

Section 2—Humanizing Course Development

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This section includes articles that discuss ways to humanize the virtual learning environment through aspects of course design and development. The first two articles in this section contemplate technology improvements that may benefit the relationships between educators and learners in virtual environments. Camille Dickson-Deane and colleagues ruminate on the role of current learning management systems (LMS) and desires for improvements in the future to create flexible and humanized learning environments online. Harati and colleagues consider future feedback mechanisms that may improve the feelings of connectedness between teacher and student online. These feedback mechanisms are grounded in technological advancements and include reflective journaling with sentiment analysis, multimodal feedback tools, social network analytics, and feedback assisted by artificial intelligence (AI). The final four articles in this section discuss humanizing course design through teacher facilitation. Dennen highlights the value of check-in messages with learners and offers examples of feedback structure and tips for implementation. Martin-Kerr and colleagues write on acknowledging time as a factor in course design as a way to move towards collective well-being for all in the virtual environment. Budhai describes responsive practices in the design and implementation of online instruction, online engagement, and online assessment. Finally, Woodley and Woodley offer

reflections on their experiences as African American scholars—from the viewpoints of student and professor—with online learning during and after the COVID-19 pandemic. They suggest culturally responsive practices focused on creating culturally caring environments, increasing instructor online presence, and using high touch learning experiences.

1. Dickson-Deane, C., Grant, P., & McNeil, D. (2024). Thoughts on the ideal LMS: Dreaming of agency, connectivity, and empathy.
2. Harati, H., Liu, Y., & Tu, C. (2024). Empathetic feedback mechanisms for enhanced emotional and academic support in online learning environments.
3. Dennen, V. (2024). Checking in with online learners: Using personal messages to humanize the learning experience.
4. Martin-Kerr, K.G., Rollag Yoon, S., & Lo Bello Miller, J. (2024). Feminist perspectives of time toward collective well-being in online pedagogy.
5. Budhai, S.S. (2024). Humanizing online learning through assets-based approaches: Responsive practices to support all learners.
6. Woodley, K., & Woodley, X. (2024). Humanizing online learning: Critical reflections on classroom practices that make a difference for diverse learners.