How I implemented this in my Psychology course:

COI states there need to be 3 ‘presences’ for a successful course:

- **Cognitive**
  - Actively wrestling with material, dialogue
- **Social**
  - Being their real self in the community
- **Teaching**
  - What educators do to facilitate Social and Cognitive

Below is how I assessed whether it worked:

**Cognitive presence themes:**

*Peers are for reassurance*

“It made me feel like I am not alone, that others have the same concerns and issues that I have, that we’re all in the same boat and improve our learning together.”

*Staff are for motivation and deeper learning*

“you can only learn so much from other students”

**Social presence themes:**

*Being yourself depends on knowing others*

“I got to know some people in smaller discussions and group projects already, and when I meet them I feel encouraged to tell them about myself”

*Live chat with lecturer is authentic encounter*

“I feel encouraged to be myself by members of staff who present themselves as truly being open and honest and their genuine self”

**Teaching presence theme:**

*Atmosphere arises out of course design*

“It feels like I am allowed to talk and put my points across if I need or want to and it feels like that is due to the encouraging and supporting way the course is structured by the staff.”

“Yes it’s a rather relaxed atmosphere to the point you are getting the work done and not fully realising it”

The study

- 32 participants from this course
- Online questionnaire

Largest effects (t-values) for:

**T** Logical flow of assignments (11.2)

**S** There is a sense of group identity (.489)

**C** Have to use what I learnt (9.1)

**S** I feel free to express emotions (.601)

**T** Logical flow of materials (8.3)

**C** I feel I’m exploring with other students (.385)

**S** I know who teaching staff are (7.1)

**C** Content engages me (6.8)

**T** Feel encouraged in my learning (5.7)

**S** Feel secure to express self with staff (5.2)

Not significantly different (p-value) from midpoint of scale

**C** Assignments encourage learning (6.7)

**T** Feel encouraged in my learning (5.7)

**S** Feel secure to express self with staff (5.2)

**Note:** C = Cognitive presence, T = Teaching presence, S = Social presence

Yes I did, but:

- Teaching presence is easiest to achieve, social presence the hardest
- Greatest learning when staff become ‘peers’ in an authentic encounter