

An overhead photograph of four students sitting around a white table, engaged in study. They are using laptops, looking at books, and talking. The scene is set in a library or study area with backpacks on the floor. The image is dimmed to serve as a background for the text.

How to Design Online Learning Communities

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Agenda

Community, interaction, and deep learning

Community of Inquiry theoretical framework: History and key elements

Pedagogical design, delivery, and assessment using the CoI

Upcoming resources

A Community-Based Online Learning Approach: Benefits

How does community show up in your online courses?

Research has shown that community-based learning can enhance the quality of a student's online experience:

- engagement
- motivation
- satisfaction
- higher-order thinking

Cleveland-Innes, M., & Hawryluk, J. (2022). Designing Online Learning Communities. In *Handbook of Open, Distance and Digital Education* (pp. 1-17). Springer Nature.



Research into Deep Learning Approaches

Garrison & Cleveland-Innes sought to find out what the instructors/designers could do to create a shift to a deep approach to learning in an online environment:

It was more than just opportunities for interaction.

- **facilitation by the instructor** and
- **requirement for reflection for the student**

Garrison, D. R., & Cleveland-Innes, M. (2005). Facilitating cognitive presence in online learning: Interaction is not enough. *The American Journal of Distance Education*, 19(3), 133-148.

Types of Student Approaches to Learning (Garrison & Cleveland-Innes, 2005)

Surface Approach	uses the least effort possible to produce the required outcomes
Achievement Approach	focuses on the external reward for demonstrating learning (e.g., grades, scholarships)
Deep Approach	involves the search for meaning through engaging with the material

The approach taken may vary based on factors such as context, goals, time, workload, or experience with a given approach.



Question 1

Where does community show up in your online courses?



Five Educational Learning Theories

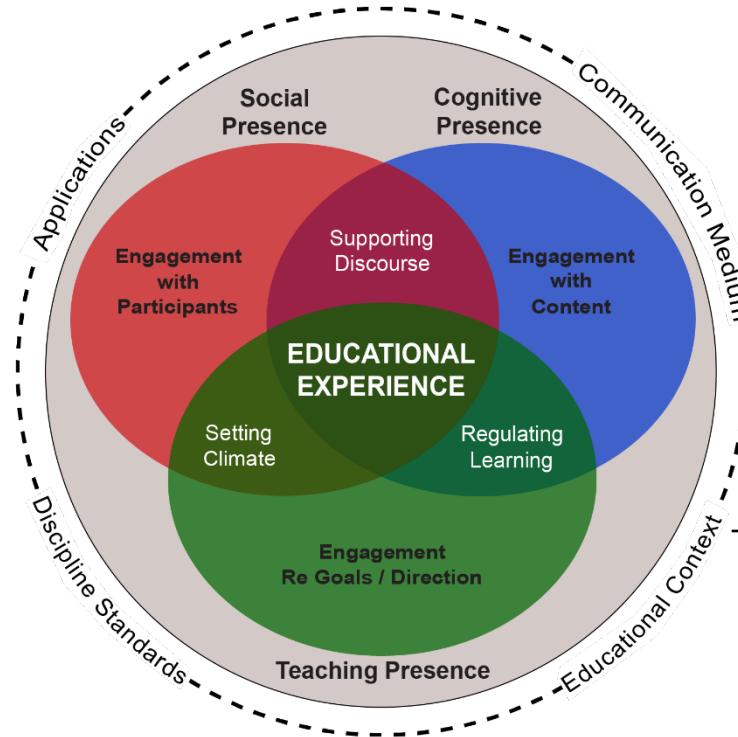
<https://www.wgu.edu/blog/five-educational-learning-theories2005.html>

Cognitive Learning Theory
Behaviorism Learning Theory
Constructivism Learning Theory
Humanism Learning Theory
Connectivism Learning Theory

The Community of Inquiry framework

Social Presence

The ability of participants to identify with the community (e.g., course of study), communicate purposefully in a trusting environment, and develop inter-personal relationships by way of projecting their individual personalities” (Garrison 2009, p. 352)



Cognitive Presence

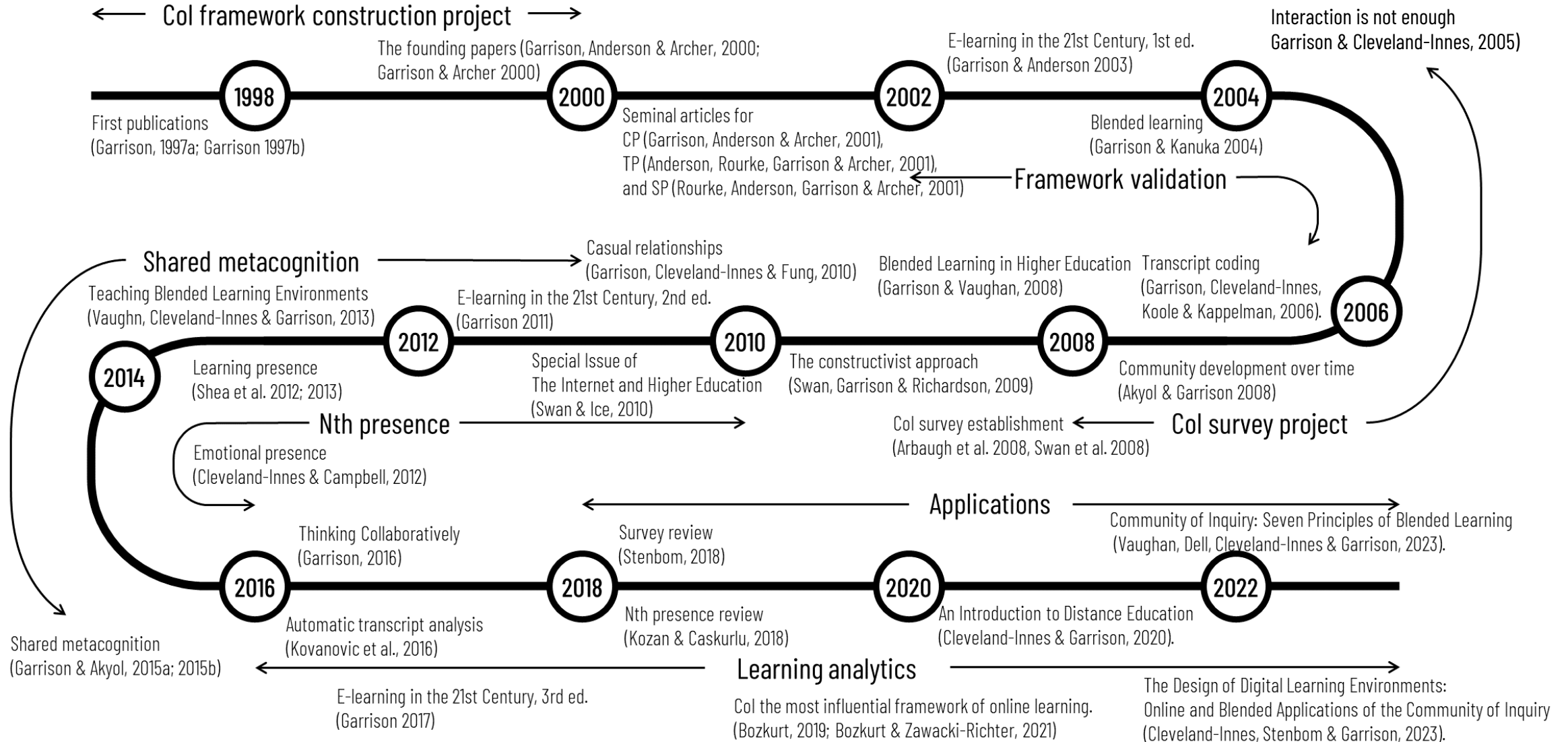
The extent to which learners are able to construct and confirm meaning through sustained reflection and discourse in a critical community of inquiry.

Teaching Presence

The design, facilitation, and direction of cognitive and social processes for the purpose of realizing personally meaningful and educationally worthwhile learning outcomes.

Garrison, D.R., Anderson, T., & Archer, W. (2000). Critical inquiry in a text-based environment: Computer conferencing in higher education. *The Internet and Higher Education*, 2(2-3), 87-105.

Developmental timeline of the Community of Inquiry framework



Elements, Categories, and Indicators

Elements	Categories	Indicators (examples only)
Social Presence	Open Communication Group Cohesion Personal/Affective	Learning climate/risk-free expression Group identity/collaboration Self projection/Expressing emotions
Cognitive Presence	Triggering Event Exploration Integration Resolution	Sense of puzzlement Information exchange Connecting ideas Applying new ideas
Teaching Presence	Design & Organization Facilitation Direct Instruction	Setting curriculum & methods Shaping constructive exchange Focusing and resolving issues



Creating Active Engagement

<p>The instructor clearly communicated important course goals.</p>	<p>I participate in broadening and channeling course content to aid collective understanding.</p>
<p>The instructor provided clear instructions on how to participate in course learning activities.</p>	<p>I direct attention and effort to participate in course learning activities based on the evolving needs of our learning community.</p>
<p>The instructor clearly communicated important due dates/time frames for learning activities.</p>	<p>I actively engage to meet important due dates/time frames for the course activities</p>
<p>The instructor was helpful in identifying areas of agreement and disagreement on course topics that helped me to learn.</p>	<p>I help to identify areas of agreement and disagreement on course topics with my peers in a way that nurtures a shared learning experience.</p>
<p>The instructor was helpful in guiding the class towards understanding course topics in a way that helped me clarify my thinking.</p>	<p>My actions reinforce and develop responsibility for the collaborative climate and sense of community.</p>
<p>The instructor helped to keep course participants engaged and participating in productive dialogue.</p>	<p>I encourage my peers to explore new concepts in this course by showing appreciation and gratitude for well-reasoned responses.</p>
<p>The instructor helped keep the course participants on task in a way that helped me to learn.</p>	<p>I contribute to our course discussions in a timely fashion.</p>
<p>The instructor encouraged course participants to explore new concepts in this course.</p>	<p>I add to course discussions and activities in a way that connects outside resources and personal examples.</p>

Question 2

For your teaching context, what might be some challenges to implementing a Community of Inquiry based approach?



Recent Findings

Challenge-Lack of Technical Infrastructure	Challenges with technology – such as limited bandwidth, unreliable Internet connectivity and/or lack of available resources such as laptops
Challenge-Design	Challenge of designing courses with the pedagogic principles of COI and integrating technology in a way that supports meaningful learning.
Challenge-Lack of skill set/support & training	Instructors and/or students lack the training, support or skill set to teach/learn with technology.
Challenge-Lack of student motivation/participation	The lack of desire to learn and to persist or participate in a course/program.



Teaching Principles

SOCIAL PRESENCE

- Design for open communication & trust
- Create and sustain sense of community
- Ensure students sustain collaboration

COGNITIVE PRESENCE

- Design for critical reflection & discourse
- Support purposeful inquiry
- Ensure that inquiry moves to resolution

ASSESSMENT

- Ensure assessment is congruent with intended learning outcomes

Vaughan, N. D., Cleveland-Innes, M., & Garrison, D. R. (2013). *Teaching in blended learning environments: Creating and sustaining communities of inquiry*. Athabasca University Press. <https://www.aupress.ca/books/120229-teaching-in-blended-learning-environments>

<https://jennaraeb.files.wordpress.com/2017/08/blended-learning-600.jpg>

Assessment -- A contemporary definition

“The ‘traditional view of assessment defines its primary role as evaluating a student’s comprehension of factual knowledge,’ whereas a more contemporary definition ‘sees assessment as activities designed primarily to foster student learning’” (Webber, 2012, p. 202, as cited in Conrad & Openo, 2018, p. 6).

We must ensure that our assessments are shaped in ways that support the approaches to learning that we value (deep learning, collaborative, constructivist, process-based). This may involve assessments such as group work, e-portfolios, presenting on or contributing to a topic of inquiry, or self-reflection.



Assessment and Community

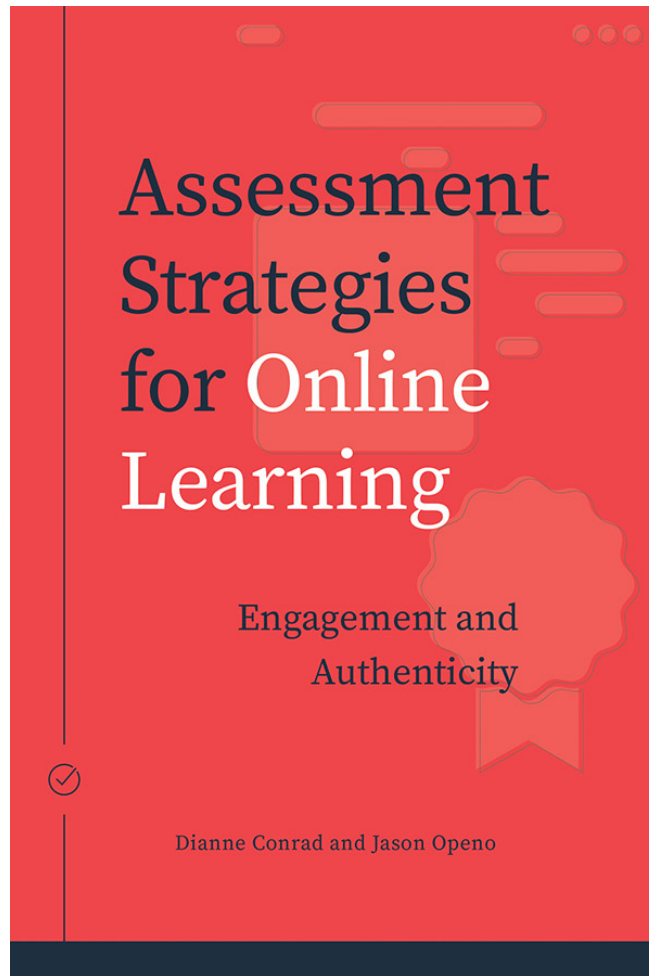
"All assessment activities, except for individual-based examinations, have the capability of encouraging and/or making possible collaboration and communication among learners – in short, building community."

Success factors with online learners are the following:

- Constructivism
- Community
- Collaboration
- Communication
- (Comfort)

Conrad, D. (forthcoming chapter). *The Community of Inquiry and Authentic Assessment: A Union of Flexibility and Purpose*.

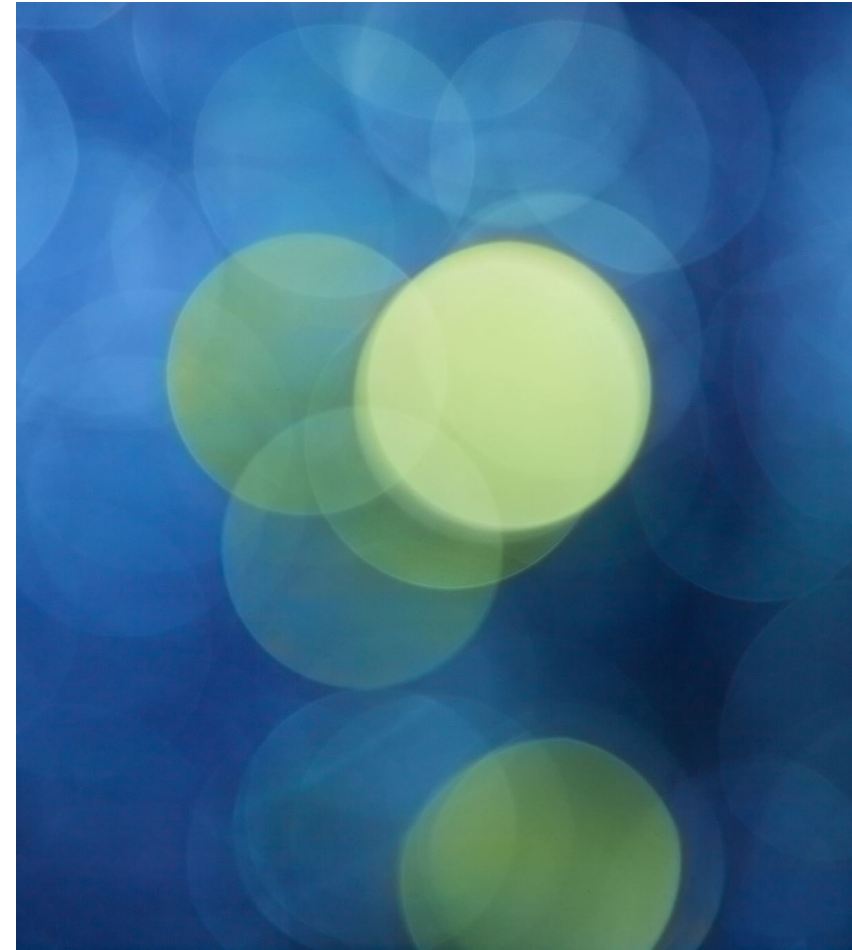
Assessment that Inspires



<https://www.aupress.ca/books/120279-assessment-strategies-for-online-learning/>

Col applications

- Start with a collaborative discussion about student roles and expectations.
- Share passion and points of interest in reference to the subject-matter and everyday life.
- Use varied and unique materials and approaches to engaging students with learning material.
- Provide opportunities for application of knowledge outside the class environment.
- Discussion and application of knowledge is a regular part of course activities.

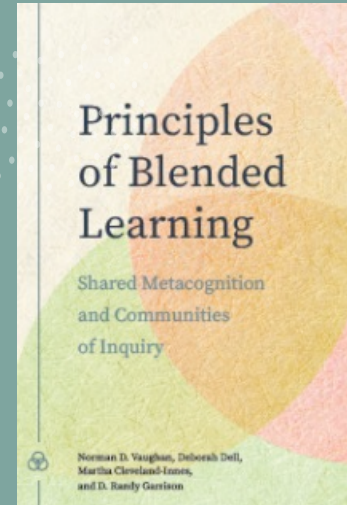


Question 3

What is **one STEP** for you toward implementing a Community of Inquiry approach in your teaching practice?



Two Upcoming CoI Publications



**The Design of Digital Learning Environments:
Online and Blended Applications of the
Community of Inquiry**

**Cleveland-Innes, M.
Stenbom, S.
D. Randy Garrison**

Routledge 2023





<https://www.thecommunityofinquiry.org/>



A MOOC FOR DESIGNING COMMUNITIES OF INQUIRY

<https://www.dcoimooc.org/>



Thank you for
your attention
and participation
in this webinar!

Let's open it up
now to for the
participants to
share if they have
any questions or
comments!