The pandemic process compelled many educational institutions for applying online education during the quarantine. Therefore, design studios in practice-based disciplines such as architecture and industrial design have been adapted themselves in a highly limited time to become applicable for distance learning. However, current e-learning tools and applications provided an uninvited option for students: pseudo-presence during the online design studio classes. Students had the possibility to turn off their video-cams and microphones, to show their attendance and not to interact with the design studio at all. This study investigates the pseudo-presence tendencies of the undergraduate design students and pedagogical methodologies to prevent this occurrence. Also, the pseudo-presence tendency at online design studio has been compared to the physical design studio environment. Semi-structured interviews were carried out with twenty-one undergraduate design students and five design educators. The qualitative data was analyzed through students' social presence, pseudo-presence tendencies, and interaction levels during distance learning in the design studio. The results showed the current e-learning tools have limitations to sustain an interactive and constructivist learning environment. The study emphasized that a low-level constructivist approach has a negative impact on students' commitment and social presence in the studio environment. Accordingly, the instructive learning environment decreased the interaction levels of the students and the design educators. In conclusion, this research
stated that distance education for design studios requires more student-centered applications, user-interfaces, and possibilities for interaction between not only between students and educators but also each other to encourage social presence. Also, design educators should adapt the course requirements and communication approaches into online design studio environment.

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