



# VISTA HIGHER LEARNING

## How do I personalize my teaching in an online course?

Keep students engaged, alert, and on task by personalizing the learning activities with video, audio, and communications/monitoring.

1. **Live Chat:** This messaging tool allows you to chat (text, audio/video) directly with your students.
  - a. Make yourself available to chat when it is convenient for you.
  - b. Online office hours
    - i. Have a set time of when you will be online to answer questions.
2. **Instructor Notes:** In the online study environment, students will be most successful if they can feel your presence throughout the course.
  - a. Add your own voice to the activities that your students complete online via Instructor Notes.
    - i. Provide additional instruction
    - ii. Give a tip on a particular question
    - iii. Provide a specific reminder about a grammar topic
    - iv. Add a model
    - v. Offer words of encouragement!
3. **Monitoring and “Check-ins”:** Monitor students’ online work and provide regular feedback.
  - a. Assign instructor-graded activities and provide personalized feedback
  - b. Send “just checking in” emails or messages throughout the semester
  - c. Utilize “Announcements” in your Communication tool
4. **Instructor-Created Content:** Further personalize your course and meet the needs of your students by creating an activity that specifically relates to a lesson theme, cultural topic, reading, or communicative activity.
  - a. Student audio recordings and written compositions
    - i. Students respond individually with an open-ended oral or written response. These activities can be enriched by adding text, photo/image or audio references. Here are activity ideas:
      1. Leave a voicemail/note for a specific purpose
      2. Submit a review of a cultural reading
      3. Descriptions of images
      4. Oral assessments
      5. Assign a weekly dialogue journal in which students communicate with you about different cultural or language topics
      6. Have students reflect on what they’ve learned at the end of a lesson
  - b. Partner Chats – create Partner Chats that you can complete with students
  - c. Video
    - i. Upload a YouTube video of yourself and assign another activity for students to compare, review, comment on
5. **Forums:** Enable students to leave audio and text in threaded discussions. Students can review peer responses and replies. For example:
  - a. Describe your family. Try to talk for about 1 minute.
  - b. Listen to the responses of three of your classmates, and reply to their descriptions with a 30-second comparison of your family to theirs.

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