

Best Pedagogical Practices for Online Instructor Emotional Presence

NICHOLE PARKER (RN, BN)¹

Athabasca University

Abstract

Online education is challenged within pedagogical, technological, and andragogical realms. Many online students feel isolated and disconnected, which negatively affects their learning experience online. Educational frameworks support learner perception as a vital element in the experience of learning. Learner emotion, motivation, attitude, and ability to learn are influenced by instructor ability to connect and convey emotional presence. An online educator can use emotional presence in online learning environments to decrease learner isolation and the perceived student-instructor distance and proximity. This exploratory literature identifies practices that enhance online instructor pedagogy in online learning environments. Theme curation was implemented to critically analyze, interpret, and reorganize existing information. This analytic evaluation of emotional presence yielded practical insights, strategies, and measurement tools into the various aspects of emotional presence. The analytical article findings allowed for the creation of the Best Pedagogical Practices for Emotional Presence Assessment Tool (BPP-EPAT), a guide for online instructors that supports best pedagogical practices as they relate to emotional presence. The BPP-EPAT supports the momentum of educational epistemology and the evolving 21st-century learner, and can be used to support the development of nursing educator knowledge around evidence-based online teaching practices.

Keywords: emotional presence, online pedagogy, best pedagogical practice, online instructor assessment, online learning, humanizing online learning, online andragogy

¹ Nichole Parker is a Master of Nursing student and graduate research assistant for the Faculty of Health Disciplines at Athabasca University. She is also a nursing instructor at NorQuest College. The author acknowledges Athabasca University and its Master of Nursing program, under which this article was produced. For correspondence email nparker2@athabasca.edu

BEST PEDAGOGICAL PRACTICES FOR ONLINE INSTRUCTOR EMOTIONAL PRESENCE

Online learner isolation is a challenge within online education. Online learners have described feeling forgotten about, disconnected from peers, and as though they “are just typing into cyberspace” (Rush, 2015, p. 22). Instructor emotional presence significantly influences the general online learner experience (Cleveland-Innes & Garrison, 2010). It can create connections between students and instructors and therefore prevent learner isolation (Rush, 2015). Emotional presence is the “outward expression of emotion, affect, and feeling by individuals and among individuals in a community of inquiry, as they relate to and interact with the learning technology, course content, students, and the instructor” (Cleveland-Innes & Campbell, 2012, p. 283). Since an online learner’s attitude, emotion, and ability to learn are influenced through asynchronous and synchronous instructor communications (Koballa, 2016), emotional presence best practices must be implemented in online learning communities. Unfortunately, nursing educator knowledge of evidence-based online teaching practices is limited (Burge et al., 2011; Kalb et al., 2015), and this knowledge is not adequately translated into the faculty preparation, training, and professional development (Kalb et al., 2015; Kebritchi et al., 2017; Makani et al., 2016; Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada [SSHRC], 2016). This article’s main objective is to review relevant literature to identify practices that enhance online instructor pedagogical practices in online learning environments. To engage in the scholarship of learning and teaching, this article critically examines emotional presence through its theoretical, neuroscientific, and affective underpinnings. The literature review findings (Appendix A) depict the pedagogical approaches and techno-pedagogical supports related to emotional presence.

Theme curation was implemented during the literature review to critically analyze, interpret, and reorganize existing information in order provide new perspectives and demonstrate how each theme related to emotional presence. The analytical article findings allowed for the development of the Best Pedagogical Practices for Emotional Presence Assessment Tool (BPP-EPAT) (Appendix B). The BPP-EPAT is a guide for online instructors that offers five primary instructor competencies that support best pedagogical practices as they relate to emotional presence, and allows instructors to critically reflect on and self-assess their abilities in each competency.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Methods

A literature review was conducted to explore best pedagogical practices for online instructor emotional presence. A four-stage algorithm was used to identify the most relevant

articles for this literature review. After completing a general search, the algorithm applied an exclusion and screening process that eliminated articles based on the relevance of their titles, abstracts, and body text to key concepts. This process yielded 34 articles. In total, 43 references were used, including the 34 journal articles found using the four-stage algorithm as well as six books, and three websites.

Foundational Underpinnings

The foundational underpinnings of this literature review are theoretical as well as related to emotion, neuroscience, and affective learning.

Theoretical Underpinnings

Our learning is influenced by the reality of how we feel about and how we perceive our learning environments (Dirkx, 2008). Constructivism describes how online learners collaboratively create and construct social learning experiences (Bates, 2015; Burge et al., 2011; Cleveland-Innes & Garrison, 2010; Dirkx, 2008; Makani et al., 2016; Veletsianos, 2010). Constructivists urge that “meaning is constructed in our minds as we interact with the physical, social, and mental worlds we inhabit, and that we make sense of our experiences by building and adjusting the internal knowledge structures in which we collect and organize our perceptions of and reflections on reality” (Cleveland-Innes & Garrison, 2010, p. 113). Therefore, educators must be attentive to their learners' emotional and affective issues (Melrose et al., 2015).

Emotion Neuroscience and Learning. Neuroscience has empirically linked emotion and cognition within the physiology of learning (Thomas et al., 2017). Adult learning environments can evoke positive or negative emotions. Emotionality significantly influences the quality of learning experiences (Dirkx, 2008). Specifically, negative emotions distract from learning (Blais & Hayes, 2016; Cleveland-Innes & Campbell, 2012). Feeling a negative emotion impedes the activation of the affective and cognitive brain circuits, which is required in learning (Cozolino & Sprokay, 2006).

Affective Learning in Emotional Environments. Learner emotions are “widely recognized as a kind of baggage that impedes effective teaching and learning” (Dirkx, 2008, p. 8). Online educators must strive to reach learners “on an emotional and attitudinal level” (Melrose et al., 2015, p. 122). Instructors who create positive emotional environments are better suited for meeting a learner's affective learning domain (Baker, 2010; Kirk, 2019; Rogo & Portillo, 2015). Moreover, a positive emotional environment facilitates learning through the expression of care (Green & Batool, 2017). These “emotionalized learning experiences help students enhance their knowledge, change their attitudes and develop their skills” (Green & Batool, 2017, p. 35).

Furthermore, the affective component of an online learner's environment is the most significantly influential aspect in facilitating the evolution of the cognitive domain and peer relationships (Rogo & Portillo, 2015).

Online instructor engagement "is statistically more central to enhancing academic engagement and in turn affective learning" (Baker, 2010, p. 418). This engagement must reflect an instructor's ability to motivate and encourage students (Kasilingam et al., 2014). Nurturing the affective domain requires online instructors to engage learners in a way that is received as caring and motivating (Thomas et al., 2017). An online instructor's ability to reach this domain can be assessed through their demonstrated sharing of experience and knowledge through streamable audio and video files that encourage students (Kasilingam et al., 2014). Although it is difficult to measure affective learning, (Kirk, 2019) learner growth in feelings, emotion, value system, attitude, motivation, and perception may be used to assess it (Kasilingam et al., 2014). Assessment of learner attitude and motivation is particularly important, as they are "the most critically important constructs of the affective domain in science education" (Koballa, 2016, para. 3).

Transformational Learning. Transformational learning occurs when new insights, attitudes, and perspectives are adopted (Melrose et al., 2013). Transforming a "genuine change in students' views of the world is not easy...[T]eachers must provide content and experiences that have the potential to trigger new insights and invite critical reflection" (Melrose et al., 2013, p. 124). Reaching the affective domain through the sharing of ideas, personal and professional values, and critical reflection can facilitate transformational learning (Sharoff, 2019). Attitude changes are measured through self-reports and personal interviews (Koballa, 2016). A learner's attitude is influenced by the instructor's personal characteristics and ability to communicate, as well as how the instructor's communications are received by the learner (Koballa, 2016). When striving for emotional presence, best pedagogical practices for facilitating transformational learning must be implemented.

Pedagogical Approaches

Expressing Emotional Presence. An online instructor must possess effective communication skills. High-quality, continuous, and ongoing communication between an online instructor and their students is vital in any online learning environment (Burge et al., 2011). Online participants' affect expression is determined by their "ability to express their personalities...through sharing experiences, beliefs and values, self-revelation, humor, and the use of paralinguistic affective indicators" (Cleveland-Innes & Garrison, 2010, p. 124). Thus, supporting online participant conversations allows "learners to experience social presence and develop a feeling of belonging and psychological closeness, which is crucial to the development of deeper learning" (Makani et al., 2016, p. 9).

Engagement and Motivation. Instructor participation and engagement is perceived as caring (Baker, 2010; Haidet et al., 2016; Melrose et al., 2013). An online instructor's ability to maintain a caring attitude facilitates learner engagement by motivating learners (Thomas et al., 2017). Emotional presence can also be used in instructor feedback to motivate online learners (Cole et al., 2017; Thomas et al., 2017). Instructor immediacy, participation, and engagement are statistically significant predictors of student motivation and learning (Baker, 2010). Moreover, intentional participation supports the human element of an online learning environment (McKenna, 2018) by promoting a sense of community and connection (Makani et al., 2016). Consequently, conversations within social learning milieus develop feelings of trust, belonging, and psychological closeness (Makani et al., 2016).

Communicating on a Human Level. Instructors must be able to communicate effectively online on a human level (Kebritchi et al., 2017). This means “establishing a relationship and the ability to connect with students and help them feel a part of the class” (Kebritchi et al., 2017, p. 19). Moreover, instructor immediacy “begins with communicating our own availability, friendliness, and willingness to connect in personal ways with our students” (Melrose et al., 2013, p. 8). Online instructors must be authentic (Green & Batool, 2017; Melrose et al., 2013; Sitzman, 2017) and demonstrate a caring and welcoming attitude (Green & Batool, 2017; Post et al., 2017; Melrose et al., 2013; Thomas et al., 2017). An intentional, optimistic, and friendly communication style facilitates this welcoming and caring atmosphere (Melrose et al., 2013).

Online nursing student perception of instructor caring is linked to timely communication (Leners & Sitzman, 2006; Post et al., 2017; Melrose et al., 2013; Sitzman, 2010; Sitzman & Leners, 2006) that demonstrates reasonable instructor availability and full presence (Catano & Harvey, 2011; Melrose et al., 2013; Sitzman, 2016, as cited in Sitzman, 2017). Online instructor caring communications should reflect flexibility (Melrose et al., 2013; Post et al., 2017; Sitzman, 2016, as cited in Sitzman, 2017) and the acknowledgement of shared humanity (Melrose et al., 2013; Post et al., 2017; Sitzman, 2016, as cited in Sitzman, 2017).

Offering feedback. Online instructors can elicit a sense of belonging through immediate feedback (Kebritchi et al., 2017; Makani et al., 2016; Melrose et al., 2013). Feedback must be meaningful (Green & Batool, 2017; Kebritchi et al., 2017; Melrose et al., 2013; Thomas et al., 2017) and frequent (Melrose et al., 2013; Thomas et al., 2017). Ensuring that feedback is personalized and individualized is vital (Melrose et al., 2013; Post et al., 2017; Thomas et al., 2017). Moreover, high-quality feedback expresses affection through an instructor's ability to affirm student efforts in a positive, genuine, and encouraging manner (Melrose et al., 2013).

Instructor Characteristics

Instruction is the most valuable asset to student success in online teaching (Kebritchi et al., 2017). Behaviours associated with instructor caring include empathy (Green & Batool, 2017; Leners & Sitzman, 2006; Sitzman, 2010) and passion (Leners & Sitzman, 2006; Sitzman, 2010). Instructor immediacy and timely assignment returns can enhance a caring online learning environment (Melrose et al., 2013). Maintaining a non-judgmental attitude that demonstrates compassion and loving kindness supports caring in online learning environments (Sitzman & Watson, 2014, as cited in Sitzman, 2017). Attending to the individualized needs of each learner while providing personalized care further increases online nursing student perceptions of instructor caring (Leners & Sitzman, 2006; Melrose et al., 2013; Post et al., 2017; Sitzman, 2010; Sitzman & Leners, 2006). Consequently, efforts that enhance a learner's self-confidence also enhance this perception of caring (Green & Batool, 2017). Lastly, sharing additional resources that can benefit student health, finances, or learning further expresses online instructor caring (Post et al., 2017; Thomas et al., 2017).

Online Environment Characteristics

Online caring is felt through online learning environments that respect learner diversity (Green & Batool, 2017; Melrose et al., 2013; Sitzman, 2017; Thomas et al., 2017) and use inclusive word choices (Melrose et al., 2013), thereby ensuring that all learners feel safe and valued (Kebritchi et al., 2017; Melrose et al., 2013; Sitzman, 2017). Positive messages use inclusive language through “words that convey emotions such as caring, compassion, concern, joy, excitement, or interest” (Melrose et al., 2013, p. 49).

Strategies to Enhance Emotional Presence

Effective teachers are transformational leaders who develop a sense of attachment, inspiration, and trust (Catano & Harvey, 2011). The use of videos helps learners perceive the instructor as real by projecting nonverbal cues that demonstrate the instructor's personality and genuineness (Melrose et al., 2013). This strategy fosters trust and a feeling of connection (Melrose et al., 2013). Online instructors can use emotional presence to express online caring by introducing themselves in a shared video at the beginning of a course. Expressed instructor caring is reflected through formative performance feedback and frequent learner check-ins (Kebritchi et al., 2017; Thomas et al., 2017). These check-ins facilitate student engagement and enhance online communities (Kebritchi et al., 2017; Melrose et al., 2013).

Using Transformative Learning Strategies to Enhance Emotional Presence

Artistic pedagogical technologies (APTs) “are creative arts–based instructional strategies [that are] effective especially in the triad of stimulating interaction...and helping develop community in the online post-secondary classroom” (Janzen et al., 2017, p. 4). APTs have a unique ability to engage learners and facilitate the discovery and creation of new meanings of learned material (Haidet et al., 2016). APTs assist learners in making emotional connections to their learning while enhancing student achievement (Perry & Edwards, 2015, as cited in Melrose et al., 2015). As transformative learning strategies, an APT “touches the humanity of students and calls out to them first as human beings and then as learners” (Melrose et al., 2013, p. 135). Consequently, APTs help online learners seem “real to each other” (Janzen et al., 2017, p. 11) and allow instructors to support the emotional needs of their learners (Melrose et al., 2015).

APT Learning Opportunities. In an online learning environment, APTs “represent a plasticity as a medium to enmesh the APTs, students, teachers, and the learning environment together with technology” (Janzen et al., 2017, p. 13). APTs “include literacy, visual, musical, or drama elements and are distinguished from customary teaching strategies by their emphasis on aesthetics and their heightened connection to creativity” (Perry & Edwards, 2010a, as cited by Janzen et al., 2017, p. 6). Some specific APTs include photovoice, parallel poetry, and conceptual quilting (Janzen et al., 2017). Photovoice assignments ask learners to respond to a critically reflective question using photographs, which are then collectively discussed (Janzen et al., 2017). Parallel poetry “involves a poem written by the teacher and then a poem written by the student which reflects or parallels the teacher's poem” (Janzen et al., 2017, p. 7). Conceptual quilting uses electronic squares that are filled up with class participants’ ideas, then collectively combined to form an electronic quilt (Janzen et al., 2017).

Measuring Pedagogical Approaches

Effective educators can be measured by their interpersonal relationships and attitudes towards students (Tang et al., 2005). Empirically high-quality competencies of effective educators include conscientiousness, creativity, social awareness (Catano & Harvey, 2011), sincerity (Tang et al., 2005), and educator availability (Catano & Harvey, 2011; Melrose et al., 2013). Faculty performance can be measured through online learner perceptions of online caring (Wade & Kasper, 2006). Moreover, the art and science of teaching are affected by the “extent to which an instructor can empathize with students...and the extent to which the instructor can communicate effectively” (Bates, 2015, p. 42).

Techno-Pedagogical Supports

Online learning environments must be student-centered, collaborative, and reflect digitally technical pedagogical approaches (Cleveland-Innes & Garrison, 2010). Education within an online platform can be enhanced by, although not replaced with, technology (Burge et al., 2011). Machines should be viewed as an extension of humanity (Hilli, 2018), therefore decreasing the perceived student-instructor distance and proximity. Thus, emotional presence expresses authentic and caring human attributes and therefore humanizes the online learning experience. Nursing educators must use “informational technologies skillfully to support the teaching-learning process” (Halstead, 2007, p. 18). Moreover, as an educator, it is vital to develop “techno-pedagogical competencies” (SSHRC, 2016, p. 22) that optimize technology-assisted teaching and learning. Furthermore, “to engage in education innovation with no reference to emotion and continue to assume learners are little more than dispassionate thinkers would be to miss a fundamental influence on education” (Cleveland-Innes & Campbell, 2012, p. 270).

Communication Media

Communicating and collaborating in diverse ways through technology supports socioemotional engagement within online learning (Bigatel & Edel-Malizia, 2018). Online instructors should actively communicate with their students in a way that allows them to be aware of the student’s unique emotional presence (Sarsar & Kislá, 2016). Instructors who understand their online learner’s feelings develop stronger connections and more efficient communication (Sarsar & Kislá, 2016). There are a variety of techno-pedagogical communication mediums that facilitate and support online instructor ability to hone emotional presence.

Asynchronous communication media. Asynchronous discussion board participation is an issue in online education (Romero-Hall & Vicentini, 2017). Educators can use asynchronous discussions to “invite students to share personal experiences and beliefs; when they encourage linking such personal knowledge to course concepts, they are particularly effective from a social constructivist point of view” (Cleveland-Innes & Garrison, 2010, p. 116). Visual or verbal pedagogical strategies (i.e., audio and/or video messaging) will increase instructor proximity in online learning environments (Dryer et al., 2018). These audio and video messages further project instructor immediacy (Melrose et al., 2013).

Asynchronous communication medias available to educators include text, audio, and video formats (Romero-Hall & Vicentini, 2017) including discussion forums, email (Burge et al., 2011), social media (Hilli, 2018; Makani et al., 2016), and Blackboard (Romero-Hall & Vicentini, 2017; Thomas et al., 2017). VoiceThread is another type of asynchronous media tool (Fox, 2017; Mckenna, 2018; Romero-Hall & Vicentini, 2017; Thomas et al., 2017). Asynchronous

communication can be used to enhance the communication of emotion through technology, including audio and video components (Fox, 2017). Emotional feedback motivates students and can be constructed in online text formats by using emoticons, font effects, and color (Sarsar, 2017).

Synchronous communication media. Incorporating synchronous interactive spaces in online learning facilitates communication and relationship development (Thomas et al., 2017). Synchronous audio and video communication media promote community building, participation, and engagement, which translate into a sense of connection and belonging (Kebritchi et al., 2017; Mckenna, 2018; Thomas et al., 2017). Synchronous communication medias available to educators include telephone calls, Google Docs, Facetime conversations, Skype, Zoom, and virtual learning environments.

DISCUSSION

The analytical article findings allowed for the development of a Best Pedagogical Practices for Emotional Presence Assessment Tool (BPP-EPAT; Appendix B). The BPP-EPAT is a guide to five primary competencies that instructors can use to support best pedagogical practices as they relate to emotional presence. The BPP-EPAT connects reflective questions to each competency. These reflective questions relate to strategies that instructors can use to meet each competency. The questions also allow instructors to critically reflect on and assess their use of best pedagogical practices as they relate to emotional presence.

Instructor emotional presence is a complex topic that depicts current pedagogical trends, philosophies, and challenges that online education faces. Emotional presence connects individuals through technology. It has been empirically established that emotional presence—the expression of authentic and caring human attributes—plays a vital role in online learning by humanizing the online learning experience. Therefore, techno-pedagogical applications of emotional presence are essential. Moreover, since a learner’s attitude, emotion, and ability to learn are influenced through asynchronous and synchronous instructor communications (Koballa, 2016), emotional presence best practices must be implemented in online learning communities. As an innovative assessment tool and guide for online instructors, the BPP-EPAT supports the momentum of educational epistemology and the evolving twenty-first-century learner. This analytic evaluation of emotional presence yielded practical insights and strategies that were used to create the BPP-EPAT: a measurement tool for assessing various aspects of emotional presence in online instructors. Moreover, educators who embrace this “scholarly endeavor, will be the profession’s leaders in building a science of nursing education” (Halstead, 2007, p. 13).

RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

Study Limitations

Existent research gaps in discussing emotional presence and its relation to affective learning, emotional environments, and APT use presented a limitation of available current literature to analyze. Another limitation of this analytic article is that the innovative BPP-EPAT guide (Appendix B) based on the results of this literature review lacks any evaluation; therefore, it is recommended that this tool be measured for soundness.

The BPP-EPAT has its own limitations. The limited availability of assessment tools designed to measure best pedagogical practices related to emotional presence presented challenges in developing the BPP-EPAT. In view of this limitation, the implementation of critical reflection and reasoning throughout the literature review process offered valuable insights into the analysis of emotional presence in related areas. The ability to form connections within theme curations and the reorganization of existing knowledge strengthened this article.

Role of Emotional Presence in Affective Learning

Learners “may experience affective roadblocks to learning that can neither be recognized nor solved when using a purely cognitive approach” (Kirk, 2019, para. 9). Unfortunately, affective learning is overlooked in research (Kirk, 2019; Koballa, 2016). Therefore, more research on the ability of emotional presence in supporting affective learning is needed.

Potential Impact of Emotional Presence in APTs

APTs add to translational, aesthetic, and affective knowledge with enhanced self-awareness and deeper understanding of material (Haidet et al., 2016). APTs have a unique effect on the emotions and affective learning of health care students (Haidet et al., 2016). This “role of emotions was particularly emphasized as an important component when working with medical students, who are often taught that illness is a problem to be solved through objective means, denying the emotional experience of professional practice” (Haidet et al., 2016, p. 325). Since nursing education includes affective as well as cognitive learning outcomes, APTs could be applied to nursing students. Overall, more research on how emotional presence can support APTs to support the holistic health and resilience of medical students is recommended.

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APPENDIX A

Literature Search Methods

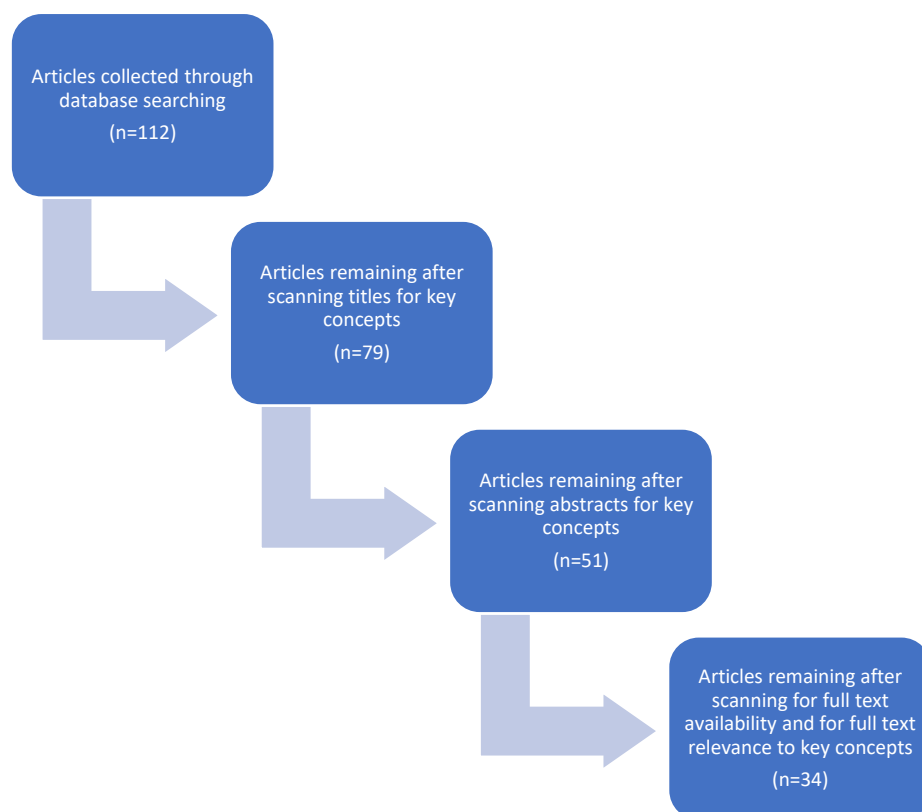
The initial step of the literature review was to identify research articles that focused on emotional presence. The electronic databases used in the search were Google Scholar, ProQuest Education, Wiley Online Library, Computers and Education, ScienceDirect, AU Library, EBSCOhost, ERIC, Educational Full Text, AU Press Athabasca University, Online Learning, and Education Research Complete. Outside of these databases, two specific journals were referenced: *International Journal of E-Learning* and *Distance Education*. Keywords used in the search were:

emotional presence, emotional education, caring online, online caring, Sitzman, emotional presence AND online, emotional education AND online, humanizing AND online AND learning OR education, online AND learning, distance education, engagement AND online learning, online OR distance AND learning OR education, digital OR distance OR online AND higher education, digital AND learning OR education OR learner OR teach, humanizing AND learn OR teach, online OR distance OR digital AND learn OR teach, teaching AND higher education, pedagogy AND online AND learning, theory OR framework AND digital OR online AND learn OR learning, engage OR humanize AND university AND digital OR online OR distance, evaluate AND online OR emotional presence, transformative learning, emotional competence, ART and learning OR teaching, emotion OR affect AND learning, emotional diversity, MODEL and online learning community, ONLINE and motivation OR learner OR interaction OR teach, affective AND change OR online OR distance OR emotion, change theory AND emotion

A four-stage algorithm was used to identify the most relevant articles for this literature review. The initial stage of the algorithm gathered full-text articles written in English language, and relevant to the keywords listed above. This stage located 112 articles. In the next stage, 33 articles were excluded because the titles lacked key concepts related to emotional presence. The abstracts of the remaining 79 articles were scanned for additional key concepts. This process resulted in the exclusion of 28 articles. The body text of the remaining 51 articles were screened for their relevance to key concepts that netted 34 articles. The four-stage algorithm used in this literature search process is outlined in Figure 1. In total, 43 references were used in the

literature review. These 43 references include the 34 journal articles identified by the algorithm, as well as six books and three websites.

Figure 1. Flow Chart for Inclusion of Literature.



APPENDIX B

Best Pedagogical Practices for Emotional Presence Assessment Tool (BPP-EPAT)

Competency 1: Creating Positive Learning Environments That Are Emotionally Supportive

1. Does the course content offer affective learning domain outcomes?
2. Is it anticipated that students will achieve new attitudes, values, or perspectives by participating in this course?
3. Are there transformative learning opportunities in this course?
4. Are there emotionally motivating learning activities such as APTs?
5. Does the instructor share stories and experiences related to course content?

6. Does the instructor ensure a safe learning environment through:
 - a. Intentionally creating a space where everyone feels safe and valued?
 - b. Remaining non-judgmental and ensure that diversity is respected?
 - c. Using inclusive and positive word choices?

Competency 2: Facilitating a Sense of Closeness, Belonging, and Connection Through Building Social Learning Milieux

1. Does the instructor offer a warm, personable welcome?
2. Is the instructor willing to personally connect with learners by:
 - a. Sharing experiences?
 - b. Incorporating humor such as comics?
 - c. Adopting a friendly asynchronous tone that uses emoticons and font effects such as size and color?
 - d. Providing frequent, meaningful feedback that is personalized and individualized and reflects a genuine and encouraging nature?

Competency 3: Hone Online Instructor Characteristics That Express Intentional Caring Efforts to Support Online Learning

1. Is the instructor reasonably available to students and does the instructor respond in a timely fashion to assignments, forum posts, emails, and telephone calls?
2. Does the instructor offer their full presence and attention in learner interactions?
3. Does the instructor use digital, audio, and/or visual media to express:
 - a. An empathetic, compassionate, and kind demeanor?
 - b. A friendly, passionate, and optimistic instructional immediacy?

Competency 4: Instructor Participation Efforts Reflect Learner Engagement, Encouragement, and Motivation

1. Does the instructor seek to intentionally and actively increase learner confidence?
2. Does the instructor provide additional or external resources to learners?
3. Does the instructor request formative performance feedback and initiate frequent learner check-ins?

Competency 5: Communicate Using Techno-pedagogical Communication Media

1. Is the instructor aware of available techno-pedagogical communication media?
2. Does the instructor have techno-pedagogical competencies?

3. Does the instructor use asynchronous digital, audio, and/or visual communication technologies such as discussion forums, email, social media, Blackboard, or VoiceThread?
4. Does the instructor use these media to develop a welcoming and personal introduction at the beginning of the course?
5. Does the instructor incorporate synchronous interactive spaces in the online learning environment such as live digital, audio, or video conversations through media such as telephone calls, Facetime, WhatsApp, Google Docs, Skype, or Zoom?