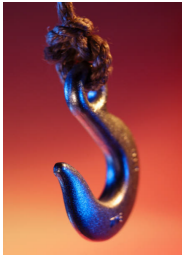


The First Day of Classes: The Easiest Day of the Semester (? – NOT!)

What should you do as faculty on the first day of classes? Does it matter? Research says that it does. Here are some hints on what to do...



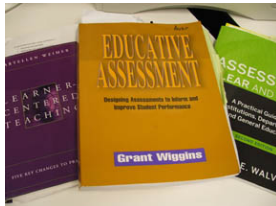
Introduce yourself to the students. Be sure to let the students know what you want them to call you – Dr.? Professor? First name? Tell the students a little about yourself, in particular how your passion for your discipline was started. Let students know the best way to reach you – email, phone, etc. – and your office hours preferences. Can they drop by? Do they need to make an appointment?



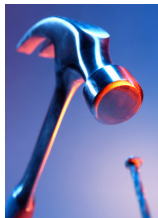
Do more than go over the syllabus. Whatever you plan for the semester, **do it on the first day**. Let students see that you value class time and expect to use it over the course of the semester. Engage the students in the discipline to get them excited about the course content. Connect your course with other content.



Design a way to get an idea about **what students already know** about the course content. Introduce the course, explain how you designed the class and why you designed it that way. Review how the tests and assessments will measure the learning outcomes. You might be able to gauge how motivated the students are about the course content.



If you require the students to buy a book for your course, be sure to review how they should use it and how you will use the text. Give students an idea of **how to approach and read the textbook**. What's the best way to determine what's important in the text, chapters, etc.?



Be sure to go over your **expectations for the class**, the course outcomes, and your perspective on what the students need to do to prepare for class and punctuality, attendance, etc. Outline the **students' responsibility** in learning. Review the **best ways to study** the course material and the course. Review UTC's policies on cheating and plagiarism.



Let students know if you will be using **UTC Online**, for what purposes and what they need to look for in that system. You might also refer them to the self-paced training in the system in which they can self-enroll. <http://utconline.utc.edu/>

Some additional resources on the first day of class are listed below.

- <http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/designteach/teach/firstday.html>
- <http://honolulu.hawaii.edu/intranet/committees/FacDevCom/guidebk/teachtip/firstday.htm>
- <http://depts.washington.edu/cidrweb/Bulletin/FirstDayofClass.html>
- <http://cft.vanderbilt.edu/teaching-guides/preparing-to-teach/first-day-of-class/>

For more information, contact the Walker Teaching Resource Center • 425•4188