

Using Personal Profiles to Develop Community in an Online Course

Purpose: A personal profiles give each member of an online course an opportunity to share information about themselves. Having students post and respond to personal profiles to learn about each other can facilitate the development of a sense of community in an online course.

Directions:

1. **Create an area on the Discussion Board** for students to post their personal profiles. Provide students with specific questions to address.

Examples of specific questions

- A description of yourself using six creative words.
- A creative thing that you have done in your life that you are most proud of.
- The Multiple Intelligence domain in which your creativity is the strongest, describing why or giving examples.
- A creative person that you would most like to meet (dead or alive) and why.
- An instrument that you play or would like to play

2. **Create a follow up activity** that requires students to read and respond to the profiles. Two examples include Scavenger Hunt and structured questions

Scavenger Hunt - Ask students to hunt for information such as

- Find a teammate who has done something you find interesting or intriguing and explain why.
- Find one or two teammates who enjoy the same hobbies that you do.
- Find one or two teammates who are the complete opposite of you.
- Find one or more things that all of the members in your group have in common.
- Find a teammate who has done something you find interesting or intriguing and explain why.

Structured questions - Ask students to synthesize the information

- Can we form a band with our skills and experience?
- What would happen if our pets met?