

# Interaction

*“Other empirical evidence also suggests increased interaction results in increased student course satisfaction and learning outcomes.” (Irani, 1998; Zhang & Fulford, 1994; Zirkin & Sumler, 1995)*

*The importance of interaction is to create a sense of community for online learners.*

## Coffee Shop Space

Create a “coffee shop” or “just 4 fun” area to give students an online space where they can post messages outside of your course. This is an area that students can share humor, the latest sporting news, and even ask questions. An added benefit is that students become more familiar with posting messages.

Goal: Students get to know each other better and build a more cohesive learning community

### Tools you can use

- Discussion Board
- Wiki

## Groups

Team-based learning encourages students to work closely on a given project or assignment. Assessing student participation in discussions motivates students to join the conversation. Conducting peer evaluations gives students an opportunity to share their thoughts on the group efforts.

Goal: Establish rich interaction among students

### Tools you can use

- Chat
- Discussion Board
- Group Pages
- Wiki
- Web Conferencing
- Journal

## Weekly Questions

Weekly questions will enable students to reflect on their opinions of the course content. Weekly questions will increase the learner-content interaction. If weekly questions are posted on a discussion board, students can read others’ postings and learn through observing how fellow classmates respond—peer modeling. If questions are evaluated by the instructor, the immediate feedback will correct false assumptions.

Goal: Foster students’ critical and reflective thinking

### Tools you can use

- Email
- Discussion Board
- Wiki

## Moderating the Discussion Board

Your presence as the instructor is critical to the success of online discussions. “Students often adjust their online activities to the instructor’s level of involvement.” (Teaching Support Group) You might consider assigning students to act as discussion moderators, posting questions or leading discussions. This will allow the student to become an expert on a specific topic.

Goal: Facilitate asynchronous student interaction

### Tools you can use

- Discussion Board
- Wiki