

# Community-Building in the Classroom

**AI Orientation  
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# Icebreaker Survey

<https://pollev.com/laurenlaskow447>

OR

Text LAURENLASKOW447  
to 37607

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# Activity

Break into groups of 3

Answer 3 questions:

- A time when your life changed for the better
- A childhood field trip or family vacation
- One teacher who made an impact on you

Introduce: Name + 3 words

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(nouns/adjectives)

# How did we do?

- What is this activity good at doing?
- What does this activity *not* do well?
- Importance of intention



# Sample Rubric for Community-Building Activity

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<b>Good to Outstanding (90%-100%) 45-50 points</b>	<b>Good to Average (80%-89%) 40-45 points</b>	<b>Average to Acceptable (70%-79%) 35-40 points</b>	<b>Acceptable to Poor (0%-69%) 34 points and below</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The activity helps introduce students to each other and draws out connections between students.</li><li>• The activity is between 10 and 15 minutes long.</li><li>• The presenters engage the class in a rich discussion of the benefits and limits of the activity in terms of context and populations.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The activity helps to build the class community.</li><li>• The activity is engaging.</li><li>• The activity is a minute over or under time.</li><li>• The presenters engage the class in good discussion of the benefits and limits of the activity in terms of context and populations.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The activity helps the students to learn each other's names.</li><li>• The activity is two minutes over or under time.</li><li>• The presenters engage the class in discussion of the activity, but there is not much information gained about limits, benefits, and contexts.</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The activity fails to meet the expectations of the assignment.</li><li>• Group members who do not attend class on the date of their CBA receive a grade of 0 (zero) for this activity.</li></ul>

# Experiences of community-building in the classroom

**Oliver Lees & Lauren Laskowski**

# Why? For you.

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- You are part of the classroom community, too.
- Being part of something increases your sense of belonging.
- You'll enjoy it more.
- It can help you recall student's names and pronouns.

# Why? For them.

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“Sense of community scores significantly predicted students’ classroom attitudes, perception of learning, and actual performance on course exams.”

(McKinney, McKinney, Franiuk, & Schweitzer, 2010)



# Student evaluation feedback

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she encourages people to listen and be there for people.  
even people we may not know very well, like our classmates.  
**this is the first class ever, since attending IU, that i've  
actually felt close to my classmates** and that's all thanks  
to professor Laskowski

# Student evaluation feedback

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This was my favorite class this semester. The material was interesting and was presented in a very accessible and fun way. **Lauren was great at making the class a really friendly and safe place. I talked to more people in this class than I ever have before.** She's the best instructor I've had. All questions were answered thoughtfully and fully.

# Student evaluation feedback

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Lauren is one of the absolute best instructors I have had at IU. She was so knowledgeable in the content and lead some really fruitful discussion. **Our class had such a warm environment and this really made an impact on my learning.** I'm sure my classmates would agree. I'm not sure how she is as a counselor but I know for a fact that she is a truly wonderful teacher.

# Student evaluation feedback

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I really enjoyed the time I spent in this class. **The environment you created was amazing and extremely beneficial to my learning!** Although I was not as passionate about the material as others, it was cool to be in a place watching everyone's passion for counseling shine. Thank you!

# Student evaluation feedback

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...he presented the class with a problem, gave us a reading to go over, and then just let the class have at it. He, of course, **spent the first couple weeks guiding us to understanding how this process worked**, but once we understood the class was the best class I had all semester. **Being able to talk to all my classmates and debate topics or build on one another's ideas was a very powerful feeling.**

# How to build community

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- Community-building activities
  - Instructor-driven AND student-driven
  - Observer, not participant - show them you're interested
  
- Exit tickets and/or anonymous polls
  - One thing I don't know about you
  - One thing to change about the course
  - One thing you want to know about me

# How to build community

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- Clarity and consistency
  - Expectations/Boundaries/Rules/Syllabus
  - Constant evaluation
  - Timely feedback
- Vulnerability
  - “I don’t know”
  - Show that you care
    - Take attendance (and follow up)
    - Talk with students before class
    - Stay after class
    - Hold office hours

# How to build community

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- Sincerity
  - Anti-Impostor Syndrome
  - Find a way to **believe** what you say
  - Be a person, but don't take it personally



# Student evaluation feedback

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It is a very open and fun environment where I feel **a desire to learn.**

# Student evaluation feedback

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I loved **how open we were allowed to be** and how accepting he always was and you could tell how much he really loves all his students!

# Student evaluation feedback

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I loved the **safe, accepting atmosphere** of both the instructor and the classroom. I looked forward to coming everyday and **knew that I was always accommodated for.**

# Student evaluation feedback

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...he assisted in great class discussion and was always open to talk about problems or issues we were having. He helped us become **more of a community rather than a classroom and I will be coming out of this course with a few friends,** confidence in my communication abilities...