivated [...], which in turn makes the chosen assessment successful.

~Tugce Elliatli-Kose, Dept of Sociology Trent University

[U]se assignments that allow and encourage students to incorporate their own experiences, so that they feel more connected to the course. By using more open-ended prompts that have some flexibility, students can customize their work so that it is more aligned with their interests This really helps with their motivation and engagement!

~Don Boyes, University of Toronto

Join us in this module to start humanizing your design and assessments and begin making deeper connections in your online courses.