

STEM - FIT

FORUM FOR INCLUSIVE TEACHING

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CONCEPT

Promoting Social Presence Using the Online Padlet Tool

Social presence, one component of the Community of Inquiry (CoI) Framework, was introduced in STEM-FIT edition 8 and is about building relationships within the online community. This can be achieved by giving students opportunities to connect with their peers and instructors, communicate in a safe environment, incorporate their personalities into their work and feel like a member of the online community. Below we feature the work of two Sac State faculty who are using the online Padlet tool to promote social presence in their online courses.

TIPS AND TOOLS

Drs. Joya Mukerji and Michael Wright, faculty in the Department of Biological Sciences, both use the interactive software tool, Padlet (<https://padlet.com/>), in the first week of the semester to engage students and build community in their large lecture sections. Their activities are summarized below, and detailed instructions of their activities can be found in our Canvas Course at <https://csus.instructure.com/courses/71792>

1. In BIO2: Introduction to Cells, Molecules, and Genes, Dr. Mukerji implements a “Meet Your Team” activity on the first day of class to help students connect with other students and encourage the formation of study groups. In addition to their names, pronouns, and email addresses, students can share a photo of themselves or a photo they particularly like and choose from a list of prompts to share their favorite foods, activities they enjoy, places they would like to visit, and/or secret superhero power. Students are also encouraged to share days and times that they could meet in study groups. Dr. Mukerji emphasizes that the information they choose to share is up to them and that the Padlet is private. And importantly, she designs a Padlet to introduce herself and her special friend, Roscoe:

1. Name: Roscoe
2. Pronouns: he/him
3. Email: Keyboards aren't really my scene.
4. Interested in-class discussion group. (Though my people tell me I'm in a class by myself).
5. Times you could meet: NA (napping and chasing squirrels)
6. Favorite food: Yes! All.
7. Activities you enjoy outside of class: eating, taking walks, napping
8. Something that has been helping you take care of yourself during the pandemic: connecting with people who care about me
9. Secret superhero alias: Small & Mighty Yard Dingo.



2. Dr. Wright uses Padlet to facilitate activity in which students collaboratively create “Class Discussion Rules” for his BIO131: Systemic Physiology course. He embeds the Padlet into a Canvas Assignment to streamline the activity for students. He provides them with some initial guidelines for communicating with each other online, including:

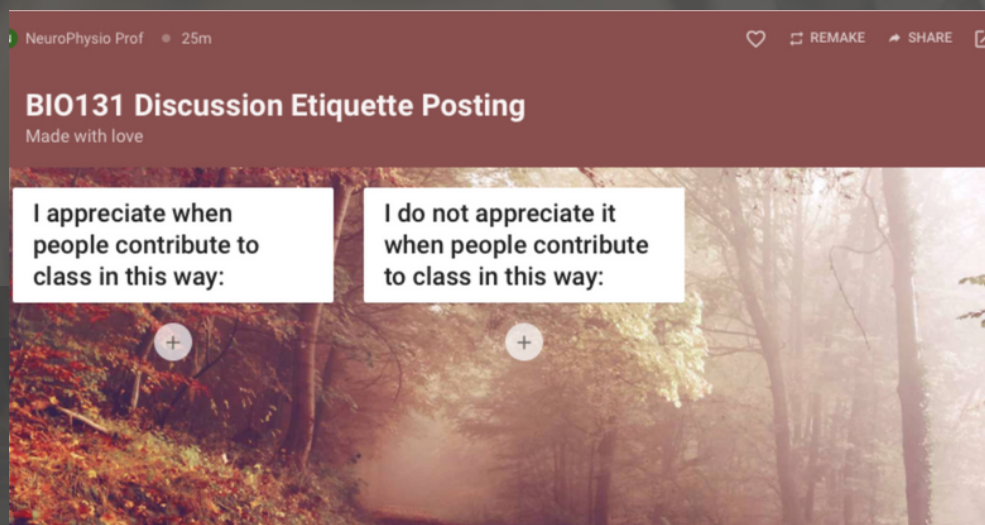
- a. Everyone has wisdom and we need everyone’s wisdom for the wisest results
- b. Everyone will hear and be heard
- c. There are no wrong answers or questions
- d. Our whole is greater than the sum of our parts

He then turns it over to the students, as they anonymously add their ideas to two prompts:

- appreciate when people contribute to the class in this way:
- do not appreciate it when people contribute to the class in this way:

If you are wondering what students added to Dr. Wright’s list, here are some great examples:

1. Be supportive!
2. Be respectful!
3. Be brave!



RESOURCES

Padlet at <https://padlet.com/> is described as an online bulletin board that can be used to display information in one of eight formats. Users can post anonymously and there is a feature to allow for commenting and applying emojis to displays. It is \$8/month or \$99 for an annual subscription.