

Strategy: First Day of Class: Engaging students in course content

The first day of class is a great chance to engage students in course material, discover prior knowledge and ideas about course topics, and have students identify topics relevant to them that relate to the course.

Origin

Carnegie Mellon (2011). Making the most of the first day of class. Retrieved from <http://www.cmu.edu/teaching/design/teach/firstday.html>.

Barkley, E. (2010). *Student engagement techniques: A handbook for college faculty*. San Francisco, California: Jossey-Bass.

Felder, R. (1995). *Getting started*. *Chemical Engineering Education*, 29 (3), p. 166-167.

Lyons, R., McIntosh, M., & Kysilka, M. (2003). *Teaching college in an age of accountability*. Boston, MA: Allyn & Bacon.

Nilson, L. (2003). *Teaching at its best: A research-based resource for college instructors* (2nd ed.). Bolton, MA: Anker Publishing.

Application

Whet students' appetite for course content (Carnegie Mellon, 2011)

- Collect data from the students about issues related to course content (look for relevant surveys, etc.).
- Have the students generate hypotheses about typical problems in the course.
- Connect course content to current events (use media to demonstrate relevance of course concepts to student interests).
- Have the students use technology (smartphones, laptops, etc.) to do an internet search related to the course and discuss this in groups.

Autobiography (Barkley, 2010)

- Have students describe aspects of their life related to the course (past experiences that have shaped their attitude toward the discipline, learning experiences in similar courses, involvement in related activities, etc.).
- Consider establishing parameters regarding chronological periods and personal areas (academic, family, work, etc.).
- Consider giving students options for their reflection (essay, other text, drawing pictures/cartoons, symbols, etc.).

