

Resource Guide

Starting the Semester: Student Engagement

Student engagement in the classroom actually begins on the first day. Here are a few ideas you can use to start building community of active student participants

- **Learn their names.** While this can be a challenge in a 300+ student classroom, it is really important to all of us to be called by our name. It helps students feel that you really care about their individual success. Did you know that student photos are now available in your Banner course list by hovering your mouse over individual ID numbers? Try setting yourself the task of learning 5 student names for every class meeting.
- **Icebreakers.** We have the idea that students already know each other, but they really don't, even if they're in the same major. Take time the first day of class to do student introductions or an ice-breaker activity. Ice-breakers can be related to course content. For example, ask students to pair up and interview each other on a question they hope the course answers for them.
- **Study Partners.** Within the first week ask students to find 2 other people in class to exchange contact information with and to meet with at least once in the upcoming days as a study group. Devoting 5 minutes in class to this will pay off in the long run in helping every student form a support network.

Resources

First Day of Class Activities from the Teaching Professor Blog. The Teaching Professor is a regular publication of practical teaching strategies. Be sure to look at the comments on this article for more useful suggestions. <http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/teaching-professor-blog/first-day-of-class-activities-that-create-a-climate-for-learning/>

Building Student Engagement from the First Classes: <http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/effective-classroom-management/building-student-engagement-first-classes/>

For more information or to discuss how you might incorporate these ideas into your courses, contact the Reinert Center at cttl@slu.edu.