

10 Teaching Tips for the First Day of Class!

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1. **Be authentic and personable** – Make a great first impression by showing your enthusiasm for the course and teaching. Let them know that you want to get to know each student and that you care about them and their learning.
2. **Send an introductory email prior to class** – Introduce yourself and the course and share information about class time, location, and information for the first class.
3. **Make the course Blackboard site available** – Good practice is to make the course site available prior to the first class for students to explore and identify any questions they may have.
4. **Model the practices that you want, right from the start** – Establish a consistent style, be well-prepared and organized, such as starting on time, recapping key points from last class, listing objectives at the start of each class, and wrapping up with 5 minutes for questions and information for next class.
5. **Establish class norms** – Consider allowing students to collaboratively establish a short list of behaviours that they all agree are important for a positive and effective learning environment... and that they agree to engage in. For example, cell phones on vibrate/silent, keep sidebar conversations quiet and to a minimum.
6. **Use an icebreaker** – Let everyone get to know each other on a more personal level, interact, and set the tone for the class.
7. **Get them actively engaged and talking from the start** – Give student pairs/groups different questions to answer about the syllabus then have them introduce themselves, present the question, and provide the answer to the class.
8. **Make connections and set the context for the course content** – Discuss the learning outcomes, key content topics, and share how the outcomes and topics relate to each other, to other courses, the program, and the relevance to their career.
9. **Showcase the course Blackboard site** – Demonstrate how to navigate the course and how the course site will be used.

10. **Introduce course content** – Give students an opportunity to engage with the content, even if it is a mini-lesson, and to see your teaching and classroom management style.

Want more great ideas for an excellent start to the semester? Visit the Teaching & Learning Centre website and check out Teaching Ideas: senecacollege.ca/teaching.

View the [September 2020 issue of the Academic Newsletter](#).

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