

## 4 Types of Interaction

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An instructor who adopts a "student-centered" methodology compared to a "teacher-centered" methodology designs a course that encourages active learning and interactions among learners. There are 4 types of interaction in face-to-face, hybrid and online classes. Each type of interaction can be facilitated by different tools and instructional methods.

**Instructor-student:** the instructional activities give students the opportunity to receive information, motivation, timely feedback, mentoring and coaching from you! As the rubric annotations state, "Interactions between the instructor and the students are designed to facilitate students' understanding and mastery of the learning objectives. These interactions may be supportive (welcome and introduction messages, "about the instructor," weekly announcements) and instructional (direct instruction, assignment feedback, FAQs, etc...). The communications between student and instructor may be one-to-one (personal emails) or one-to-many (forum postings, class announcements)."

**Content-student:** the instructional activities give students the opportunity to engage with the course materials in multiple ways and encourage active learning. There are many ways to present content to students and for them to engage with it. You are well on your way to learning about many alternative delivery methods (blogs, presentations, podcasts, audio/video, hyperlinks, social networking, etc.). How will you design your materials to engage the learner?

**Student-student:** the instructional activities give students the opportunity to collaborate with their classmates by exchanging and building information together. There are many types of instructional activities that encourage student collaboration. As the rubric states, "Examples of student-to-student interactions may include self-introductions, group discussion postings, small-group projects, peer critiques, etc."

**Technology-student:** How students interface with the course technology (computer hardware/software, the course management system, audio/video materials, etc.) can impact their ability to learn from and engage with the course materials. Technology crisis points need to be anticipated and addressed.

The image that follows is an example of how a Course Management System (such as Blackboard) can be used to facilitate the different types of interaction.

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