

Classroom Management Tips

Here are some suggestions for maintaining a classroom environment conducive to learning.

1. Have a clear, concise syllabus. Suggested elements of a syllabus can be found at: http://staffdev.lavc.edu/Elements_of_a_Course_Syllabus.pdf
 - List reasonable classroom policies/procedures.
 - attendance and tardiness
 - academic dishonesty (you cannot fail a student in the course for dishonesty, only for the assignment)
 - missed tests/assignments make-up policy
 - using cell phones/text messaging/social conversations
 - List the consequences of failure to adhere to the policies.
 - Include your expectations for an environment conducive to learning.
 - If you deviate from the syllabus make sure all students know and understand the change and that the change does not adversely impact them.

2. Mutual respect is important.
 - Treat students the way you want to be treated. Be empathic.
 - Try not to take bad behavior personally – you’re likely not the only one who has had problems with a particular student.
 - Try not to be sarcastic or condescending (even if it’s the most stupid question you have ever heard).
 - If you have to speak to a student about his/her behavior, try to do it in private. Do not engage students or let them engage you in front of others whenever possible. Encourage students to speak to you after class or in your office.
 - Give students constructive feedback about your expectations.

3. Be consistent.
 - Be equitable. This does not always mean “equal.” Individual circumstances require individual solutions.
 - Don’t ignore bad behavior. Deal with it early in the term.
 - If you need to separate students, talk to them after class and assign them to seats for the next class meeting.

4. Be aware of the diversity in your classroom.
 - Different students have different learning styles and academic abilities. Some cultures do not consider some forms of collaboration to be cheating.
 - Humor in the classroom can be great but can easily be taken the wrong way and offend students. Caution is recommended when using humor to make points.
 - Be careful when expressing personal or political points of view that might offend students.

You are in control of your classroom. Take appropriate action to maintain a positive learning environment.