

The First Class Counts!

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Goals for this Session

- Review the importance of the First Class
- Brainstorm: What Can/Should We Do the First Day of Class?
- Check our ideas against those generated by a group of professors at the University of Oklahoma after they visited each other's classes on the first day of class.
- Review and reflect upon some nuts and bolts examples.

What's at Stake that First Class!

- **Blink** – the first impressions of our students are lasting impressions!

Psychologist Nalini Ambady studies on students –



What's at Stake that First Class!

- usnews.com “10 Warning Signs of a Bad Professor”
 1. The professor is boring.
 2. The professor is bummed out.
 3. The professor does not give out the syllabus.
 4. The professor isn't clear about the requirements and how much they count.
 5. The professor assigns an undoable amount of work—or no work at all.
 6. The professor has incredibly petty rules.
 7. The professor can't fill the whole class period.
 8. The professor seems unsure about the material.
 9. The professor presents material in a confused way.
 10. The professor never involves the students.

What's at Stake that First Class?

Knefelkamp's research:

Both teachers and students want to make a great connection that first class but neither group realized that the desire was mutual!

(Knefelkamp, L.) In Rubin, S. "Professors, Students, and the Syllabus," *The Chronicle of Higher Education*, August 7, 1985, p.85.

What Can/Should We Do on the First Day of Class?

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Dee Fink's Results

How Many Did We Agree On?

1. Involve students quickly
2. Identify the value and importance of the subject matter
3. Set expectations
4. Establish rapport
5. Reveal something about yourself
6. Establish your own credibility
7. Establish the “climate” for the class
8. Provide administrative information
9. Introduce the subject matter

Nuts and Bolts Ideas

- Build Interest in Course Content
- Encourage a Community of Learners Atmosphere
- Emphasize Course Expectations and Requirements

Nuts and Bolts Ideas – Build Interest in Course Content!

Spend some time talking about your own enthusiasm for the course material!

Look for ways to connect the course material to the lives of your students!

Nuts and Bolts Ideas – Encourage a Community of Learners Atmosphere!

- Welcome your students as they enter the classroom.
- Introduce yourself – ideas
 - Personal biography
 - Educational biography
 - Teaching biography
- Allow the Students to introduce themselves
 - Use an Ice Breaker – ideas (adulted.about.com/od/icebreakers)
 - “Expectations”
 - Incorporate a “Background Knowledge Probe” as a part of an icebreaker

Nuts and Bolts Ideas – Emphasize Course Expectations and Requirements!

- Course Overview
- Departmental Requirements/Expectations
- Presentation of Material
- Expectations for Class Time
- Expectations Out of Class
- Instructor Responsibilities
- Student Responsibilities
- Assessment
- College Resources

**What do you want your Students to tell
their friends about your first class?**



**Have a Wonderful Start to a Wonderful
Semester with All of Your Classes!**

