From Theory to Practice:
Discussion Forums

Overview

1. Review Discussion Forum **Components**

2. Create **Prompts**: Active Learning Strategies

3. Enhance Dialogue: Effective **Engagement**

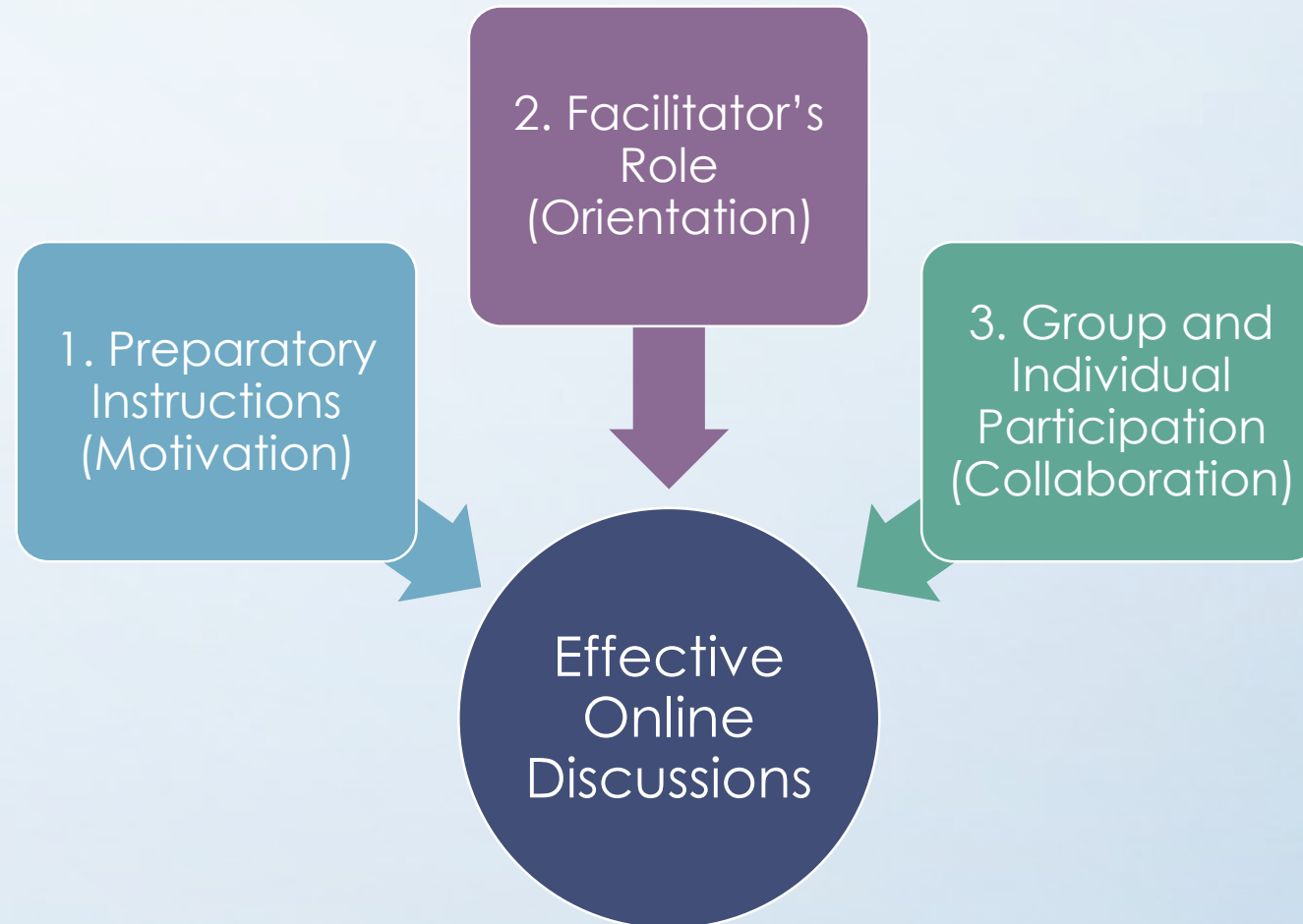4. Develop a **Community** of Inquiry
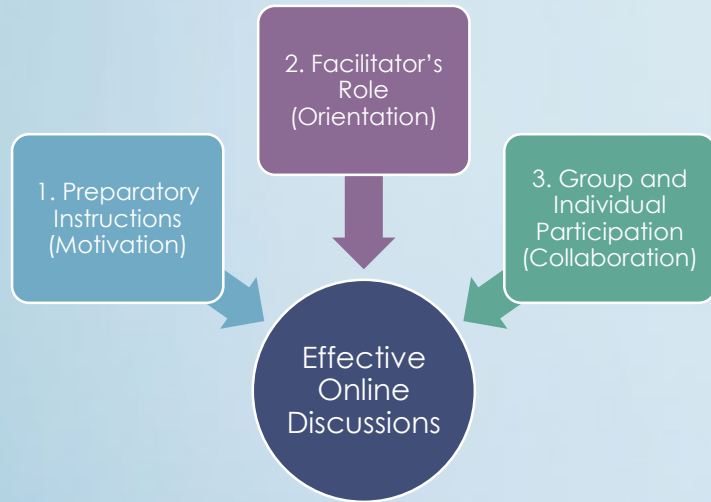
Discussion Forum

Components

Online discussions are used to bridge the gap of social interaction to construct, apply and develop knowledge.

Discussion Forum Components

1. Preparatory Instructions (Motivation)

2. Facilitator's Role (Orientation)

3. Group and Individual Participation (Collaboration)

Effective Online Discussions

TIBI, M. H. (2016). ESSENTIAL COMPONENTS IN STRUCTURING ASYNCHRONOUS DISCUSSION FORUMS. *Turkish Online Journal of Distance Education (TOJDE)*, *17*(2).

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Effective Online Discussions

Component 1:

Effective Strategies for Discussion Prompts

Active Learning Strategies

Problem-Based Learning:

Complex, case-based stories to motivate and engage learners in real-world scenarios and problem-solving activities.

Discussion Prompt:

You are a senior accounting analyst at a publicly traded company. Tomorrow your company is scheduled to release its annual report (10-K). You just received an internal document with tomorrow's press release. You noticed immediately that the numbers in the press release are inflated. After bringing it to the attention of your boss, she told you that she changed the numbers at the CEO's request and not to mention it again. What should you do?

Active Learning Strategies

Design-Based Learning:

Actively support students through a self-directed, authentic problem-solving process and by scaffolding applied knowledge to design original artifacts for project-based assignments.

Discussion Prompt:

Your consulting firm has been asked by Delta Airlines to improve the efficiency of boarding and deboarding their commercial flights. Delta would like to board a flight of 50 passengers within 10 minutes so they can improve their "on time status" and gain market advantage.

In your group, design a solution to streamline these processes. Present your solution as a multimedia presentation or professional report using tools and resources you're comfortable with to the discussion post. Be persuasive! Your consulting firm may get the job based on your sales-pitch and design.
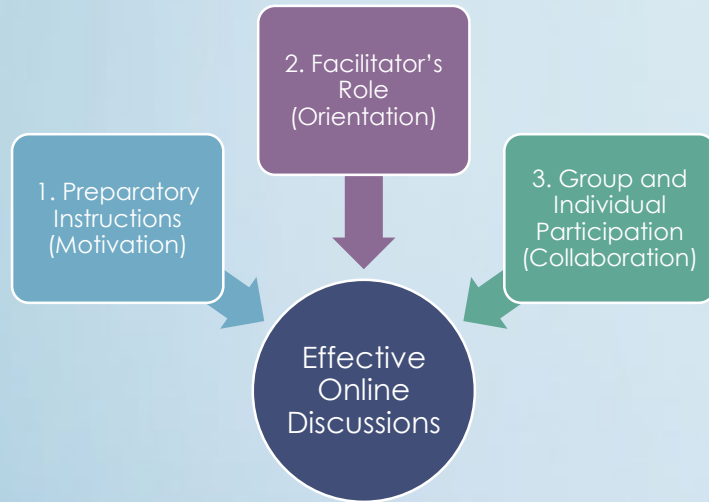
Active Learning Strategies

Experience-Based Learning:

Through a cyclical process of reflection, experiential learning asks learners to contemplate on the learning activity, whether created by the instructor or from previous experience and to analyze improved strategies for future iterations.

Discussion Prompt:

In the past few years, financial transactions and currency have dramatically evolved. For example, the emergence of PayPal, online checking, Bitcoin, and even the ability to text someone money are all new technology-enhanced ways we can transfer currency. Based on your own experience in this evolution, where do you think the future of money is headed and what will currency be like ten years from now?
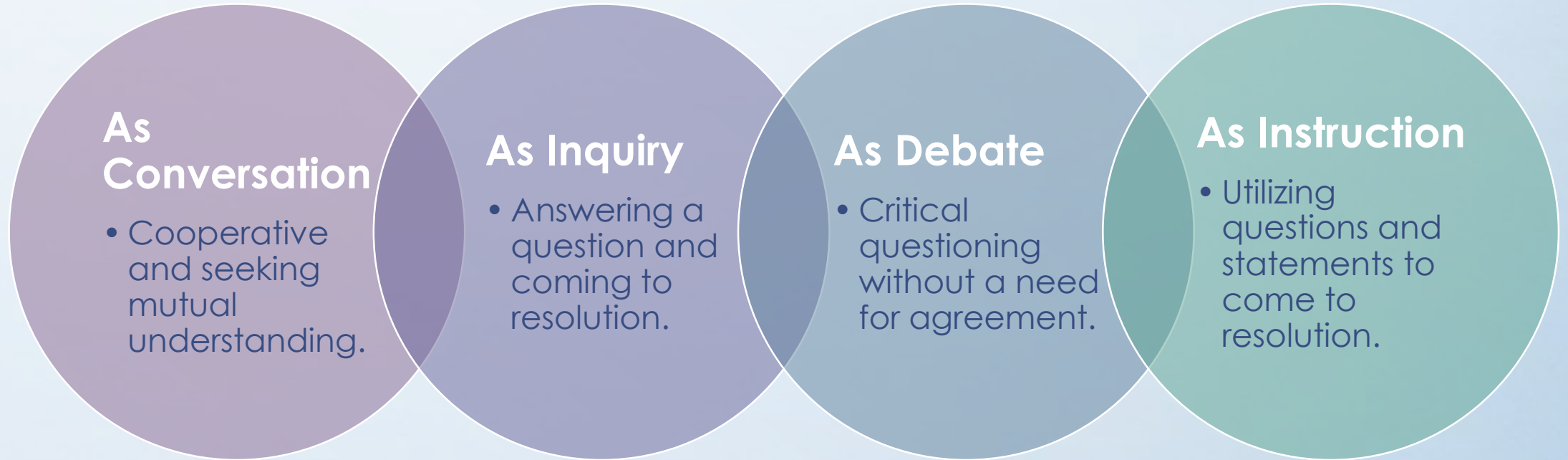
2. Facilitator's Role (Orientation)

1. Preparatory Instructions (Motivation)

3. Group and Individual Participation (Collaboration)

Effective Online Discussions

Component 2:

Effective Strategies for Engagement

Dialogue: Engaging Students in Discussion

As Conversation
- Cooperative and seeking mutual understanding.

As Inquiry
- Answering a question and coming to resolution.

As Debate
- Critical questioning without a need for agreement.

As Instruction
- Utilizing questions and statements to come to resolution.

Burbules, N. (1993). *Dialogue in Teaching*. New York: Teachers College Press.
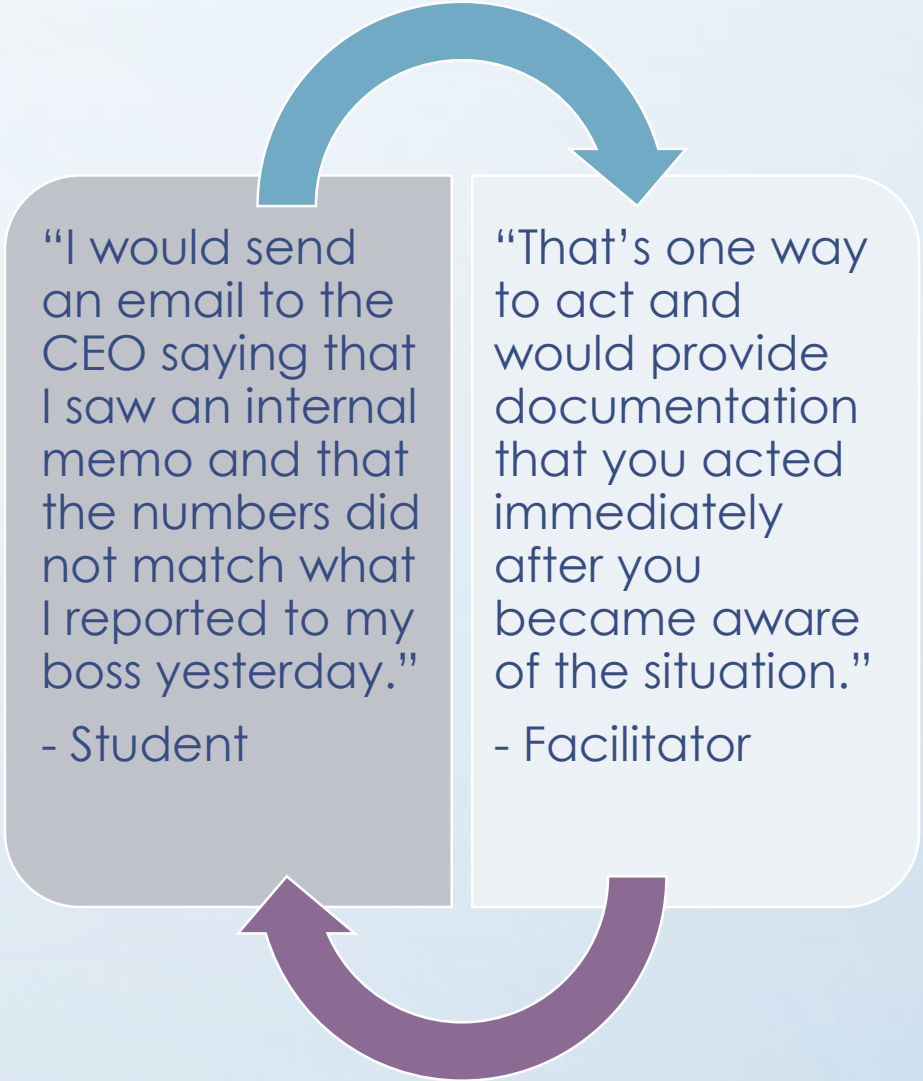
Dialogue: As Conversation

You are a senior accounting analyst at a publicly traded company. Tomorrow your company is scheduled to release its annual report (10-K). You just received an internal document with tomorrow's press release. You noticed immediately that the numbers in the press release are inflated. After bringing it to the attention of your boss, she told you that she changed the numbers at the CEOs request and not to mention it again. What should you do?

"I would send an email to the CEO saying that I saw an internal memo and that the numbers did not match what I reported to my boss yesterday."

- Student

"That's one way to act and would provide documentation that you acted immediately after you became aware of the situation."

- Facilitator

Dialogue: As Inquiry

Student Post ↑

"I would send an email to the CEO saying that I saw an internal memo and that the numbers did not match what I reported to my boss yesterday."

"Why would your first course of action be to email the CEO? Do you think it's appropriate to go over your manager's head?"

Facilitator Response ↓

Dialogue: As Debate

Student Post

"I would send an email to the CEO saying that I saw an internal memo and that the numbers did not match what I reported to my boss yesterday."

"If you do not hear back from the CEO and the incorrect numbers are released, will you go public?"
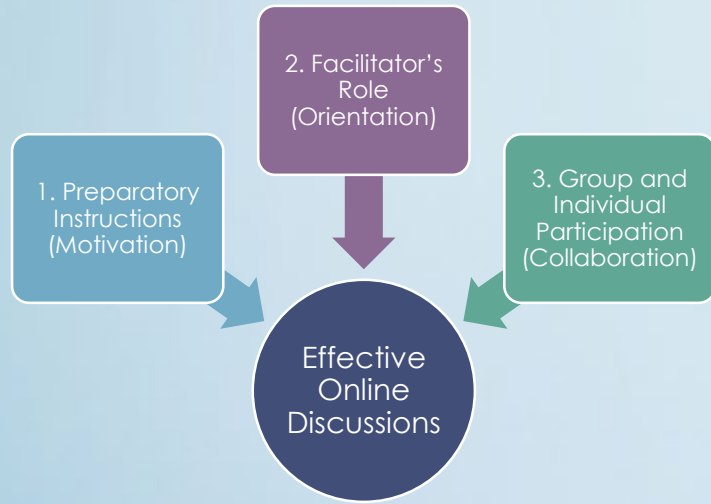
Facilitator Response

Dialogue: As Instruction

Student Response

- "I would send an email to the CEO saying that I saw an internal memo and that the numbers did not match what I reported to my boss yesterday."

Facilitator Response

- "That's a good first step and will help you document the situation. However, have you considered how your boss will react? The CEO? Others? What's your second step to this situation? You may want to review this case study and consider how it applies to this scenario."
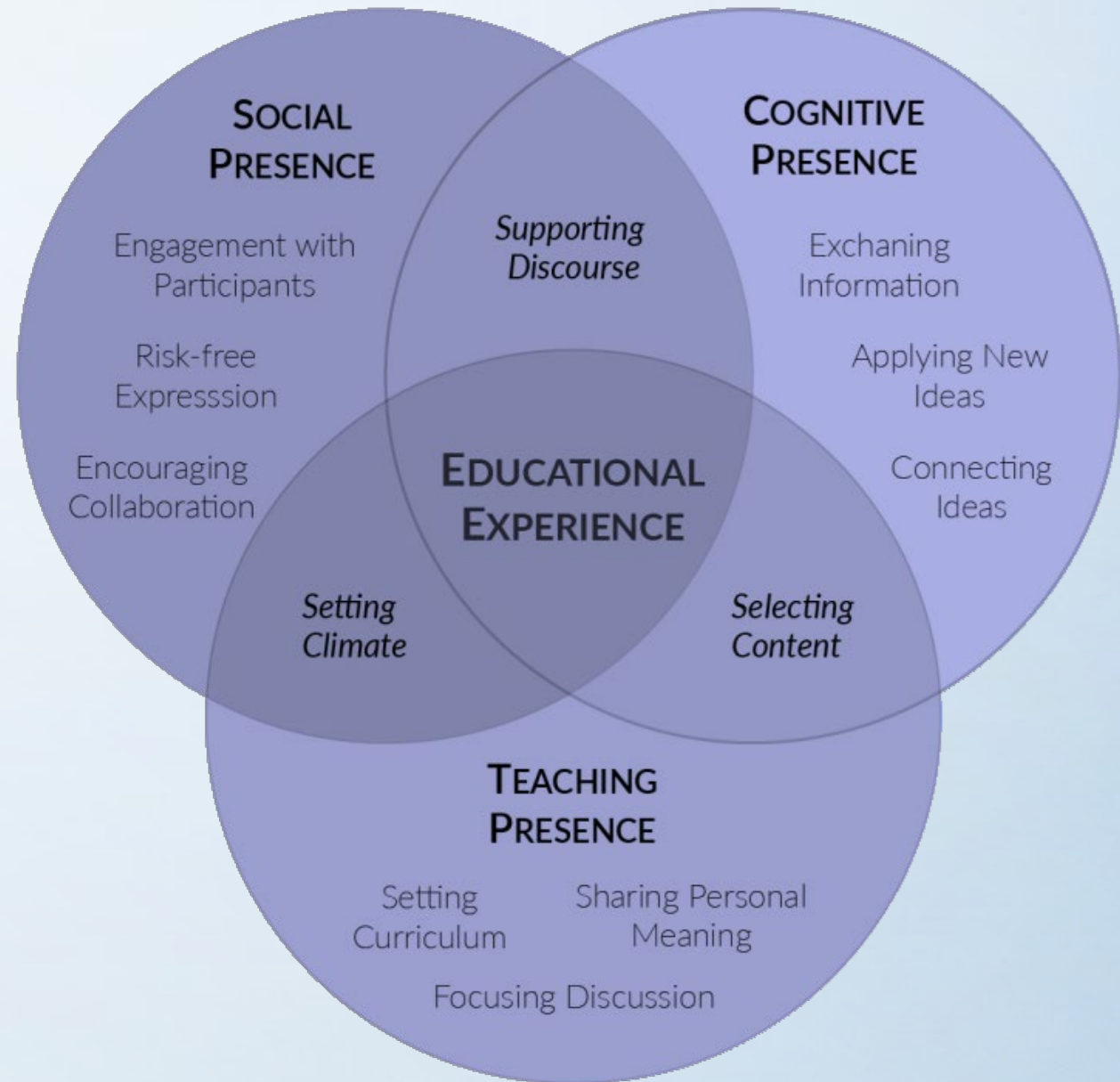
2. Facilitator's Role (Orientation)

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Effective Online Discussions

Component 3:

Community of Inquiry

Community of Inquiry

1. Social Presence
2. Teaching Presence
3. Cognitive Presence

The Community of Inquiry Model

SOCIAL PRESENCE

Engagement with Participants

Risk-free Expresssion

Encouraging Collaboration

Supporting Discourse

COGNITIVE PRESENCE

Exchaning Information

Applying New Ideas

Connecting Ideas

EDUCATIONAL EXPERIENCE

Setting Climate

Selecting Content

TEACHING PRESENCE

Setting Curriculum

Sharing Personal Meaning

Focusing Discussion

Adapted from Garrison, D.R., Anderson, T., Archer, W. (1999) Critical inquiry in a text-based environment: Computer conferencing in higher education. *The Internet and Higher Education* 2(2), 87–105

Discussion

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