



Best Practices: How to lead discussions online

Asynchronous:

Find common areas of consensus or divergence in student responses, and use that as a point of learning

Provide the goals/outcome of the discussions at the start

Assign a discussion leader ✓ For sure!

Also maybe have rotating leader

Be a moderator in discussions

set expectation of at least 1 Q and at least 2-3 answers for class participation points

collaborative community guidelines

Posting material early, so that if further discussions/ clarifications are reqd, we can switch to Sync

Clear instructions to get conversation going rightaway

Moderate discussions to encourage further conversations

Allow students to have an Avatar that represents themselves - get to know students better

Having clear expectations set out in the beginning, built collaboratively with students (applies to both)

Synchronous:

Having a platform to take notes as a way of consolidating discussion points

Breakout groups for think/pair/share
(Small breakout rooms)

collaborative community guidelines Non-class related ice breakers to foster sense of community

Build discussion progressively from low stakes anonymous contributions to verbal discussion

Polls create breakout rooms

Follow-up activity where students can summarize the discussion ✓

Kahoot to get things started

Patience! Things take at least 1.5x as long online as compare to f2f

positive reinforcement; use people's names; develop a culture of calling on people for responses

create breakout rooms for self introduction in smaller groups

ask for non-verbal responses (eg emoticons) often

Self checkins at the start of the discussion

Encourage chatbox discussion

Unpredictable ideas and ways of challenging perceptions/biases 'in the moment'

prepare theme based questions and have the students prepare answers ahead of time

Somebody needs to be in charge of the chat

Start with a low risk activity to encourage participation