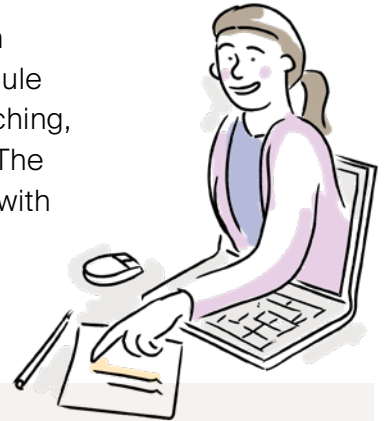


# 10 tips to enhance your online teaching

The AO recognizes that online teaching requires competencies that differ from face-to-face teaching competencies. For example, the defined program schedule and time frame are more flexible for online education than for face-to-face teaching, requiring you and your learners to proactively self-direct the learning process. The AO recognizes the need to define and communicate expectations associated with online teaching and is developing additional resources. Stay tuned.



These ten tips are applicable to facilitate and enhance your online moderation.



## 1 Convey clear expectations

It might seem easy to hold online discussions to higher standards than discussions happening face-to-face. But not all learners participate equally in a face-to-face setting. Make sure to provide clear expectations regarding the number of posts, the number of replies, and the associated deadlines.

## 2 Be the first to show up

Make sure you are the first one in the online forum, welcoming learners with a warm message, just as you would during a face-to-face educational activity. Be visible and lead the learning experience.



## 3 Online activities do not get taught by themselves

The moderator has the role of guide, facilitator and teacher. Online teaching—more than a face-to-face event—allows you to dedicate time to individual learners and their learning processes. Make sure you plan accordingly.

## 4 Familiarize yourself with the online learning management system (LMS)

Take time to learn to use all the different functionalities available to you as the online moderator, so that you can empower your learners to get the most out of their online learning activities.



## 5 Interaction versus intervention

Proactively and strategically manage your educational activity. Find a balance between clearly defining and communicating what is expected of your learners to ensure each learner's potential to meet her/his learning outcomes, while managing the learners to ensure that they are completing necessary tasks.

## 6 Pace and pattern your activity

Establishing and communicating regularly and with a reliable pattern help you and your learners to structure the learning, in parallel with everyone's other daily routines and responsibilities, such as work and family life. There are start and end dates with specific weekly assignments (self-assessment, discussion groups, etc), so the “timeless” virtual learning space is not as flexible as one may think. Therefore, it is necessary to establish and maintain a predictable study pattern.

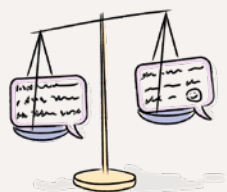


## 7 Responding in time

In today's age of information technology, expectations of response times have increased. Though it can be challenging, it is important to set reasonable time frames when responding to learners. As the online moderator, you may be the learner's only contact point. Learners' progress may also depend on your feedback.

## 8 Working as a team

As an AO online moderator, you will often work with a faculty team. Make sure you are aligned with and are sharing (if applicable) the online moderation, especially if it is your first time teaching and moderating together.



## 9 Be conscious of your messages and messaging

The contextual information (eg, voice intonation, facial expression, body language, etc) that is a given in a face-to-face interaction gets lost in online communications. Ideas, opinions, or humor need to be carefully and simple worded. In an international and diverse organization like the AO, it is important to be conscious of your learners, their backgrounds, their cultural identities, and their needs. Practice cultural humility; use gender-inclusive language, keep reflecting on your own behaviors, and give and receive feedback to make sure your learners are comfortable. Make the most of the opportunity to send reflected and informed messages—one of the advantages of online learning.

(For further information, please take a look at the following previously published ten tips: [Ten tips on diversity](#), [Ten tips on intercultural sensitivity](#), [Ten tips on webinars](#))

## 10 Track participation

Use the classroom progress table that the LMS provides to track participation. As in face-to-face discussions, learners may differ. Some might be very engaged while others might be very quiet. Make sure that you get all learners engaged. For those who are quiet, you may want to send a private message to them to find out why they are not contributing; keep tip 9 in mind when writing your message.



### References

**Ten tips on diversity:** <https://facultyfocus.aoeducation.org/2019-02/ed1ten-tips-on-opportunity-diversity-and-inclusion.html>

**Ten tips on intercultural sensitivity:** [https://facultyfocus.aoeducation.org/aot2017\\_01/10-tips-on-intercultural-sensitivity.html](https://facultyfocus.aoeducation.org/aot2017_01/10-tips-on-intercultural-sensitivity.html)

**Ten tips on webinars:** [https://facultyfocus.aoeducation.org/aot2016\\_01/10-tips-for-webinar-presenters.html](https://facultyfocus.aoeducation.org/aot2016_01/10-tips-for-webinar-presenters.html)

**NCBI resources:** <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3834043/>

**Penn State University's World Campus:** [http://www.mnsu.edu/cetl/teachingwithtechnology/tech\\_resources\\_pdf/Ten%20Principles%20of%20Effective%20Online%20Teaching.pdf](http://www.mnsu.edu/cetl/teachingwithtechnology/tech_resources_pdf/Ten%20Principles%20of%20Effective%20Online%20Teaching.pdf)