Welcome Message and Announcement

A welcome message is an important step in establishing your online persona. It should:

- Introduce you to the students. Consider including photos of yourself and things that are important to you.
- Welcome students to the course.
- Explain your overall expectations. Include screen shots or links to important sections of the course. Share examples of what success means in your course.

- Include an overview of the course components.
- Tell students how to get started.
    - Share information specific to your course regarding course navigation, software, etc.
- Consider a similar message at the beginning of each week.

Ice Breaker Activities

Ice breaker activities should be fun, engaging, and help students get to know each other, acclimate to the online environment, and build community.

Consider creating a discussion forum and invite your students to:

- introduce themselves,
- post their expectations for the course,
- describe with a picture their workstation at home, or
- share a picture of their "coworkers".

For more, view - [Ideas for Online Ice Breakers Video](#)

Utilize Weekly Announcements

Start each week with an announcement.

- Explain the course outcomes for the week and the expectations you have of them.
- Provide an overview of the content for the week and explain each assignment/activity that is due.
- Summarize the content from the previous week.
- Include a current event that relates to your course topic.
- Anticipate questions students may have and provide pre-emptive answers.
- Include encouraging statements on resilience and growth mindset.
- Explain why you have included certain content and highlight connections outside of academics.
- Consider video or voice announcements for variety.
- Send email before the first day of class.

Participate

Be the facilitator, role model and guide for your students.

- Log into the course site several times a week and leave evidence that you have been online.
- Participate in student discussions and model good online behavior. Ask probing questions to encourage better discussion.
- Respond quickly to student questions. Consider a Q&A thread or posting FAQs.
- Include some synchronous sessions for interaction and/or provide times students can chat with you informally online.
- Include virtual office hours.
- Ask for feedback using anonymous surveys.
- Be available by email on the day assignments are due. (Consider what day you can be available to answer questions when deciding on assignment due dates.)

Additional Resources

- [5 Research-Backed Tips to Improve Your Online Teaching Presence](#)
- [How Important Is Instructor Presence in an Online Course?](#)
- [Instructors' Perceptions of Instructor Presence in Online Learning Environments](#)
- [The indicators of instructor presence that are important to students in online courses](#)