

# Section 1

## Social Presence—Supporting Students

This section includes articles that address social presence, one of the three interrelated elements of the community of inquiry framework. Social presence “may be defined in terms of the participants identifying with the community, communicating purposefully in a trusting environment, and developing interpersonal relationships” (Garrison, et al., 2010, p. 7). It involves students’ feelings of connectedness to their instructor, peers, and course/course content in general, as well as how they contribute to and interact in their courses. Accordingly, online educators need to incorporate “an explicit focus on cultivating a sense of belonging for all students in every learning space” as it is “a first and fundamental step in any effort to promote holistic student well-being” (Tuckwiller & Milman, 2020, p. 56). The first two articles in this section are about student well-being—its definition and strategies for cultivating students’ well-being, critical to creating a welcoming learning community (Milman & Tuckwiller, 2020; Tuckwiller & Milman, 2020). The last article in this section introduces resources for online educators to support students with disabilities, chronic health conditions, or mental/emotional illness to ensure students with special needs “feel welcome, supported, and able to thrive” (Milman, 2018, p. 75). Sometimes they need additional supports and resources; the article shares several resources for online educators to explore and use.

1. Tuckwiller, B., & Milman, N. B. (2019). What is student well-being? A definition for those who teach students in blended and online higher education settings. *Distance Learning*, 16(3), 54–56.
2. Milman, N. B., & Tuckwiller, B. (2020). Fostering blended and online students' well-being. *Distance Learning*, 17(1), 48–52.
3. Milman, N. B. (2018). Teaching online postsecondary students with a disability, chronic health condition, or mental or emotional illness: Resources for instructors. *Distance Learning*, 15(3), 75–77.

### REFERENCES

- Garrison, D. R., Anderson, T., & Archer, W. (2010). The first decade of the community of inquiry framework: A retrospective. *Internet and Higher Education*, 3, 5–9.
- Milman, N. B. (2018). Teaching online postsecondary students with a disability, chronic health condition, or mental or emotional illness: Resources for instructors. *Distance Learning*, 15(3), 75–77.
- Milman, N. B., & Tuckwiller, B. (2020). Fostering blended and online students' well-being. *Distance Learning*, 17(1), 48–52.
- Tuckwiller, B., & Milman, N. B. (2019). What is student well-being? A definition for those who teach students in blended and online higher education settings. *Distance Learning*, 16(3), 54–56.