Social Presence Matters: Research, Strategies, and Reflection

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“As human beings, our job in life is to help people realize how rare and valuable each one of us really is, that each of us has something that no one else has—or ever will have—something inside that is unique to all time. It’s our job to encourage each other to discover that uniqueness and to provide ways of developing its expression.

FRED ROGERS
Social Presence

Noun

• An affectively-charged connectedness that motivates us to take an active role in our knowledge construction as well as that of our peers
College Students with Mental Illness

4 out of 10 don’t seek help

5 out of 10 struggle in school

8 out of 10 feel overwhelmed
I Can’t Adult Today.
PROCEED WITH CAUTION
“We are social beings...this fact is a central aspect of learning.”

—Etienne Wenger
Social Presence Model

- Affective Association
- Community Cohesion
- Instructor Involvement
- Interaction Intensity
- Knowledge and Experience
Social Presence = Critical Literacy
Social Presence Model

Affective Association

Social Presence in Practice
Social Presence in Practice

Social Presence Model

Affective Association

- Organize!
- Instructor video
- Welcome letter with survey
- Introductory profile
- Announcements and reminders
- Audio and video
Social Presence Model

Community Cohesion

Social Presence in Practice
Social Presence Model

- Greet respectfully
- Refer to “we”
- Build in connections
- Model language you hope to see

Community Cohesion

Social Presence in Practice
Social Presence Model

- Know your students
- Personalize
- Provide early feedback
- Share the stage
- Reflect often
Social Presence Model

Social Presence in Practice

Interaction Intensity
Social Presence Model

- Build in meaningful interactions
- Develop a Q&A area
- Connect with learners
- Create informal social spaces and area to share resources

Social Presence in Practice
Knowledge and Experience

Social Presence Model

Social Presence in Practice
Social Presence Model

- Ask questions in your opening survey
- Be K-W-L Minded
- Allow students to draw from their cultural background and past experiences
- Make it authentic!
Engage in Planned Change
Social Presence Matters
“Every child deserves a champion...who understands the power of connection.”

–Rita Pierson
Thank you for impacting lives every day!
Selected References


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Questions

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