Welcome!

Connecting with Your Students

Before we get started

Open **Collaborate Panel** to view session options (bottom right of screen)

Click **Settings** to edit options (e.g., disable pop-up notifications)

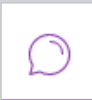Let us know if you can hear us when we do **Audio checks**

Download **Presentation Slides** at uoft.me/ctsi-videos

During the webinar

Your **microphone** will be muted until Q&A at end of session

Type questions and comments into the **Chat**

Close **Collaborate Panel** to stop viewing incoming chat posts

Following the webinar

View **Session Recording** at uoft.me/ctsi-videos in approx. 24 hours

Complete **Feedback Survey** (link sent via email)

Connecting and Interacting with Your Students Online

William Heikoop and Cristina D'Amico
June 03, 2020

UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO

CENTRE FOR TEACHING SUPPORT & INNOVATION

Connecting and Interacting with Your Students Online

In this webinar we will:

1. Identify tools and methods to connect with your students from a distance
2. Consider a strategy to introduce students to your course and explain how it will operate
3. Identify ways to create a sense of community to begin the course
4. Demonstrate strategies for ongoing communication and student support

Reflect on the question in the chat

What is your most burning question around how to connect with students at a distance?

QUERCUS

The University of Toronto's Academic Toolbox

QUERCUS

Organize content

Connect and communicate

The Academic Toolbox helps you...

Assess student work and provide feedback

Teach from a distance

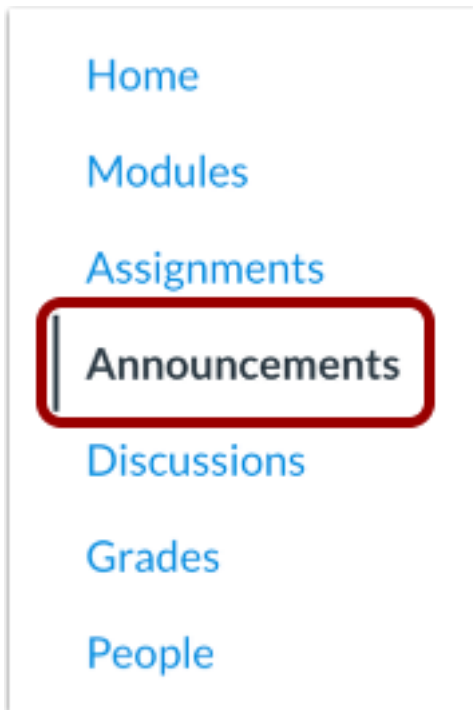# Section 1: Tools and methods to connect with your students from a distance

Webinar: Connecting and Interacting with Your Students Online

Quercus Communication Options

Use the Announcements tool to communicate with everyone in your course

Home

Modules

Assignments

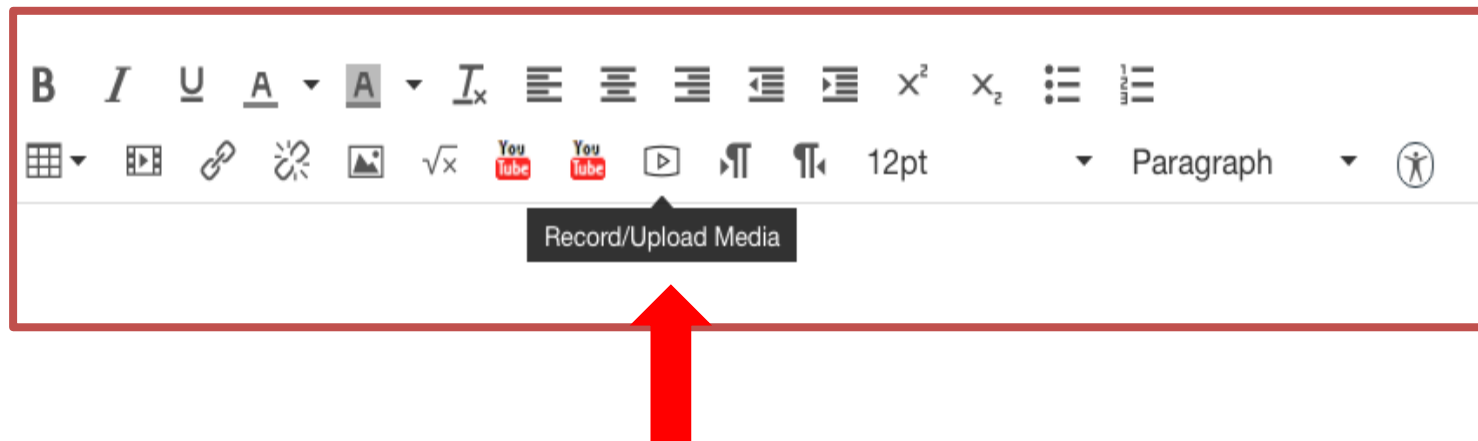**Announcements**

Discussions

Grades

People

Note: Your course must be published for students to receive announcement notifications.

Try This

Video Welcome

The integrated recording tool can be used to record just audio or audio and video from your webcam.

Create a welcome message designed to connect with students and let them know that you are "in this together."

Try This

Timed Announcements

Post to

All Sections ✕

Attachment [Choose File] No file chosen

Options ☑ Delay posting

Post At Apr 20, 2020 🗓

Mon Apr 20, 2020

☐ Enable podcast feed

☐ Allow liking

Start Strong

For example, time first week announcements for Monday, Wednesday, and Friday at 9 am. These really help guide the students to where they should be in the course at that point.

- Monday is "What's happening this week"
- Wednesday is the "Update" for the week
- Friday is a "Weekly Checklist" of what happened/where students should be

Quercus Communication Options

Use the [Conversations/Inbox](#) tool to send targeted messages to individuals, groups, or your entire course
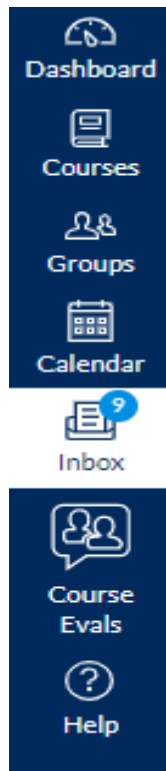
Note: At the University of Toronto, the option for student-student communication via the Inbox is not available. Students can only contact their instructors or Teaching Assistants with this tool

Quercus Communication Options

Email: To obtain your students' email addresses:

- – Contact your [department/divisional support contact](), your Registrar or,

- – Download the email list using [UT Advanced Group Tool]() in Quercus

Note: The UT Advanced Group Tool is only accessible to users enrolled in a course as a Teacher, TA, Course Staff, Grader, Designer, or Librarian

Section 2: Introduce students to your course and explain how it will operate

Webinar: Connecting and Interacting with Your Students Online

Welcome to the Course Module

Welcome to XYZ - Full Course Title!

This course will run fully online/remotely. To begin, I've prepared some tips and strategies, as well as some resources to help you be successful in this mode of learning. Before diving into course content, click on the "How This Course Works" button below for a module to orient yourself to this course specifically and to learning online generally.

How This Course Works

Sample Home Page

Try This!

I. **Consider a quiz reflecting on introduction**

II. **Consider adding an 'easter egg' in the introduction material**

Section 3: Sense of community to begin the course

Webinar: Connecting and Interacting with Your Students Online

Remote Togetherness

Constructing presence in the online learning environment is important to establishing a successful online community of learners.

Social presence: How instructors and learners see each other as "real people" in the online environment.
Social presence is important to online learners as it combats feelings of isolation and gives learners a feeling of community.

Rosemary M. Lehman and Simone C. O. Conceicao. (2010). Creating a Sense of Presence in Online Teaching: How to "Be There" for Distance Learners

Persistence

Interactivity in online courses, particularly between the student and instructor, can play an important role both in student satisfaction and persistence.

Croxton, R. A. 2014. "The Role of Interactivity in Student Satisfaction and Persistence in Online Learning." Journal of Online Learning and Teaching 10 (2): 314.Hart, C. 2012.

Try This

Consider a course tour video

Creating a Course Tour using Lecture Capture Software

Create a video that takes your students on a tour of your course in the online environment.

Try This

Consider a social forum discussion board

Create a social forum for students to connect with one another

Section 4: Ongoing communication with your students

Webinar: Connecting and Interacting with Your Students Online
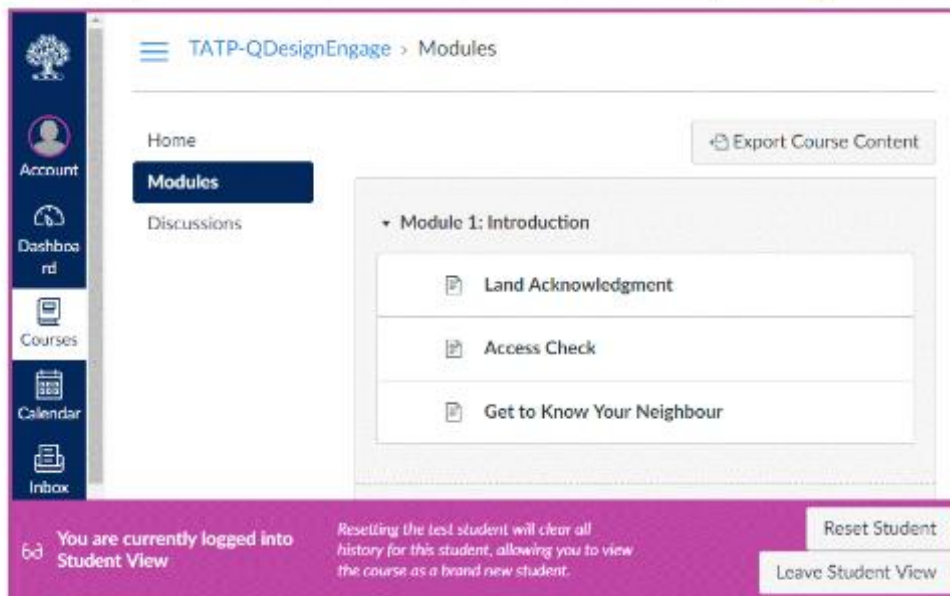
Communicating with Students in the Online Environment

I. **Building Community Agreements (using Wikis)**

II. **Peer-to-Peer Engagement (using Discussion Boards)**

III. **Weekly Video Check-Ins (using TechSmith Snagit)**

Use "Student View" to Check Your Posts

Course > Home

○ Check your course content availability using Student View.

Additional support:

- Quercus Support Resources, University of Toronto
- The Community of Inquiry blog ⌐ & Community of Inquiry site ⌐, Athabasca University

I. Community Agreements

- A shared agreement between learners about how you want to work together over the term

- Possible topics: respect for diversity, "right to pass," active attention, NETIQUETTE, etc.

- A collaborative tool that give students autonomy in the course.

- [Guidelines for Building Community Agreements](#)

I. Community Agreements and NETIQUETTE

- Community agreements and NETIQUETTE
  - Consider language and tone
  - Re-read messages before posting
  - Diversity and inclusion
  - Be precise (to avoid miscommunication)
  - Be generous!
- Don't assume students are "digital natives" – online learning is new for everyone.

I. Community Agreements

- These are collaborative and living documents: you can use Wikis to set-up your community agreement.

- Re-visit and reference these guidelines throughout the course.

- [Create a Course Page as a Wiki](#)

I. Community Agreements

- Reference the University of Toronto's resource on [creating inclusive classrooms](#).
  - *"The University of Toronto is committed to equity, human rights and respect for diversity. All members of the learning environment in this course should strive to create an atmosphere of mutual respect where all members of our community can express themselves, engage with each other, and respect one another's differences. U of T does not condone discrimination or harassment against any persons or communities."*

I. Community Agreements using Wikis

Create a Page:

i. Type a name for your page.

ii. Use the Rich Content Editor ⤢ to create content for your page.

iii. You can also add links, files ⤢ , and images ⤢ to the Page using the content selector.

II. Peer-to-Peer Learning and Discussion Boards

- Have a clear purpose
- Explain how and why *Discussions* fit in overall course workload and in grading scheme
- Additional considerations:
  - Groups of 8-10 students (being responsive as needed)
  - Student moderators
  - Grading rubrics
  - Opening and closing discussions
- Set a topic and open-ended discussion prompt

II. Discussion Board: Class Introductions

II. Best Practices: Discussion Board

- Set clear expectations on posting and responding (how many times, criteria for success, netiquette)

- Be present by checking in regularly, providing feedback, monitoring and participating

- Encourage and incentivize students to respond to each others' posts

II. Casual, Ungraded Discussions

Grades
People
Pages
Files
Syllabus
Outcomes
Quizzes
Collaborations
Settings

Account
Dashboard
Courses
Calendar
Inbox
Course Evals
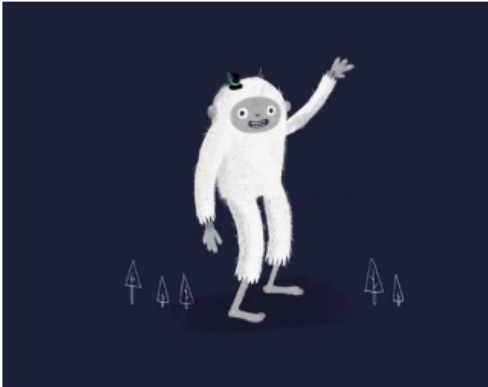Help

Welcome to the Visitors' Lounge!

As you learn about Toronto, feel free to drop by the lounge to enjoy a virtual cup of coffee / tea.

This lounge is a good place to ask questions you might have about the course, course content, assignments, technology, etc. As your official Visitor Guide, I'll be checking in 2-3 times each week to respond to any questions posted. If you have not had a reply within 48 hours, reach out to me using the Inbox function.

III. Checking-in with Students

- Checking in at the beginning of the week and the end of the week
  - Course-related content
  - Questions about assignments (following up on group work)
  - Personal check-ins on absent students
- Use TechSmith Snagit for pre-recorded check-ins and other videos

III. Checking-in with Students

- Ideas to implement
  - **Live Q&A sessions** (keep the Q's focused and specific)
  - **Small group interaction in Bb Collaborate Ultra**
  - **Clearest point/Muddiest Point** (at the end of the week or at the end of an asynchronous lecture)
  - **Devoted Discussion thread to specific topics** (check in regularly)

III. Checking-in with Students

- Supports for students
  - [Supporting students in distress](#)
  - [Accessibility Services](#)
  - [Financial Services](#)
  - [Health and Wellness Centre](#)
- Include links in your syllabus or create a page with links to resources
- Normalize the use of campus resources

Reflect on the question in the chat

What communication piece(s) are you most interested in utilizing?

Quercus support resources

CTSI website: https://teaching.utoronto.ca

Upcoming events: https://teaching.utoronto.ca/events

Quercus Support Resources: https://uoft.me/qresources

Divisional Support: https://uoft.me/qsupportcontacts

Questions: q.help@utoronto.ca

Connecting and Interacting with Your Students Online

In this webinar we:

1. Identified tools and methods to connect with your students from a distance
2. Considered a strategy to introduce students to your course and explain how it will operate
3. Identified ways to create a sense of community to begin the course
4. Demonstrated strategies for ongoing communication and student support

Questions?
Thank you!