Fall 2019

C-TIE: First Day Activities and Syllabi Tips

Helpful MOOCs

https://www.coursera.org/learn/emerging-technologies-lifelong-learning?action=enroll

https://courses.edx.org/courses/course-v1:ColumbiaX+INCLTEACH1x+2T2019/course/

https://teachinginhighered.com/podcast/small-teaching/

Resources

http://www.stephenbrookfield.com/ciq

21st Century Tools

https://emtechwiki.webapps.buffalo.edu/discovery-exercise-oer/

Universal Design of Learning

http://www.cast.org/

UDL and Higher Education

http://udloncampus.cast.org/home

Activities in the Classroom: Tons of Examples

https://ablconnect.harvard.edu/

Small Teaching: Small adjustments

https://teachinginhighered.com/

https://teachinginhighered.com/podcast/small-teaching/

On Being Observed

https://chroniclevitae.com/news/1306-on-being-observed

Writing a Syllabus

https://www.mcsweeneys.net/articles/i-would-rather-do-anything-else-than-write-the-syllabus-for-your-class?fbclid=IwAR3Lr58tEjWNDcyjDgLbjzTdqHFKZBuwqYtMUcnanSjfQIgwzcj23mcx8zs

http://cte.virginia.edu/wp-content/uploads/2014/05/Syllabus-Rubric-Guide-11-24-14.pdf

Positive Teaching

https://www.scholarlyteacher.com/post/using-a-capacity-based-lens-to-teach-positively

First Day Activities and Advice
https://www.chronicle.com/interactives/advice-firstday

First Day of Class Activity: The Interest Inventory

Learning Names Early
There are almost as many reasons why it is hard to get names right as there are students in a class. Professors have scores or hundreds of students in a term, and new ones every term. Some professors have more than a thousand students in one term. There are a lot of names to learn. But learning and using student names improves teaching.
Daniel F. Chambliss, Eugene M. Tobin Distinguished Professor of Sociology at Hamilton College, wrote "the best thing I do to improve students' work in my courses is ... I will learn and use their names. It's easy, and it works. Using those names in class is uniquely powerful."
Here are some strategies:

- Read a class roster out loud before meeting the class. Note potential difficulties. If the class list has photos, try to match them with the names. Print out the pictures and bring them to class.
- Take attendance on the first day in a consistent way with each student, even the ones with seemingly easy names. Use a standard question such as, "What do you like to be called?" One professor sends out a survey before classes begin and asks students for their name preferences. One student seemed delighted when, at the first roll call, she was called by her preferred name, which was not the name on the attendance list.
- Write phonetic spellings down when you need to. When you get to a name that might be difficult, ask the student to say it, using the part of the name you feel more comfortable with. Don't joke. Don't rush. Spend a little extra time if you must to understand, but don't make a big deal. If you need to ask the student for more help, do it after class. If you make a mistake, apologize but don't make an excuse.

Ideas from Fellows for First Day Activities/Strategies

I always start off with icebreakers. They say their name, their major (if they have one), what they did over vacation (summer or winter vacay), and something unique about them (aka a special talent, something about their family-something you would never know, if they didn't tell you). In a non-intro class, I sometimes ask why they enrolled in this specific class. On other occasions, I have done two truths and a lie, but that is typically as an Orientation bonding-type of event.

I always discuss the syllabus as a contract between the students and me. I mention that some things might change, but that it is generally an agreed upon doc and every requirement will be clearly laid out in the doc. I always ask them to review it during the first week of class.

When I am teaching first year students in their first semester, I'll often review expectations for classroom decorum (including attendance expectations and how to properly inform me when they will have to miss class) and email decorum (i.e. Don't ask-"Did I miss anything? And don't ask the professor for the notes). I try to explain the responsibilities they have as students and what expectations I have of them.

Suggested Information Sheet for First Day
Preferred Name: (First and Last):

Major or Specialization:

What one thing do you most look forward to learning in this course?

Which of the following would you say best describes you? (Check ONLY One)

- Analyst
- Chairman
- Completer

- Driver
- Executive
- Expert
- Explorer
- Innovator
- Team Player

On a scale from 1 to 10 where 1 represents "Not at All" and 10 represents "Completely" please rate your level of agreement with each of the following statements about yourself:

All
I am a creative person
I work best with others
I am a creative problem solver
I work best independently

Team-Building: paper and scissors. Paper and tape and scissors. Random objects. A goal, timed, in teams you create. Go!

First day essay prompts (I use this for diagnostic essays):

1. Write the history of your name (can be any/all parts of name; can be nickname; can define "history" however they see fit)
2. Collaborative prompt: write a letter asking the person to your left (students sit in a circle) for $500 to spend on something specific; try to be as convincing as possible in terms of what you're asking and why you're asking for it. Once students complete a letter, have them pass it to the classmate on the left, who then needs to respond to the letter (yes/no/maybe; why or why not)

For both prompts, students should share afterwards with the class, though I also collect them.

I give out index cards on the first day where they can write their name and other important information but also give them a chance to fill in "what they'd like me to know about them as learners." I give them some examples, such as that they are procrastinators, they get anxious if called on without their hand raised, or anything that might be helpful for me to know.