


First Day – First Tutorial

The following is a list of different activities, tips and ideas that staff can implement on the first day of teaching to help first year students feel a sense of belonging to and feeling relaxed at university.

- Welcome and congratulate the students on both their acceptance into university and also their decision to undertake further studies. Reinforce the advantages of choosing further study and the positive outcomes that can arise from completing tertiary study.
- Introduce yourself and the unit and provide students with your contact details. Leave these on the board so students can refer back to them throughout the tutorial.
- Ask students to talk to one another for a brief period to find out answers to different questions such as:
 - Where did you attend high school?;
 - What are you hoping to do when you finish uni?;
 - How do you get to uni?; and
 - What is your current best tip for other students starting uni?
- Read through the Unit Plan with students. Explain the purpose of the Unit Plan and where they can find an electronic copy. Ask them to complete a Scavenger Hunt- have students find page numbers for different sections, due dates for assignments, rules for submission etc.
- Have a discussion about what uni life is like- ask students what they think will be some of the toughest challenges or most exciting aspects. Tell them about the unit and how it fits within the course.
- Tell students about your prior work experience. Let them know they have chosen an exciting degree to study, in a field of study that excites you and explain what opportunities your degree opened for you.
- Ask students to join a buddy group (of 3-4 students) and swap contact details so that if they ever miss a class they can contact a buddy and the buddy can tell you. Give the group a fun task and ask them to report back to the class about it next week- E.g. Evaluate the coffee at the two different cafes on campus, decide on the best place to have a quiet chat, determine the best time to arrive to get a car park. The activity the students do is not as important as having them connect with one another outside of class time.
- Give students the names/ contact details of people who they might need to contact over the semester- Learning Advisors, Counsellors, and Unit Coordinator etc. Tell them the signs that indicate that a visit might be advantageous!
- Explain to students the tutorial structure and your expectations for class participation, communication, attendance and punctuality.

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- Include some new content material that students will be able to discuss with one another in the tutorial to develop their sense of confidence and interest in the unit material and get a sense that they can succeed at this.

It is important to consider how you can modify these tips to suit both the content of your unit and your personal teaching style. The key is supporting students is to communicate to students your interest in their presence in your unit and recognition of the significance of their choice to study at ECU.