1. An excellent resource is a book called How To Teach Anything to Anyone Online: Course Design Formula, by Rebecca Frost Cuevas (2019). This is not a scholarly work, but is based on research combined with experience in online learning. It will walk faculty through the thought process for determining the best approach for his/her individual class, and then help them follow the formula in setting up modules and lessons, choosing appropriate media and building a course.

2. I have both taken and taught online courses for several years, and have learned that building a relationship with students through online resources can be done through open and consistent communication. For example, I tell students in introducing my online courses that I read email at least once every day, in the morning sometime between 8-9 a.m., so they will never have to wait longer than 24 hours for a response. But they know they may need to wait that long, so they don't send me a note at 8 p.m. on the day an assignment is due at midnight, for example. Then I consistently keep that promise, and respond promptly, even if the message is just an acknowledgement that I need more time for a more through or accurate answer.

3. Much of the transition from face-to-face to online, I think, will involve the use of discussion forums. The UB Learns discussion forum system, while not ideal, is pretty good, in that it allows instructors to read forum postings two ways -- the "normal" way, showing each original student posting along with the responses to that posting, and the "grading" way, showing each student's postings and responses. My usual system is to require each student to post comments based on the weekly discussion prompt, with the posting expected to be between 300-500 words, and then to read and respond to the postings of at least two (or three, depending on the course subject matter and level) other students. Responses should run at least 50 words. (Note: Your mileage will vary, depending on the nature of the individual course, but I think my numbers are reasonable while challenging.)

My discussion prompts generally point to a section of the textbook or an additional reading, which I comment on and highlight, and then raise several discussion questions to be covered in the student posting. My usual schedule is to open a forum each Sunday, and require original postings no later than the end of the day on Wednesday, and then require the appropriate number of responses to those postings no later than Saturday. Sunday comes, and we begin again. It is extremely important with online classes to create a rhythm for students to follow. They're not going to class, but they still have responsibilities each week for the class. I send students an email each Sunday morning, labeled "COM xxx -- the week ahead." That way, nobody can say they forgot.

I also make it clear to students that each weekly discussion must be completed within the week it is assigned, or there will be no credit for that week's work. I reinforce that by grading the forums promptly, and giving zeroes where they are due. I also "hide" the forum each Sunday morning after its cycle is complete, so they can't try to sneak a comment in.

One thing that surprised me early on when I transitioned from face-to-face to entirely online classes is how interesting the students are who never speak up in class! The shy ones can't escape, the ones who talk all the time have to scale back, and it balances out for everybody.