The Importance of Building Community with Generation Z Students

Gen-Z Characteristics (Twenge, 2017)	What Instructors See	Gen-Z Learning Needs	How will building community in the classroom meet each of Gen-Z's learning needs?
INSULATED, but NOT INTRINSIC	"Students won't participate in class discussions or ask questions."	**Aversion to Risk Taking** Today's adolescents and young adults are less likely to engage in risky behavior, which has implications for learning (Twenge, 2017) Student anxiety, complacency, indecisiveness, and hesitancy is a reaction to teacher control (Weimer, 2013).	
IN NO HURRY	"Students constantly ask, *Is this what you want?*"	**Underdeveloped Frontal Cortex** "Teens are growing up more slowly. They eschew adult activities until they are older." Compared to Gen-X, they go out less without their parents, less likely to drink, or have sex." (Twenge, 2017)	
INTERNET	"Students can't focus."	**Short Attention Spans/Need to Multitask** The daily media habits of people in their 20s include switching media sources 27+ times as well as checking their cell phones between 150-190 times a day. This leads to hyperattention, rapid task switching, high levels of stimulation, and low threshold for boredom (Wolf, 2018).	
IN PERSON NO MORE	"Students aren't patient."	**Inferior Social Skills** Students often expect an instant answer to every question or communication (Tapscott, 2009). They crave the speed and interactivity given by electronic devices. (Prensky, 2001 & 2008). They lack the social skills	
INSECURE	"Students seem bored."	**Stressed out and Depressed** Today's young people are suffering from high rates of anxiety and depression as well as "techno-brain burnout" which creates situations in which their mental exhaustion prevents them from full engagement in their studies. (Twenge, 2017; Turkle, 2018; Small & Vorgan, 2008)	
INCOME INSECURITY	"Students constantly ask: *Is this on the test?* They don't seem to care about learning."	**Concerned about Economy & Future Earnings** I-Gen is "practical, forward looking, and safe." They look for job stability and crave authentic learning experiences. (Twenge, 2017)	
IRRELIGIOUS (Focus on Individualism)	"Students don't pay attention to instructions."	**Prefer Figuring it Out** Digital Natives prefer to learn by jumping into task and figuring it out.(Prensky, 2001) Gen Z favors hands-on experiential learning especially in situations in which academic learning is integrated with practical experience (Chronicle of Higher Education, 2018).	
INDEPENDENT Politically	"Students think news is fake, yet seem so willing to believe in conspiracy theories."	**High Levels of Distrust in Institutions** Young people are "disconnected, dissatisfied, and distrustful of government and media. They are politically apathetic and favor authenticity over being pre-programmed" (Twenge, 2017)	
INCLUSIVE	"Students avoid difficult subjects because they don't want to be offensive."	Embraces Difference, but Avoids Controversy "These students have witnessed the harmful effects of hate speech, but not the devastating effects of censorship" (Twenge, 2017).	