

Different teachers prefer different classroom climates: intense, relaxed, formal, personal, humorous, serious, etc. Whatever climate you prefer, you must establish it at the beginning. It sets the tone for the whole semester.

Provide administrative information

Go through your syllabus with your students. Make sure everybody knows what's in it. Information they will need include:

- List of textbooks and other required reading
- The kind and quantity of homework involved
- Your office hours, address, phone and email
- Grade stipulations and the procedures by which they will be determined
- Classroom policies: attendance, late papers, make-up exams, etc.

Present an overview of the subject

- What is it?
- What parts of the subject will be covered in the class you're teaching?
- How are those parts connected?
- How are they connected to other subjects, courses and types of knowledge?

Final Note:

Remember this imperative: Whatever it is you want your students doing on a regular basis, have them do it on the first day of class as well.

If class or group discussions are going to be a regular activity, have a class or group discussions on the first day. If you want them working in small groups throughout the semester, put them in groups on the first day. If you want them writing regularly, have them write immediately.

Sources: University of Oklahoma Program for Instructional Innovation. (n.d.). The first day of class: What can/should we do? In *Ideas on teaching*. Retrieved August 19, 2008, from the University of Oklahoma Program for Instructional Innovation Web site:
<http://www.ou.edu/pii/tips/ideas/design4.html>

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