**First Day of Class**

**On first day of class**, **before** starting to teach**:**

* Prepare your classroom space.
* Get excited – this excitement and anxiety can be constructive.
* Break the ice – develop rapport, introduce yourself and students.
* Set the state for learning with your enthusiasm.
* Establish behavioral standards and set the tone for the class by verbally communicating your requirements.
* Distribute and review with students the course syllabi. Share with the students what they need to know – what is expected and who is responsible for what.

**If you are feeling anxious**, use some relaxation techniques:

* Breathe deeply, do some large muscle movements (stretching, toe touching, walking about with long strides).
* Drop your shoulders; then hunch them a number of times.
* Move your head slowly back and forth and up and down.

**Suggestion for ice breakers:**

* you may start with a devotional thought or pray for students’ success in your class and their intellectually, spiritually and emotionally nurturing experience at Westmont.
* you may arrive at the first class well before the starting time, and stand at the doorway and greet each student as they come in, shaking hands and introducing yourself to them by name
* as students come into class, you may hand each one piece of chalk and ask them to write their names on the board before they sit down
* you may ask students, “How do you think your instructor feels on the first day of class?”
* in a small class you may ask class members (including yourself) to introduce themselves, tell where they’re from, what are their expectations about this class, and answer their questions (up to 3).

**It is important to introduce students to the course topic or materials in a substantive way** (sends the message that you are excited and eager to help the students learn in this course)

Suggestions for:

* Introducing the syllabus:
* you may hand out a course syllabus, tell students to find a partner, and ask them to work together to find three questions either about what *is not* on the syllabus or about what *is* on the syllabus.
* Introducing the textbook
* you may explain the features that led you to choose it
* you may describe how students can learn from it most effectively.
* in case disagreement between the instructor and the text is inevitable, explain to students what they are supposed to do about such discrepancies on examinations. Give your reasons for disagreeing within the textbook.
* Assessing prior knowledge
* you may ask questions like, “How many have had more than X precious courses in this subject?”
* you may give a short, noncredit test of relevant knowledge or ask students to write a short paragraph in response to two or three substantive questions about their past experience with the course topic.