

# Creating Classroom Community

## Student Engagement and Interactions

### Student to Student

- Interaction between two learners or among a group of learners in the same course

**Provide Autonomy Support** – Allow students to share their ideas and opinions and integrate into activities or discussions. Involve students in activities that promote critical self-reflection.

**Embrace Collaborative Learning** – Implement group work with established guidelines for communication, appropriate behavior, and accountability for individual and group contributions.

### Student to Teacher

- Interaction when teacher provides information, feedback, and guides student learning

**Establish Positive Teacher-Student Relationships** – Establish instructor presence in the course, and care and empathize with the student's social and emotional needs. Treat all students fairly. Also, provide one-on-one methods of feedback in audio posts, phone calls, schedule chat sessions, or visits to office hours.

**Promote Mastery Orientations** – Promote mastery of the content rather than having students work towards a grade. Instructors should frame student feedback as successful achievements in content mastery versus a high score or high grade. Focus on the student's individual progress and avoid using comparisons with other students or ideal performance.

### Student to Content

- Interaction when students obtain information directly with learning materials and resources. Instructor must consider the student's interaction with content by information organization and chunking, various multimedia resources to reinforce content, and various methods of media consumption in accessible formats.

**Make learning meaningful.** – Connect student's existing knowledge with new information from the course. Students will be less engaged with the content if it seems irrelevant. All activities should be connected to learning outcomes.

**Foster a Sense of Efficacy** – Provide meaningful feedback to students so they can evaluate their personal gains in knowledge. Ensure activities build upon previous skills so students know they are progressing forward.

**Reinforce Active Learning** – Implement activities that allow students to actively absorb content rather than simply memorizing information. Allow content to be dynamic and peak the varying learning styles that student possess.

**Apply Cognitive Load Theory** – Humans can only process information in limited spurts. Implement shorter presentations with knowledge checks before allowing student to advance to next concepts.

**Reference:** James, N. P. (2014, December 08). *Golden rules for engaging students in learning activities.*

Retrieved December 3, 2015, from <http://www.edutopia.org/blog/golden-rules-for-engaging-students-nicolas-pino-james>