

2A: Classroom Demonstration

David Beach, PhD, Associate Undergraduate Writing Coordinator, Department of English, West Virginia University [00:00:00] The first day is really important because you're setting the tone for the entire semester.

Student [00:00:04] The first day of class, that's, like, where you make your judgment call on if you're going to have a good time in this class or if you're going to dread it.

Brittany, Student, West Virginia University [00:00:11] I find it very important for professors to basically represent to us what they expect from us and what we should expect to learn from them.

Student [00:00:19] It really does, like, set the direction that you're going to go for that class.

Chad Bauman, PhD, Associate Professor of Religion, Chair of the Dept. of Philosophy, Religion & Classics, Butler University [00:00:31] Hi folks. Go ahead and come in, settle in.

Caroline, Student, Butler University [00:00:34] That really helps if the professor seems welcoming.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:00:38] Caroline?

Caroline, Student [00:00:39] Yeah.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:00:39] Okay.

Caroline, Student [00:00:39] If he or she greets me first thing, it makes it seem like the professor really cares about me being in the class and it makes me feel less nervous, maybe.

Joshua, Student, West Virginia University [00:00:48] The teacher walks in and slams her book down and just starts barking, then you're not receptive.

Lori Ogden, PhD, Teaching Assistant Professor, Department of Mathematics, West Virginia University [00:00:52] Good morning.

Joshua, Student [00:00:53] They come in, they're warm, they're greeting, they're open. Then, you know, you're like, all right, I can work with this person.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:00:59] Hi, I'm Chad.

Monet, Student [00:01:01] Hi, I'm Monet.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:01:02] Onet?

Monet, Student [00:01:02] Monet.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:01:02] Monet? Welcome to the class.

Monet, Student [00:01:03] Thank you.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:01:04] It shows a certain concern for students. And I think students respond to that and they recognize it. They see it. They know when you've made an attempt to know their name.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:01:13] Hi.

Case, Student [00:01:13] Hey there. I'm Case.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:01:15] Case.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:01:15] There's lots of research that suggests that students not only feel good when it's clear that a professor knows their name, but actually learn better.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:01:24] Nice to meet you all and welcome to the class.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:01:26] I think it's really important to set the standard of starting immediately when the clock chimes. You know, we start on time and we use all of our time in this class.

David Beach, PhD [00:01:35] Since this is a writing class, I want you to get started on some writing, so if you could pull out some paper.

Lori Ogden, PhD [00:01:44] You have to engage them right at the beginning of class because otherwise why do you have to be there on time? You have to give students a reason to come to class, and I think that means that you have to be prepared to fill every minute of that class with something that's worthwhile.

Lori Ogden, PhD [00:01:58] I thought we would start with an activity that will kind of show you some of the things that we'll be doing throughout the semester.

Lori Ogden, PhD [00:02:04] If we're going to do something that involves group work, I try to do something on the first day that will illustrate some of that and get them used to doing some of those things.

Lori Ogden, PhD [00:02:12] And then I'm going to have you work together, at least pair up with the person next to you. See what you come up with.

Lori Ogden, PhD [00:02:18] Give them a glimpse of what's to come. So they know this is a class where I'm going to actually get to know the people around me. I'm actually going to interact with the instructor. I'm actually going to participate in the class.

Lori Ogden, PhD [00:02:27] Did anyone get the final sum? Yes?

Student [00:02:31] We got 69.

Lori Ogden, PhD [00:02:32] Wonderful. Did anyone get a different answer?

David Beach, PhD [00:02:35] Here's your prompt. What excites and frightens you about this class? So write for about three minutes and then we'll hear from you all.

David Beach, PhD [00:02:42] We will be doing writing every day in the classroom. I want students to write. I want them to do a little bit of research on the first day. I want them to start forming some arguments on the first day because time is short.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:02:54] I want you to tell me what the largest Muslim countries in the world are by population. Yell out any country you think would be on the top 10 list.

Student [00:03:04] Saudi Arabia?

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:03:04] Saudi Arabia? What else?

Student [00:03:07] Egypt?

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:03:09] Egypt. All right.

Student [00:03:11] Iraq?

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:03:13] Iraq? All right.

Student [00:03:13] Sudan?

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:03:14] Sudan, good.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:03:16] Through these kinds of exercises, you can unearth the misconceptions that students might have about what, what the course is going to be about and address them right away in the first day.

Student [00:03:24] When a teacher starts off with actual course material, at first I'm like, uh, I actually have to do work, but then I'm like, but this is good because then that means that I'm going to have to put effort into this class and then it's going to be a good class.

Caroline, Student [00:03:36] If on the first day, if the professor does cover some content in the class, I do prefer that over just the professor just reading through a syllabus and then dismissing us.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:03:45] I think there is more to the first day of class than just going over the syllabus. It's tempting to just do that, and, and, you know, sometimes there is a lot on the syllabus you feel you need to get out there. But it becomes a really boring class really quickly for people, I think, if you're just going over the syllabus.

Lori Ogden, PhD [00:04:04] So I'm going to get this out to you and then we're going to do what's called a syllabus reconnaissance. So I sent an email to all of you last night with the syllabus attached, although I brought some copies today in case you weren't able to print it before coming to class. So I'd like you to take a look at the syllabus, read through it, highlight key points to the syllabus, maybe some items that you'd like to then ask questions about.

Lori Ogden, PhD [00:04:26] They aren't just reading it or I'm not just reading it to them, but they're actually interacting with it.

Lori Ogden, PhD [00:04:31] So this is something that you really are going to be referring to. So it's important that we take the time to really look at it and understand the expectations of the course.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:04:40] So we're just going to talk now together about some of the things that you found that were significant in terms of expectations.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:04:47] Okay.

Caroline, Student [00:04:48] So there's two different options that we can have, 20 hours interacting with the Muslim community in Indianapolis and an encounter journal.

Student [00:04:55] We were wondering how our homework and exams will be graded.

Lori Ogden, PhD [00:04:59] Okay, so there are three exams and a final exam. The three exams contribute to 20% of your grade and then the final exam will also contribute to 20% of your grade. I'm going to give you an opportunity to come up with some questions to ask me about myself, about the course. And then I'm also going to ask you some questions.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:05:21] I think it is very useful to hear from students what they expect of their professor, but it's also useful, I think, to try to solicit that feedback really intentionally through an exercise like a reciprocal interview where you might, you know, intentionally and directly solicit that kind of feedback.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:05:37] What is that one question, that one big question, that you'd like to be able to answer by the end of this semester?

Student [00:05:43] My big question would probably be what sets Islam apart from other religions?

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:05:48] Good. We will definitely get to that.

Student [00:05:51] How would you define your role in the course?

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:05:54] I see one of my important roles in the classroom as a sort of community facilitator in chief.

Chad Bauman, PhD [00:06:00] In my mind, it's important to keep students for the entire class period. It's important to demonstrate that this is a course where we're going to take things seriously. We're going to be organized and efficient with our time. And you're expected to show up for the full period every day.

Caroline, Student [00:06:15] If on the first day if the professor releases us early, it does kind of send a message that maybe they're not using that time to the fullest, and I'm not getting really what I paid for.

Jennifer, Student, West Virginia University [00:06:26] Coming in the first day and setting the tone in a really positive way that we're going to learn and we're going to take things seriously, and these are my expectations for you this semester, it gives you that, okay, you know, I need to be prepared every single class. And also the first day makes you feel prepared.

Brittany, Student [00:06:42] Because if you start right away, that focuses you right away.