

CTE This Week **August 26-29, 2003**

A bad beginning makes a bad ending.
~Euripides

Teaching Tip of the Week - First Day of Class: Other than going over the syllabus or immediately starting with information from Chapter 1 of your text, here are some suggestions for things you can do the first day:

- Involve students quickly. This can be done in a variety of ways:
 - having them introduce themselves
 - allowing them to think and write silently
 - having a whole-class or a small-group discussion, etc.
- Identify the value and importance of the subject.
 - Not all students come to all classes with a clear idea of why this subject is important. The teacher may need to help them understand the significance of the course. The sooner this is done, the sooner the students will be ready to invest time and energy in the task of learning the subject matter.
- Set expectations.
 - This can involve such things as what the teacher considers appropriate amounts of study time and homework for the class, the importance of turning homework in on time, expectations about in-class behavior, how the teacher wants to relate to students, and how much interaction among students is desired. The first day also offers an opportunity to find out what expectations the students have of the teacher and of the class.
- Establish rapport.
 - Almost any class will be more enjoyable for both the teacher and the students if they know each other a bit. This exchange can be started with introductions, sharing some background information, etc.
- Establish the "climate" for the class.
 - Different teachers prefer different classroom climates: intense, relaxed, formal, personal, humorous, serious, etc. Whatever climate you want, you should try to establish this early and set the tone for the rest of the semester.

eLearning Teaching Tip of The Week: Use E-mail Outside of Class to Enhance Discussions

- To participate, students normally need to read **and think about** texts before class.
- Students' comments demonstrate some misunderstandings that you can then address in class as appropriate.
- You can better see and reward the depth of interpretation of some students who are quiet in class, or whose written language is better than their spoken language.
- E-mail can be a good way get students to admit what they don't understand about a text or assignment, as well as a chance for them to be analytical about what they are studying.
- Begun early, e-mail can help students create a rapport among themselves-and with you.

Resources at CTE

Come by and take a look at some of the articles and books in our library. If you would like a copy of any of the articles abstracted below, contact the CTE (c.wehlburg@tcu.edu). You might be interested in:

Ten Strategies for Getting Students to Take Responsibility for their Learning by Sara Jane Coffman (Purdue University). *This article presents ten strategies instructors can use to get their students to take more responsibility for their learning. Suggestions are given about the importance of getting students to verbalize why they are taking the course, helping students get into the proper mindset for each class, and structuring assignments so students will be more likely to come to class prepared. Other suggestions include teaching students to look out for each other, behave responsibly when working in groups, and analyze their learning experiences. By teaching responsibility, as well as content, in our classrooms, we can enhance learning, raise the level of our classrooms, and produce more responsible members of society.*

Teaching Integrity by John Dichtl (Organization of American Historians). *Articles about academic honesty seem either to begin with an example of egregious deceit in American school or to claim that dishonesty is worse than ever. What could be more shocking in this regard than recent news from the University of California that admissions officers there think it necessary to begin spot-checking applications for students' lies about special achievements and experiences? or that, according to the Duke University Center for Academic Integrity, "instances of unpermitted collaboration" at medium or large state universities have grown from eleven percent of students in 1963 to forth-nine percent in 1993. This article discusses ways of teaching that may influence academically honest behavior on the part of students. The focus is on teaching History, but this information can be used in other disciplines.*

Problem-Based Service-Learning: Rewards and Challenges With Undergraduates by Kenneth France (Shippensburg University) *Students in three Abnormal Psychology sections participated in problem-based service-learning (PBSL). Desired learning outcomes included humanizing persons diagnosed with mental health disorders and more fully appreciating challenges experienced by such individuals. Students completing the PBSL projects evidenced decreased negative feelings and increased positive feelings toward consumers of mental health services. According to the community partners, students made valuable contributions to both the organizations and the mental health consumers served by those organizations. Students saw the activity as being challenging and rewarding.*

Upcoming Events at CTE - Mark Your Calendars (and check out <http://www.cte.tcu.edu>)!

Conversations on Teaching - Student Engagement: What do we know from NSSE (National Student on Student Engagement). This brown bag lunch discussion will focus on the results of the most recent (2001) TCU student responses to NSSE. The issues deal with student in-class participation perceptions as well as other academic issues. Bring your lunch and enjoy conversation with your colleagues! (**September 2 from 12:00 - 1:00** in the CTE, SWR 501).

Bits 'n Bytes - On-line Quizzes and Groups. Are you interested in using online quizzes or have your students work in groups in an online or web-enhanced course? Then come to this 30 minute session that will demonstrate these eCollege tools. (**September 9 from 3:00 - 3:30** in the CTE, SWR 501)