

Regular and Substantive Interaction Evidence

This page provides guidance on how to find evidence of Regular and Substantive Interaction (RSI) when evaluating an online course.

The following are examples of interaction you can look for in online classes. You want to find examples of interaction between the instructor and students, as well as among students.

Instructor and Learner

- **Welcome Letter:** Does the instructor send a welcome letter? This would be sent prior to the start of class, or in the first week, containing important preliminary information about the instructor, Canvas, the course, and initial activities. This may not be visible as an observer, so you'll have to ask about it.
 - [See welcome letter examples with explanations.](#)
- **Communication Plan:** Do students know how and when they can expect to hear from the instructor? For example, what communications methods will be used? Will the instructor be interacting in the discussions? How and when are office hours offered? Often these will be in a welcome or orientation module.
 - [See communication plan examples with explanations.](#)
- **Introduction Discussion:** Is there a getting to know you discussion board with interactions between the instructor and the students with introductions? You can look for messages between the instructors and the students in the discussion boards.
- **Module Discussions:** Are there discussion boards on course content in the modules? These could be about course content, and to be an example of faculty-student interaction, you want to find examples of discussion between the instructors and the students in the discussion boards.
- **Weekly Video-Check In:** Some faculty send weekly videos about course content, what is coming up, or even personalized messages to individual students using the media recorder from the SpeedGrader. This may be visible if included as announcements, but may not be visible if sent to individual students or through the Canvas Inbox or email, so you'll have to ask about it.
 - [Learn how to submit audio and video feedback in Canvas.](#)
- **Gradebook Feedback:** Feedback from the gradebook, both messages sent and speed grader comments are great examples of personal interaction between the instructor and students, but aren't visible to the observer. You'll have to ask the instructor about if or how they use the gradebook and SpeedGrader to communicate with students.
- **Announcements:** Instructors often use announcements to communicate with students about upcoming assignments, class content and relevant examples. To see the announcements sent, you can click on the announcements tap in the left navigation bar.
- **Weekly Office Hours:** Look for easy to find information about when office hours are held, and how to access them.