

## Establish a Rhythm for Participation

A predictable rhythm or weekly pace for online modules (units of study) helps students better manage their time. A rhythm can also reduce stress because the structure answers questions such as “What’s next?” (Boettcher & Conrad, 2016).

It is particularly important to establish a rhythm for posting in, reading, and replying to the online discussion forums, which are the online version of classroom discussions. Below is an example of a weekly schedule for both students and instructors.

|                            | Monday   | Tuesday  | Wednesday  | Thursday  | Friday – Sunday   |
|----------------------------|--|--|--|---|---|
| <b>Student Task(s)</b>     | Respond to the module introduction survey by 5 p.m. EST.                     | Read instructor’s response to the survey results.  | Take the online quiz on the required readings.   |   | Do the weekly summary discussion activity. Submit your reflection journal.  |
| <b>Student Process(es)</b> | Watch the microlecture and take notes. Start on the required readings.       | Do some preliminary thinking/note-taking for the discussion forum. Complete the required readings. | Write an initial discussion forum post responding to this week’s discussion board prompts on the required readings and microlecture. | Read and reply to your peers’ posts as well as the responses to your original post in the discussion forum. | Read your instructor’s response to, or summary of, the weekly discussions.  |
| <b>Instructor Task(s)</b>  | In the morning, send an email or announcement introducing the week’s module. | In the morning, post a summary of the survey results.  |  | Read the discussion board posts and clarify, correct, or ask questions, as appropriate.                     | Send an email or announcement closing out the module and signaling what is ahead. Provide feedback and grade assignments. |

### Reference

Boettcher, J. V., & Conrad, R.-M. (2016). *The online teaching survival guide: Simple and practical pedagogical tips* (2<sup>nd</sup> ed.). Jossey-Bass.