First Day of Class
Learning Outcomes

From this session, you will
• Gain familiarity with rubrics
• Refine communication and presentation skills
• Develop a well-planned first day of class

* While aspects of the first day may seem like a theatrical performance, our emphasis will be on developing strong communication skills with your students
Sample Video 1


For workshop purposes, take detailed notes about the quality of this presentation.

Focus your attention on the speaker’s communication skills based on the rubric
Think, Pair, Share

Think-Pair-Share is a useful way to structure discussion, especially in large groups.

• Take one minute to read notes and gather thoughts in response to the following question: How would you rate this first day of class? Why?

• Introduce yourself to your neighbor

• Share responses and discuss some consensus points
Building Community

• Take 3-5 minutes to brainstorm ways that you and your team (of 4) would build community in your classroom

• During 2 additional minutes, write some suggestions on the poster board and read other ideas
Building Community

• Introduce yourself providing some key facts -- why you entered the field, where you are from.
• Create an icebreaker to allow students to share their names and get to know each other.
• Set the tone for the class.
Setting Policies and Expectations

• Take 3-5 minutes to brainstorm ways that you and your team (of 4) would build community in your classroom
• During 2 additional minutes, write some suggestions on the poster board and read other ideas
Setting Policies and Expectations:
The Syllabus

• Review the syllabus
  - Learning outcomes
  - Course requirements
  - Specific assignments and weight
  - Components of course grade
  - Weekly schedule

• If available, discuss the supplemental syllabus
  (syllabus specific to discussion sections)
Setting Policies and Expectations

• Establish clear class rules and policies regarding the following:
  - Participation
  - Absences and Tardiness
  - Late/incomplete work
  - Electronic devices (e.g. laptop, iPods, etc.)
• Emphasize not only the how but the why behind the policies
Setting Policies and Expectations

• Cover academic integrity issues
  - Terminologies (e.g. cheating, plagiarism, collusion)
  - Educational Resources (e.g. library, official pamphlets, online sites)
  - Process for handling academic dishonesty

• Assess the extent to which students understand the expectations
Encouraging Engagement Beyond the Classroom

• Take 3-5 minutes to brainstorm ways that you and your team (of 4) would encourage engagement beyond the classroom.
• During 2 additional minutes, write some suggestions on the poster board and read other ideas.
Encouraging Engagement Beyond the Classroom: Curricular

- Schedule mandatory individual or group conferences, early in semester to support office hour attendance
- Encourage learning communities by planning group work projects
- Use course management technology to develop discussion board conversations about readings and assignments
Encouraging Engagement Beyond the Classroom: Co-curricular

- Be aware of films series, clubs, and honor societies on campus related to your field.
- Become familiar with your students’ club participation and interests, request they briefly share mission and meeting times.
- Talk to the instructor of record about undergraduate research opportunities, etc.
Encouraging Engagement Beyond the Classroom: Office Hours

- Offer reasons to go to office hours
- Suggests ways to meet with students in pairs or groups
- Offer a personal story about gaining courage to go to office hours
- Explain what is to be gained from office hours
Encouraging Engagement Outside Class:

Promote Support Services

• Explain where services exist on campus
• Offer reasons for taking advantage of services
• Clarify that Disability Services is confidential and Student Advising & Learning Center (tutoring) and the Peer Mentoring Program are for everybody
Video Sample 2

http://www.viddler.com/explore/mtruong/videos/5/
Other ideas for creating active learning opportunities?

- Group discussion focused on creating classroom-specific policy (like participation, group work, etc.)
- Minute papers
- Group work
- Think-pair-share
- Tennis ball or yarn toss