

Humanizing Learning & Teaching in Times of Disruption

What is Humanizing?

As we make choices in adapting our instruction to the online environment, creating a humanized experience is essential to learning, particularly during a time when our lives are disrupted and things are changing at a rapid pace. Humanizing our teaching and our students' learning in times of disruption is critical.

When we *humanize* across physical space, we are leveraging technologies to foster relationships and build community that support the non-cognitive components of learning. This intentional blend of the cognitive and affective domains has potential to increase sense of belonging that can positively impact ability to learn (Ambrose, Bridges, DiPietro, Lovett, & Norman, 2010; Walton & Cohen, 2011). But how do we *humanize* to ensure that [learning online is not learning alone](#)? This is not about technology; it is about *how we use* technology to engage our students. We can do this with a combination of facilitation and design choices to create a space where students feel seen, connected, and supported in the online learning environment.

Facilitation

presence	empathy	awareness
 Don't be a robot.	 See things through your students' eyes.	 Know your students.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accept your imperfections • Communicate regularly • Use video/audio announcements • Provide video/audio feedback • Create an online discussion in Canvas for students to interact • Hold online office hours 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be transparent about your uncertainty • Acknowledge loss • Be approachable • Be flexible • Craft motivational messages that engage in "early alert" practices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Be sensitive to students' needs • Ask students how you can help • Use formative feedback loops



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Design Choices

- Keep a consistent structure/routine
- Organize materials in modules/pages
- Provide a weekly overview
- Ensure materials are accessible to all students
- Model kind, supportive interactions
- Provide asynchronous small group work
- Find ways to construct meaning together
- Find ways for students to express through writing, voice, video
- Intentionally include the use of mobile apps

References

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