FIRST DAY OF CLASS CHECKLIST

"You never get a second chance to make a good first impression."
Will Rogers

BEFORE THE FIRST DAY OF CLASS

Fink (2003) emphasized the importance of knowing situational factors such as the layout of the classroom the technology available. Some of the things you could do are:

- ☐ Visit the lecture hall/ classroom a few days before the first day of class.
- ☐ Try out the technology, microphone, lights, etc.
- ☐ Print handout if using.

ESTABLISH A WELCOMING LEARNING ENVIRONMENT

- ☐ Arrive early, greet students as they arrive.
- ☐ Engage students in some light conversation.
- ☐ Project a PowerPoint, or write on the board, the course and instructor names.
- ☐ Share some personal information about you (this will personalize you) - you can share an experience about your teachings, your family, your pet, or even an embarrassing anecdote from your days as a student. It's better to stay with whatever you are comfortable with self-disclosing.
- ☐ If you have teaching assistants, introduce them and let them tell something about themselves
- ☐ Dedicate some time to sharing your enthusiasm about your subject, how relevant it is to them, to your department and to the general community.

GET TO KNOW YOUR STUDENTS

- ☐ The first day of class is a perfect opportunity to get to know your students and to get their buy-in into active learning methodology. Gary Smith has developed a number of questions for the first day of class. His results show an increase in students' active engagement and performance. Follow this link to read Gary Smith's article
- ☐ Another useful tool is Anton Tolman's Metacognitive Instruments based on the Transtheoretical Model of Change (TTM). Follow this link for an explanation of the model and to get access to the TTM tools

USE AN ICEBREAKER TO REMOVE ANONYMITY

Icebreakers are short activities, games, or events that are used to create a warm and welcoming environment, to foster a feeling of connection and to build a sense of community among students. you can use either a social icebreaker (one where students get to know each other and you) or you can use an instructional icebreaker (students learn about the course in a more relaxed way). Follow this link for a list of icebreakers.

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