**Intel® Teach Elements:
Project-Based Approaches**

Facilitation Guide

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Intel® Teach Elements

Project-Based Approaches

Facilitation Guide

Contents

Overview of Course Facilitation

Course Description

This Facilitation Guide provides information to successfully facilitate face-to-face or online discussion sessions, based on participants' Action Plan work in the Intel® Teach Elements: Project-Based Approaches course. Participants taking a facilitated course may receive continuing education credit, when defined and arranged by the school, district, or education agency offering a facilitated course.

Participants in facilitated courses will participate in three ways:

- **E-learning:** Learn concepts of project-based learning in interactive tutorials (approximately 5 hours individual work)

- **Action Planning:** Apply project-based approaches to one's own classroom (6 to 12 hours of individual work based on optional activities and individual engagement in the planning exercises)

- **Facilitated Discussions:** Share ideas and give feedback on Action Plan work (5 to 8 hours, varies by format—face-to-face or online—and optional exercises)

The e-learning component of the Project-Based Approaches course has five modules plus an Orientation and Wrap-Up. Each module includes three to six lessons of interactive activities with exercises that introduce and explore concepts. Many of the activities are followed by an Action Plan task. The Action Plan tasks are designed for application of the concepts to one's own classroom. Course facilitation is structured around the Action Plan, with facilitation typically occurring after participants complete two to three Action Plan tasks.

By the end of the course, participants who complete the Action Plan will have designed materials and activities to implement or improve project-based approaches in their classrooms. The Action Plan is required for participants who are taking the course for credit by engaging in a facilitated course.

The Facilitator

Facilitators provide richer, more meaningful course experiences for participants by guiding individual work and group discussions. Before facilitating the course, facilitators should meet the following requirements.

Facilitator requirements:
- Familiarity with project-based learning, technology integration, student-centered assessment practices, and questioning strategies

- Prior experience with facilitating technology integration courses for teachers

- Online facilitation experience (if facilitating online, or co-facilitating with an experienced online facilitator)

- Thorough experience with the e-learning course, including:

    - Review all supporting resource files

- Take all quizzes, intentionally trying to get correct and incorrect answers

- Complete the Action Plan

- Review Abe's Action Plan, available in Resources

Facilitators set the tone for the course discussions. Facilitators can create a rewarding experience for participants by fulfilling the following responsibilities.

Facilitator responsibilities:

- Engage all participants in discussions

- Encourage participants to think critically and deeply about their own practices

- Provide and promote thoughtful and constructive feedback

- Clarify concepts and answer questions

- Promote reflective teaching

- Create a supportive learning community

Facilitation Options

Course participants complete interactive e-learning tutorials and Action Plan activities independently between facilitated sessions, where they join discussions to share and give feedback on their work and learning. Course facilitation is flexible and can be done in different settings—fully face-to-face, online, or various combinations of face-to-face and online:

Facilitated Face-to-Face

Participants may take the course from a CD or online. Discussions take place in a face-to-face setting. Facilitators can print out the discussion questions or display them for participants. The discussions are flexible – choose some or all to do or create your own questions and format.

Facilitated Online

Participants take the course online and engage in online facilitated discussions. The discussions may be posted on a Web site or embedded in a learning management system (LMS). Facilitators may also choose to use other Web 2.0 tools to support learning and discussion.

Face-to-Face and Online Hybrid

A combination of face-to-face and online facilitation is possible. For example, the discussions may begin with a face-to-face meeting, continue online, and meet again at the end for a face-to-face session.

The length of a course is determined by local program needs. A course schedule is designed locally through the selection of suggested and optional activities as well as the number and length of discussions. The course completion section of this guide provides time estimates for course planning. Continuing education credit and/or certificates of completion may be given based on length of course and acceptable

participation levels, determined by the local program and/or the facilitator.

Course Length

A course schedule is designed locally through the selection of suggested and optional activities as well as the number and length of discussions. The course completion section of this guide provides time estimates for course planning. Continuing education credit and/or certificates of completion may be given based on the length of the course and acceptable participation levels, determined by the local program and/or the facilitator.

Intel® Education Online Community

An option for any of the facilitation formats is to create a group to support your training in the Intel® Education Online Community. Facilitators can create groups to support participants with online discussions or provide opportunities to publish Action Plans for feedback. To join the community, register at http://engage.intel.com. Then, review tips on creating a group in the Teachers Engage > Intel® Teach Professional Development > Facilitate section.

Facilitators will also want to join the Elements Implementation Toolkit group in Teachers Engage. After registering for Teachers Engage, then go to groups and search for Elements Implementation Toolkit or use this link, http://engage.intel.com/groups/intel-teach-elements-implementation-toolkit.

Discussion Schedules

Course facilitation is structured around discussions and sharing of completed Action Plan tasks, with facilitation sessions typically occurring after participants complete several of the lessons in the e-learning course and two to three Action Plan activities. Participants need to complete the recommended e-learning and Action Plan activities prior to the discussion session to ensure rich conversations and more beneficial experiences.

Facilitated discussion sessions are flexible. Face-to-face discussions range from 20 to 60 minutes and can be combined for longer face-to-face sessions. Online facilitation times will vary and will depend on how often and when participants visit the discussion board. Typically, online discussion time takes longer than face-to-face.

The following tables show example facilitation schedules with action plan activities that should be completed prior to discussions.

Schedule Example 1: Facilitation Sessions After Each Module

Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	Module 4	Module 5	Wrap-Up
Lesson 1 Activity 3	Lesson 1 Activity 3	Lesson 3 Activity 2	Lesson 2 Activity 5	Lesson 2 Activity 2	Summary
Lesson 2 Activity 1	Lesson 2 Activity 2	Lesson 5 Activity 1		Lesson 4 Activity 2	Next Steps (Optional)
Lesson 3 Activity 5	Lesson 3 Activity 2				
Facilitation Time: 60	**Facilitation Time: 60**	**Facilitation Time: 60**	**Facilitation Time: 60**	**Facilitation Time: 60**	**Facilitation Time: 30-60**

Schedule Example 2:
Facilitation sessions at beginning, middle, and end of course

Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	Module 4	Module 5	Wrap-Up
Lesson 1 Activity 3	Lesson 1 Activity 3	Lesson 3 Activity 2	Lesson 2 Activity 5	Lesson 2 Activity 2	Summary
Lesson 2 Activity 1	Lesson 2 Activity 2	Lesson 5 Activity 1		Lesson 4 Activity 2	Next Steps (Optional)
Lesson 3 Activity 5	Lesson 3 Activity 2				
Facilitation Time: 60		**Facilitation Time: 120**			**Facilitation Time: 150/180**

Schedule Example 3: Facilitation sessions at middle and end of course

Module 1	Module 2	Module 3	Module 4	Module 5	Wrap-Up
Lesson 1 Activity 3	Lesson 1 Activity 3	Lesson 3 Activity 2	Lesson 2 Activity 5	Lesson 2 Activity 2	Summary
Lesson 2 Activity 1	Lesson 2 Activity 2	Lesson 5 Activity 1		Lesson 4 Activity 2	Next Steps (Optional)
Lesson 3 Activity 5	Lesson 3 Activity 2				
		Facilitation Time: 180			**Facilitation Time: 150/180**

Facilitated Discussions

Once facilitation format and schedule have been determined, and participants have been invited, consider group organization. Discussion formats are indicated in the Course Facilitation section of the Facilitation Guide as whole group, small groups, and pairs. Discussions help participants exchange ideas, process information, develop

new ideas, and refine thinking.

For online discussions, you may want to set up your discussion boards by modules, with separate discussion for each activity. You can create different discussion strands based on whether the discussions are whole group or small group.

Whole group discussions: The intent of whole group discussions is to foster a learning community to exchange ideas to benefit from others' ideas. When conducting a whole group discussion, consider these tips:

- Establish ground rules so all participants feel safe to share their ideas

- Encourage everyone to participate

- Start with a getting to know each other activity at the first meeting or as a first online activity

- Acknowledge and respect all ideas, even if you do not agree with them

Small group discussions: Small group discussions provide a more intimate way for participants to delve deeper into topics and get crucial feedback. The ideal size for small groups is four participants. Groups can be organized by similar grade levels and subject areas or mixed grade and subject areas. Participants can stay in their same groups for each discussion or can mix. For some discussions, remaining with the same group may be advantageous as participants become familiar with each other's Action Plans. For others, mixing groups may be advantageous to get different perspectives.

For some feedback sessions, pairs of participants within the small groups may be more productive. Working in pairs provides more time for review and to provide feedback on each other's work.

To aid discussions, the Appendix includes some discussion documents:

- **Discussion Suggestions**: Tips for engaging in group work

- **Discussion Checklist**: Tips on creating constructive discussions during face-to-face and online discussions

Course Completion

Course completion is based on the hours spent on e-learning, the Action Plan, and facilitated discussions. The combined time for these three components will vary depending on the delivery format, depth and length of discussions, and completion of optional exercises. These timings are defined based on local training needs and context. Approximate timing guidelines for the course are as follows:

Module	E-Learning	Action Plan Suggested	Action Plan Optional*	Facilitation
1	55 minutes	60 minutes	40 minutes	60 minutes
2	60 minutes	100 minutes	15 minutes	60 minutes

3	60 minutes	85 minutes	65 minutes	60 minutes
4	60 minutes	75 minutes	50 minutes	60 minutes
5	60 minutes	60 minutes	35 minutes	60 minutes
Wrap-Up	5 minutes	15 minutes	0 minutes	30/60 minutes
Total Hours	**5 hours**	**6.5 hours**	**3.5 hours**	**5.5 to 6 hours**

* **Note:** Completion of all Action Plan activities is estimated at 9 hours minimum. The Appendix provides estimated times for all activities by module and indicates optional Activities to assist with planning a reduced course length, if needed.

Continuing education credits and course completion certificates are arranged by the facilitator, based on school or district guidelines. You are encouraged to issue continuing education create and course completion certificates, according to local needs and expectations.

When your course is completed, please report the number of participants who completed the course at http://engage.intel.com/groups/intel-teach-elements-implementation-toolkit.

Course Facilitation

Each facilitation activity described in this section indicates the e-learning and Action Plan activities that participants need to have completed. Before facilitation sessions, inform participants which e-learning and Action Plan activities they need to complete. An estimated time is also included for face-to-face meetings.

The discussion questions included in the activities are suggestions. Whole group, small group, and peer discussion questions are included. Please feel free to include supplemental questions or use the suggested questions as guidelines for developing your own questions. Peer Feedback indicates prompts for participants to use in giving feedback. Consider having the items listed in the Appendix printed for participants' reference during face-to-face facilitation.

Introduction: Course Orientation

Regardless of the format of your course, you will want to begin with activities for participants to get acquainted with each other and then use the Orientation e-learning module to introduce the course itself.

Orientation has five short lessons that introduce the course objectives and structure in general, the features and navigation of the e-learning environment, and the Action Plan. In a face-to-face session, you can walk through the lessons and the user interface as a group to assure everyone is familiar with the course features. If your course is online, you will want to encourage sharing any questions about the e-learning features or Action Plans in an introductory discussion. In both course formats, this is a good time to review technical requirements for the course found in the Resources tab and the FAQ document found online at the Elements site at

Module 1: Projects Overview

Module 1 Facilitation 1: Project-Based Approaches and You

This discussion should be completed after participants complete the e-learning and Action Plan activities through *Module 1, Lesson 1, Activity 3*.

Face-to-Face Discussion Time: 30 minutes

- **Whole Group Discussion:** How do you incorporate project-based approaches and technology in your classroom?

- **Small Group Discussion:** Share a few of your goals and challenges that you identified in your Action Plan. Identify one unique challenge to share with the whole group.

- **Peer Feedback:** Offer suggestions for overcoming challenges.

Facilitation Tip: If participants have little or no experience with projects or are struggling to identify ways to incorporate project-based approaches, encourage them to think about their classroom teaching carefully and provide additional prompting, such as, *Do your students work in groups? Do you spend time studying a topic in depth?*

Facilitation Tip: Share your own goals and challenges. Sharing anecdotes from your teaching experiences or a colleague's experience can help someone who may be struggling with a similar challenge.

Module 1 Facilitation 2: Benefits for Students

This discussion should be completed after participants complete the e-learning and Action Plan activities through *Module 1, Lesson 2, Activity.* NOTE: The Action Plan activity associated with this discussion is optional but is not required for a meaningful discussion of the topic.

Face-to-Face Facilitation Time: 15 minutes

- **Small Group Discussion:** Choose one of your students that you identified in *Module 1, Lesson 2, Activity 1* of your Action Plan and share key points about how the student might either benefit from or struggle with project work.

- **Peer Feedback:** Provide suggestions for engaging all students in projects.

Facilitation Tip: Prepare suggestions to engage disinterested students in projects, such as:

- Develop a project that taps into students' interests
- Let students choose group roles based on their talents
- Encourage creative thinking by allowing students to pursue their ideas

Module 1 Facilitation 3: Project Characteristics

This discussion should be completed after participants complete the e-learning and Action Plan activities through *Module 1, Lesson 3, Activity 5*.

Face-to-Face Facilitation Time: 15 minutes

- **Small Group Discussion:** Provide a brief summary of a project, unit, or lesson that you teach, and using the Project Characteristics Checklist (available in Resources), discuss how your project could be improved.

- **Peer Feedback**: Provide additional suggestions on ways to improve the unit, lesson, or project, based on the Project Characteristics Checklist.

Facilitation Tip: If participants do not have a unit or project, encourage them to consider how they can develop a lesson into a project and use the Project Characteristics checklist as a guide. Abe's Action Plan, in Resources, shows how Abe did this.

Module 2: Project Design

Module 2 Facilitation 1: Project Scenarios

This discussion should be completed after participants complete the e-learning and Action Plan activities through *Module 2, Lesson 1, Activity 3*.

Face-to-Face Facilitation Time: 20 minutes

- **Small Group Discussion:** Share your project scenario.

- **Peer Feedback:** Give each other feedback, including suggestions for improving the project scenarios, checking that the project scenarios:

  - Connect to community issues, local activities, social problems, or world events

  - Are relevant to students

  - Target specific standards

Facilitation Tip: For small group discussions, arranging groups by similar grade levels may be more productive.

Facilitation Tip: Refer participants to the project scenarios in the Appendix of the Action Plan to get ideas.

Module 2 Facilitation 2: Learning Objectives

This discussion should be completed after participants complete the e-learning and Action Plan activities through *Module 2, Lesson 2, Activity 2*.

Face-to-Face Facilitation Time: 15 minutes

- **Small Group Discussion:** Share your learning objectives.

- **Peer Feedback:** Give feedback to your group members for improving objectives. Objectives should target 21st century skills, and they should be observable, specific to the project, and standards-based. Provide feedback for each group

member. Refer to the list of 21st Century Skills and use the Standards and Objective Rubric, in Resources, when giving feedback.

Face-to-Face Facilitation Tip: Ask a participant to share learning objectives. Using the Standards and Objectives Rubric, model how you would give feedback on the learning objectives. Identify how the objectives do or do not:

- Address 21st century skills and higher-order thinking
- Support content standards

Online Facilitation Tip: You may want to offer participants your review of their objectives if they need extra help. When offering feedback, suggest ways to help meet the criteria for good objectives:

- Objectives are specific.
- Objectives address 21st century skills.
- Objectives support content standards.

Module 2 Facilitation 3: Curriculum-Framing Questions

This discussion should be completed after participants complete the e-learning and Action Plan activities through *Module 2, Lesson 3, Activity 2*.

Face-to-Face Facilitation Time: 25 minutes

- **Small Group Discussion:** Share your Curriculum-Framing Questions.

- **Peer Feedback:** Give feedback to your group members for improving Curriculum-Framing Questions, using the CFQ Rubric, in Resources, to ensure that the:

  - **Essential Question:** Addresses big ideas and enduring concepts, is thought-provoking, is engaging, has multiple answers

  - **Unit Questions:** Are open-ended, align with objectives, require higher-order thinking skills, help answer the Essential Question

  - **Content Questions:** Are fact-based, focus on key concepts, help answer the Unit Questions

- **Optional Small Group Discussion:** If you complete all of Module 2, feel free to share and offer feedback for project activities, developed in *Module 2, Lesson 5, Activity 1* of the Action Plan.

Face-to-Face Facilitation Tip: Ask a participant to share Curriculum-Framing Questions. Using the CFQ Rubric, model how you would give feedback on the Curriculum-Framing Questions.

Online Facilitation Tip: If participants request feedback from the facilitator, ask them to identify specific feedback that they would like—where are they facing difficulty?

Module 3: Assessment

Module 3 Facilitation 1: Assessment Planning

This discussion should be completed after participants complete the e-learning and Action Plan activities through *Module 3, Lesson 3, Activity 2*.

Face-to-Face Facilitation Time: 40 minutes

- **Whole Group Discussion:** For the following purposes, which assessment instruments do you plan to use in your project?
  - Gauging Student Needs
  - Encouraging Strategic Learning
  - Demonstrating Understanding
- **Whole Group Discussion:** Which assessment instruments did you select for learning processes and thinking skills? Why did you choose those particular checklists or rubrics?
- **Small Group (or Pairs) Discussion:** Share your Assessment Timeline and Assessment Plan.
- **Peer Feedback:** Review peers' Assessment Timelines and Assessment Plans to provide feedback and get suggestions for your own projects.

Facilitation Tip: Review a sampling from among all the participants of Assessment Timelines and Assessment Plans to ensure that participants are on track. Make sure that the Assessment Timelines include a mix of instruments that the teachers as well as students will use. When reviewing participants' Assessment Plans, make sure that the plans explain how the instrument is used and the purpose.

Module 3 Facilitation 2: Project Grading

This discussion should be completed after participants complete the e-learning and Action Plan activities through *Module 3, Lesson 5, Activity 1*. NOTE: The Action Plan activity associated with this discussion is optional but is not required for a meaningful discussion of the topic.

Face-to-Face Facilitation Time: 20 minutes

- **Whole Group Discussion:** Share your experiences with grading projects. What challenges have you faced? How did you overcome the challenges? What did you find helpful when grading projects?
- **Peer Feedback:** Offer suggestions to help other participants overcome particular challenges of grading projects.

Facilitation Tip: Be prepared with grading tips for participants struggling with this concept, such as:

- Give individual and group grades
- Convert rubrics to scoring guides
- Include product grades as well as process grades based on journals, reflections, anecdotal notes, collaboration, and self-direction skills

Module 4: Project Planning

Module 4 Facilitation 1: Project Management

This discussion should be completed after participants complete the e-learning and Action Plan activities through *Module 4, Lesson 2, Activity 5*.

Face-to-Face Facilitation Time: 60 minutes

- **Whole Group Discussion:** What key challenges do you anticipate when implementing and managing a project? Consider any challenges with integrating technology.

- **Small Group Discussions:** What strategies do you plan to use to address your challenges? What other strategies do you currently use which are effective?

- **Peer Feedback:** Provide feedback to peers and share new strategies with each other.

- **Whole Group Discussion:** Share additional strategies for planning and managing projects, particularly when integrating technology in projects.

Facilitation Tip: If the discussion seems narrow, remind participants that they can consider Module 4 strategies for:

- Accountability
- Accommodation
- Technology integration
- Organization
- Developing a project timeline
- Balancing activities between teacher-led, individual, and groups
- Community connections
- Communicating about the project
- Timing and transitions
- Managing resources
- Managing collaboration
- Student project plans
- Celebration and wrap-up

Module 5: Guiding Instruction

Module 5 Facilitation 1: Teaching 21st Century Skills

This discussion should be completed after participants complete the e-learning and Action Plan activities through *Module 5, Lesson 2, Activity 1*.

Face-to-Face Facilitation Time: 30 minutes

- **Pair Discussion:** Share your mini lesson on a collaboration or self-direction subskill with someone who did a different skill.

- **Peer Feedback:** Provide suggestions for improving mini lessons.

Facilitation Tip: As you listen to pairs, check to see that for the subskill, the mini lessons includes modeling, discussing how the skill is used, practicing, and applying the subskill.

Module 5 Facilitation 2: Information Literacy and Reflection

This discussion should be completed after participants complete the e-learning and Action Plan activities through *Module 5, Lesson 4, Activity 2*.

Face-to-Face Facilitation Time: 30 minutes

- **Small Group Discussions:** Share your ideas for mini lessons on information literacy subskills.

- **Peer Feedback:** Provide suggestions for improving mini lessons.

- **Small Group Discussions:** Share your ideas for incorporating reflection in your projects. Identify places that you could add reflection to your Assessment Timeline and share new Assessment Timelines.

Facilitation Tip: Probe participants to think about how reflection can be beneficial for students and which strategies they can use to get students to reflect deeply. Some strategies discussed in Module 5 include reflection journals, think-alouds, student-led conferences, letters, and discussions.

Course Wrap-Up

Wrap-Up Facilitation 1: Goals and Challenges Revisit

This optional discussion should be completed after participants complete the e-learning and Action Plan activity in Wrap-Up.

Face-to-Face Facilitation Time: 15 minutes (30 minutes

- **Whole Group Discussion:** Discuss goals and challenges of project-based approaches:

    c. After revisiting your goals, how have you achieved your goals?

    d. What new goals do you have?

    e. How do you plan to achieve your new goals?

    f. How have you overcome some of the challenges you were facing at the beginning of the course?

    g. What do you expect to find most challenging when implementing the ideas from the course?

- **Complete Survey:** Remind participants to complete a short online survey, accessed from a link on the final screen of the course.

- **Distribute:** Hand out the certificates of completion.

- **Report the number of teachers you trained:** Visit the Elements Implementation Toolkit Group (*http://engage.intel.com/groups/intel-teach-elements-implementation-toolkit*), log in, and click Report Teachers Trained.

Appendix

Time Estimates for Action Plan Activities

Completion of all Action Plan activities is estimated at 9 hours minimum. To assist with planning a reduced course length, optional activities are indicated below.

Action Plan Activity	Suggested	Optional
Module 1 – Projects Overview	**60 min**	**40 min**
Lesson 1 – Activity 1: Knowledge of Project-Based	10 min	
Lesson 1 – Activity 3: Project-Based vs Conventional	15 min	
Lesson 2 – Activity 1: Benefits Based on Research		15 min
Lesson 2 – Activity 4: Self-Assessment		10 min
Lesson 3 – Activity 2: Roles		15 min
Lesson 3 – Activity 5: Project Improvement	20 min	
Lesson 4 - Activity 1: Module Summary	15 min	
Module 2 – Project Design	**100 min**	**15 min**
Lesson 1 – Activity 2: Project Ideas from Standards	20 min	
Lesson 1 – Activity 3: Project Ideas from Community	15 min	
Lesson 2 – Activity 1: 21st Century Skills	10 min	
Lesson 2 – Activity 2: Learning Objectives	10 min	
Lesson 3 – Activity 2: Curriculum-Framing Questions	25 min	
Lesson 5 – Activity 1: Activity Planning	10 min	15 min
Lesson 6 – Activity 1: Module Summary	10 min	
Module 3 – Assessment	**75 min**	**65 min**
Lesson 1 – Activity 2: Purposes of Assessment	15 min	15 min
Lesson 2 – Activity 3: Assessment of Thinking	15 min	15 min
Lesson 3 – Activity 2: Assessment Plans	30 min	
Lesson 4 – Activity 1: Rubrics and Scoring Guides	15 min	15 min
Lesson 4 – Activity 2: Group Grades		10 min
Lesson 4 – Activity 3: Process Grades		10 min
Lesson 5 – Activity 1: Module Summary	10 min	
Module 4 – Project Planning	**80 min**	**50 min**
Lesson 1 – Activity 1: Project Challenges		5 min
Lesson 1 – Activity 2: Project Timelines	15 min	
Lesson 2 – Activity 1: Management Scenarios		15 min
Lesson 2 – Activity 3: Strategies for Communicating	10 min	
Lesson 2 – Activity 4: Managing Time and Transitions		15 min
Lesson 2 – Activity 5: Strategies for Managing Collaboration	15 min	
Lesson 2 – Activity 6: Strategies for Managing Resources	15 min	
Lesson 3 – Activity 1: Implementation Plans	15 min	15 min
Lesson 4 – Activity 1: Module Review	10 min	
Module 5 – Guiding Instruction	**60 min**	**35 min**
Lesson 1 – Activity 1: Questions for Different Purposes	15 min	
Lesson 2 – Activity 1: Teaching Collaboration and Self Direction	20 min	
Lesson 3 – Activity 2: Teaching Information Literacy		20 min
Lesson 4 – Activity 2: Reflection Planning	15 min	15 min
Lesson 5 – Activity 1: Module Summary	10	
Course Wrap-Up	**15 min**	
Summary	15 min	

Discussion Suggestions

Online Group Discussions

Consider the following suggestions when engaging in an online group discussion:

- Ensure posts are be substantive and advance or reframe a discussion

- Support comments with examples, experiences, or references

- To encourage responses to your entry, ask participants a question about the material you have posted or ask whether others agree or disagree with your thoughts and why

- Revisit the discussion regularly to review your entries and respond to other participants

Providing Constructive Feedback

Consider the following tips when providing feedback in an online discussion or face-to-face:

- Begin by giving positive feedback to establish a supportive tone

- Be clear and specific when providing suggestions

- Provide constructive feedback that is descriptive, rather than evaluative

- Provide examples and tips

- In an online environment, read posts out loud to make sure they are complete

- Ask for clarification to ensure that you understand what is being said

- Make neutral statements

- Focus on elements that the individual can change and that are relevant to the topic

- Provide feedback in a timely manner

- Limit feedback to two or three key comments

- For facilitators, remind participants that you are available to help them

- End with a motivational statement

Discussion Checklist

The Discussion Checklist can enhance participants' conversations. Tips for improving online interactions are included.

☐ My discussions reflect a deep understanding of the content through the use of detailed examples and comparisons.

☐ I make meaningful connections between the course content and classroom practice.

☐ I connect the topics I am learning about to broader issues and ideas.

☐ I take risks by sharing areas of confusion and concern.

☐ I respond to colleagues' comments and entries by asking questions, elaborating, paraphrasing, and extending their ideas.

☐ My writing is easy to understand.

☐ I follow online conventions for creating a positive and productive discussion environment.

☐ I respond to discussions early to encourage meaningful interaction.