I LIVE AND WORK ON THE TK'EMLUPS TE SECWEPEMC TERRITORY WITHIN THE UNCEDED TRADITIONAL LANDS OF SECWEPEMCÚL'ECW (SECWEPEMC NATION), WHERE LEARNING HAS TAKEN PLACE SINCE TIME IMMEMORIAL.

I recognize the privilege I embody in being free to move about the territories we now call Canada even while the original people to steward these lands continue to await meaningful reconciliation with the settler state.

FOR THOSE WHO ARE RETURNING TUTORS…

… how do you establish a connection with someone you are helping when you're working face-to-face?

… how do you show care?

If you feel comfortable, please share your experiences in the public chat.

THE GOOD NEWS IS:

Your modality is shifting.

Your competencies are not.

SEAN MICHAEL MORRIS, "FOSTERING CARE AND COMMUNITY AT A DISTANCE"

https://www.enhancementthemes.ac.uk/docs/ethemes/conference/fostering-care-and-community-at-a-distance.pdf?sfvrsn=93aacc81_10

"The role of the teacher is not just to listen, to extend care and compassion, but also to wait in the silence of grief and concern for the notes of humanization to emerge, and to amplify those notes so that a student can be reminded that they are, even in times like these, a being becoming, emerging. Even in this moment, even in pandemic and tragedy and fear, we are all nonetheless—and in some ways, more so than when comfort and peacefulness abide—in a process of becoming more human. As we are confronted by the aches and diseases of our culture, we can be reminded that *culture* is distinctly human, and so part of our common project."

# A LEARNING RELATIONSHIP IS ONE OF CARE AND COMMUNITY

- Students need to feel a sense of belonging in order to learn, and this is true both in classroom and support / co-curricular spaces.

- Many students find tutors and other support roles *easier* to connect with than traditional faculty members – this makes you a critical part of this semester.

- We know that students are struggling with a sense of isolation – I'm doing this alone! – and your role is designed in part to offer a salve to that sense.

LET'S CHAT

- Think about your best learning experiences.

  - What made you feel like you belonged there?

  - What can you do in your role as a tutor to share that feeling with someone else?

  - How can we translate that experience online?

- Think about your worst learning experiences.

  - What made you feel alienated in that situation?

  - What can you do in your role as a tutor to prevent someone else feeling that way?

  - How can we translate this negative learning experience into a lesson as we move online?

COMMUNITY OF INQUIRY APPROACH

- Learning occurs best at the intersection of:

  - social presence (do we identify with the community);

  - teaching presence; and

  - cognitive presence (is the content meaningful).

- By this model, the content is only one-third of the learning experience.
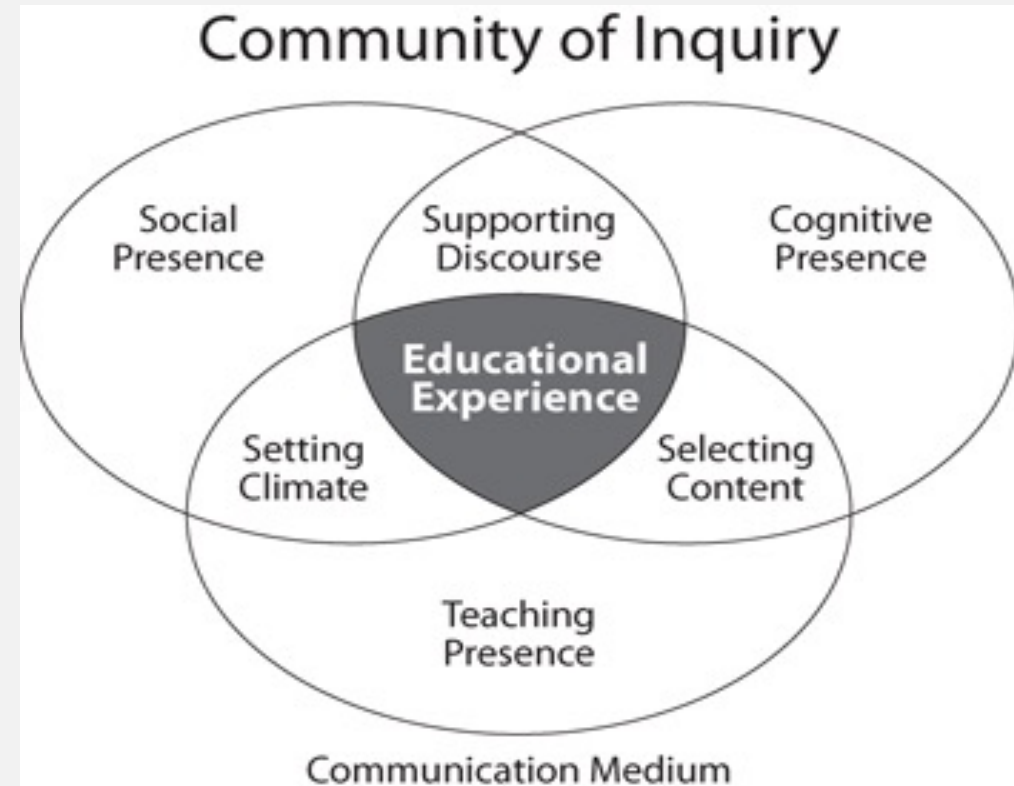
Garrison, et al. (2000) "Critical Inquiry in a Text-Based Environment: Computer Conferencing in Higher Education." *The Internet and Higher Education* 2(2-3): 87-105.

AS TUTORS…

- … I encourage you to think about how your role encompasses all three parts of the Venn diagram.

- Obviously, you teach (tutor) and you support content delivery (and deliver content related to writing instruction), but you're also a significant part of the social world of the institution for students right now – probably far more than their professors.

- Consider how *few* faces will make up the institution for students this term, and how *accessible* you are by virtue of your role in supporting learning.

TECH-FREE STRATEGIES TO ESTABLISH BELONGING

- Introduce yourself, and be as personal* as you feel comfortable being.

- Use students names when responding in writing or audio/video.

- Establish a communication policy that you are comfortable with and stick with it; air on the side of being more conservative (online communication absorbs time!).

- Make space to talk about things* that aren't coursework.

*Your willingness to share will depend on a lot of factors, including your subject position and sense of vulnerability. Never be more open than makes you comfortable! But plan ahead for what you are able to share – pet photos, a favourite book, or a sense of how you set-up your workspace, even.

GOOD PRACTICES FOR ZOOM (ADMITTEDLY NOT MY FORTE!)

- Find a space where you feel comfortable working and try to model that comfort for students. Experiment with backgrounds if that helps you feel comfortable.

- Allow space to talk about unrelated things (we do it all the time face-to-face, but tend to become more rigid online).

- Give yourself the freedom to be animated when you speak – even if you're turning cameras off. You'll sound more natural and welcoming if you do!

- Don't worry if your cat or family member bumbles into the shot – you're a person with a life! -- but remember to extend grace to others, too.

TRAUMA-INFORMED PEDAGOGY

- What it is:

  - An acknowledgement that learning is negatively impacted by emotional trauma;

  - An awareness of the current stressors impacting students; and

  - NOT mental health care or invitation to confession / disclosure.

- What it encourages:

  - Predictability, consistency, and connectedness; and

  - Compassion and consideration.

MANAGING SITUATIONS WITH TRAUMA-AWARENESS

- Plan ahead! How can you react in the moment with compassion to frustrations like:

  - Students arriving late or underprepared?

  - Students skipping / missing sessions?

  - Students being distracted by a complex living situation?

  - Students not wanting to turn on their webcameras?

- Can we talk through some of these scenarios, on mic or in the public chat?

PLEASE REMEMBER THAT YOU, TOO, ARE LIVING THROUGH A TRAUMATIC TIME.

How can you extend kindness and grace to yourself that will enable you to extend kindness and grace to others in turn?

I HOPE YOU'LL KEEP IN TOUCH.

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