

**TWENTY YEARS' WORTH OF THINGS THAT WORK:  
Methods and Materials That Can Be Employed  
In Almost Any First-Year Seminar**

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**1. Summary of Presentation/Necessary and Desirable Elements in FYE Courses**

*A choice of models.* These elements will work very well in two or more different models: (1) a traditional, University 101-style first-year seminar; and (2) special first-year seminar sections of regular academic core courses, such as Psychology, English, History, Public Speaking, and even Algebra. Other, more specialized models work, as well. Twenty years of experiments at Mississippi State University have led us to the conclusion that the "magic" of the first-year seminar is in the *method* by which the course is taught, rather than its specific *content*; thus, effective first-year seminars can take a variety of forms and can be delivery vehicles for a variety of contents beyond the traditional first-year orientation. We believe that necessary and/or desirable elements common to successful first-year seminar efforts include the following:

*Excellent, enthusiastic teachers.* Recruit teachers who communicate caring, enthusiasm, and excitement—and who *want* to teach a course like this. If in doubt about appropriate teachers, ask the students! Great teachers are great to have, but good teachers are good enough to accomplish your goals quite satisfactorily if you train participating faculty in certain models and techniques and make those "signature features" of your program. Faculty development benefits are significant.

*Small, discussion-oriented classes.* Best class size is about 20-25 students; do *not* exceed 30. Discussion should be included whenever possible. Usually, around 50% discussion is optimal, but the model will still work with 80-90% lecture. Circular or U-shaped seating arrangements are enjoyable and facilitate discussion and interaction. *Classes need to meet at least twice a week*; otherwise, it is very difficult to get proper student-student and faculty-student bonding.

*Personal, mentoring relationships between professors and students.* These are absolutely essential. Learn names immediately; taking pictures the first day makes this easy. If you have time, meet with students individually outside of class during the first two weeks and again around midterm, especially after midterm grades come out if those are used at your

school. Have students keep and turn in weekly summary sheets. Assign an autobiography early in the course. Make detailed comments in student journals.

**Journaling.** This is an exceedingly powerful and effective tool; it allows the instructor to stay abreast of developments in the students' lives and intervene, if warranted, before problems become severe. Journals are also an excellent place to have students think about and work with concepts covered in class, and to get practice in writing. Read their journals *weekly*, to stay current with events in the students' lives and to provide sufficiently frequent feedback. Take appropriate legal precautions. Always write *comments* in journals; students enjoy them greatly and pay very close attention to whatever you write.

**Awareness and referral to helping services.** Devote significant space on the syllabus to describing services students are most likely to need, such as study skills centers, career development centers, counseling centers, etc. Name specific individuals at each service whom you can honestly recommend. If you don't know any, take the time to meet some—they'll be delighted, and you'll learn valuable information to pass on to your students. *Faculty* awareness of helping resources is as important and useful as student awareness. If possible, take classes to key resource offices on campus or invite staff members to class. In matters of health and safety, use your academic freedom to put needed information, such as sex education topics, in front of students if they are not effectively exposed to it already at your institution. If students appear to need help, they probably do, but usually they do not define themselves as needing help and do not seek it on their own; *you* need to recognize their need and suggest help. Students rarely resent this, and usually they are grateful.

**Frequent graded writing.** Assignments should include papers, journals, etc. Always mark and grade writing mechanics—almost all students need the practice, and most, after initial griping, will be glad someone is helping them learn to write better. List and discuss commonly occurring mistakes and test students on them. Do not foster the notion that English is important only in English classes!

**Frequent testing/feedback and an academically credible workload.** Students who are not used to college-level demands need frequent feedback. The course should be demanding and challenging to model rigorous performance expectations. These are best encountered early in the students' careers, at the hands of excellent, caring teachers whose feedback will be taken to heart. Students need *frequent* tests (we favor weekly or biweekly) and *prompt* feedback (our standard is next class period) to recognize shortcomings and master new skills.

**Frequent reading.** Textbook readings will probably be necessary to cover material not covered by lecture; if students enjoy the class, they won't object to substantial reading. Interesting and/or challenging supplementary readings also work well. Two "sure fire" readings that we have repeatedly used that have been extremely well received by first-year students are: "The Fictional Adult," by Robert Hudson (*Etc.: A Review of General Semantics*, 32(3), 284-286); and *Be True to Your School*, by Bob Greene (Ballantine Books, 1988), a journal of the year 1964, when the author was a junior and senior in high school. The Hudson article is a sweet read and is excellent for discussing perceptions of self and others, and why we never feel as "grown up," wise, masterful, etc. as we once imagined others in our present roles to be. The Greene book models a journal, as well as bringing up inter-generational issues and issues of transition into adulthood. A powerful reading on the African American experience that tends to be a real eye-opener for the white students is *Makes Me Wanna Holler*, by Nathan McCall (Vintage, 1994). McCall is an approximate contemporary of Greene, and his story makes an excellent counterpoint to the relatively secure, carefree upper middle class white existence Greene describes. Lest students believe that blacks invented crime and poverty, a good follow-up reading is *Sleepers*, by Lorenzo Carcaterra (Ballantine, 1995). This is the story of four white boys growing up in the infamous Hell's Kitchen neighborhood in New York, set at about the same time as the Greene and McCall narratives; it is gripping, graphic, and a good counterpoint to simplistic notions that harsh punishment would solve most of our societal ills. Another popular book is *Witness for the Defense*, by Elizabeth Loftus (St. Martin's Press, 1991); this one is another eye and mind opener for students, detailing the fallibility of eyewitness testimony and the miscarriages of justice, sometimes intentionally perpetrated by the authorities, that the author has observed as a forensic memory expert. An article with much impact and one that leads to interesting discussion and follow-up is "White Privilege and Male Privilege: A Personal Account of Coming to See Correspondences Through Work in Women's Studies," by Peggy McIntosh (available from the author at the Wellesley College Center for Research on Women, Wellesley, MA 02181, (617) 283-2500). Primarily about race and secondarily about gender and sexual orientation, this article points out unacknowledged advantages that persons in the majority have that they don't even think about, such as being able to come to a meeting late and not have it attributed to their race, being able to do a good job without being called a credit to their race, being able to introduce their partner in life without fear of disgrace or denunciation, etc. A popular and somewhat different way of getting into issues of sexual harassment and sexual respect is with the bestselling fictional book *Disclosure*, by Michael Crichton (Knopf, 1994). *The Truth Machine*, by James Halperin (Ballantine, 1997; available for free download at [www.truthmachine.com](http://www.truthmachine.com)) is a great read and a thought-provoking way to bring up issues of honesty. Highest rated of all by students is *In My Hands* (Anchor, 2001), by Irene Gut Opdyke, a Polish, Gentile survivor of the Holocaust and rescuer whose story is particularly gripping and inspiring. For basic sex education, we use chapters in *Sexuality Today*, by Gary Kelly (McGraw-Hill, 2004). Another interesting book is *The Pursuit of Happiness*, by David Myers (Morrow, 1992); it details for the layperson the findings and implications of psychological research on who is happy and why, with many implications for

college students. Do drinking, drugs, and sex actually increase happiness? No. Does money? No. What *does* reliably correlate with happiness is surprising and reassuring.

**Personal, present day, real world applications.** Specifically assign students the task of *applying* course contents, both to their own lives and to the “real world.” Have them try ideas on for size and give their personal reactions in their journals. Assign students the task of scanning newspapers and appropriate magazines for real world illustrations of concepts covered in class, and have them write papers or journal entries based on these. See if you can get them in the habit of reading at least part of a good newspaper, such as the front page and editorial pages, each day. (Warning: Getting students to do this requires persistence!)

**Cultural diversity.** Specifically incorporate issues of cultural diversity into the course if possible. There is some evidence that students actually respond better to having diversity topics in the context of a regular course than when these topics are segregated into a course of their own. Have students scan news sources for current examples of diversity issues—they are constantly out there. Emphasize local history and context; this has high interest value for the students and can be eye-opening. Find out the diversity questions students are most interested in the answers to—by asking them—consult with campus experts on the best answers, and use the students’ own questions as the basis for discussion and response. Start with less controversial topics and then move into the more difficult ones. If desired, a cultural diversity course can double as a first-year seminar if the right teaching methods and course structure are used. It is also feasible to integrate about 1 semester hour’s worth of diversity material into either a traditional first-year seminar or core curriculum courses in relevant disciplines.

**Critical and interdisciplinary thinking.** Use readings, guest speakers, etc.; they add variety to the class and help give a broader university or college perspective. In a first-year seminar, specifically bringing in one speaker from several different colleges or divisions of the institution can be exceedingly valuable; it is amazing how much more understanding students have as a result of just one presentations on, say, architecture or engineering or agriculture, than they have if they have no exposure at all. This not only suggests career possibilities but also generates a healthy long-term appreciation of the *whole* institution.

**Cultural literacy.** This cannot possibly be covered by any single course, but students can be introduced to the concept. *The New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy: What Every American Needs to Know*, 3<sup>rd</sup> edition, by E. D. Hirsch, Jr., Joseph Kett, and James Trefil (Houghton Mifflin Co., 2002) is remarkably well received by students. Pick perhaps 100-300 relevant terms, break them down into lists, and have students look up and learn a certain number of them each week. Give frequent quizzes on these. Students are typically delighted to notice terms that they have studied show up in newscasts, books, magazines, etc. Contrary to popular belief, students do not *want* to be ignorant!

**Additional faculty-student interaction.** Alexander Astin’s research shows that faculty-student *interaction* is positively correlated with just about every student outcome we could wish for; and by providing similar levels of faculty-student interaction, even large universities can equal the levels of student satisfaction achieved by small colleges. Weekly journals provide a particularly powerful form of ongoing faculty-student interaction. A small, discussion-oriented class helps. While not strictly necessary, faculty-student interaction out of class is much appreciated and long remembered by students. Play “Ozzie and Harriet”: Invite your students over to dinner and let them meet your spouse and/or kids if you have them; this is not difficult, it needn’t be expensive, and surprisingly, it means a *great* deal to the students. Many other activities/programs are possible. Do small, unexpected acts of kindness for your students and classes. Use your imagination: The possibilities are endless, the results delightful.

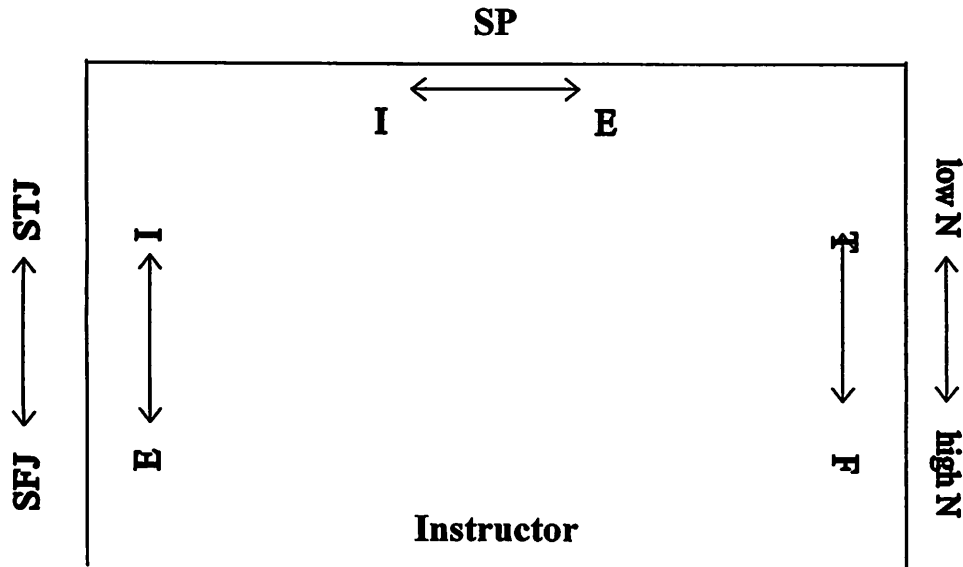
**Parent contact. This is gold!** It is not *necessary* for your course to work, but it generates enormous institutional goodwill. Write to parents about a month into the semester. Then telephone them. Send something at mid-semester, if you can. Write again at the end of the semester, and put it in a holiday greeting card. (Send a card and note to each student, too.) Talk in detail about the course, the student, and yourself. This is *greatly* appreciated by almost all parents, and it is highly satisfying and humanizing for instructors, as well. If you haven’t time for repeated contacts, even *one* good letter to parents can do wonders! Make these contacts, of course, with students’ permission and in such a way as not to violate their privacy. Tell them directly what you want to do and why; they very seldom object.

**Pros and cons.** Compared to the traditional, University 101-style first-year seminar, incorporating a first-year seminar into one or more core courses will inevitably result in less introduction to the college or university as a whole and less direct consideration of first-year developmental and adjustment issues. Any extensive treatment of study skills, career planning, etc. will have to come from referral to services or from outside readings rather than in your regular class time.

Advantages of using existing academic courses as vehicles for a first-year seminar include the capability of providing the spirit of the traditional first-year seminar in regular content courses for which students can receive normal credit, applicable to their majors. The excitement of the class and the close mentoring relationship with the instructor can occur in a wide variety of courses. Even College Algebra can become a course to write home about! Faculty recruiting and compensation

issues are usually easier because faculty are teaching courses their departments would be teaching anyway. Courses can be open to first-year students in general, departmental majors, honors students, etc., or to any appropriate group—including groups where building cohesion is desired, such as at-risk students, minority students, nontraditional students, social (Greek) units, residence hall units, etc. Course techniques need not stop with the first semester: They can be continued into another semester with a different course, and extended to upper-class offerings. Usually, what is good for first-year students is good for all.

## 2. Suggested Classroom Seating Arrangement, Physically and by Psychological Types



Factors on the *exterior* of the diagram should be the *primary* considerations; those on the interior of the diagram should be secondary, coming into play *within* the primary factors. Overall, you are going from the most Sensing individuals on your left, to the most Intuitive individuals, on your right. Note that students sit *next* to similar, compatible types for comfort and easy friendship; but they *face* students of different types, on the theory that in higher education, we have the *most* to learn from those who are likeliest to see things differently and/or disagree with us.

## 3. Sample Class Card Information Questions for Students

Name /// email address /// Local Phone /// Local Address /// Permanent Phone /// Permanent Address /// Date of Birth /// Age /// Year in School /// Major /// Hometown /// Why are you taking this course? /// Ideal Home: Where would you most like to live? /// Nightmare Home: Where you'd least like to live (and have actually seen) /// Prettiest/Nicest Place (you've ever actually seen) /// Do you read books? If yes, best book or three /// Favorite Movie or three /// Dream Car (but you have to drive it every day and it's your only one) /// Lunch with any person living or dead (other than Jesus Christ; this one is so frequently chosen that it is best to disallow it so you will get more variety.) /// Jobs you have had and how well you liked each /// Smartest thing you ever did/best decision you ever made /// Stupidest thing you ever did/worst decision you ever made /// Most dangerous thing you ever did /// Accomplishment or thing you did that you are proudest of /// Fun (What is fun for you?) /// Two or three interesting things about you that you don't mind sharing, that I would never know or guess unless you told me /// Five adjectives that describe you (three positive and two negative) /// Where you went to high school /// ACT/SAT scores (verbal, math, and composite) /// For each parent: Name; Educational degrees and places received; Occupation; Three adjectives that would describe them; Address; Phone; email address.

## 4. Autobiography (sample instructions to students)

This paper should be typed (double spaced) and well written. Give it careful thought, and allow plenty of time. Length should be about five or six pages. Staple the pages together, and when you get your paper back from me, add it to your journal.

The purpose of this paper is to trace your own personal history, describing the most meaningful people and events in your life, and taking a look into your future as you now see it. It should help you start thinking about yourself and how you want to grow as a person during your college years and beyond. It will also be a very useful way for me to get to know you

better. Here are some things to cover as you do this. (If any of these topics make you uncomfortable, omit them; and obviously, don't tell me anything you don't want me to know!)

What was your early childhood like: Who were your parents and family, what happened early in your life, etc.? What were your grade school years like, and what people and events were most important? What were your junior high school and high school years like? What people and events influenced you the most then, and how?

As you look back from where you are now, how would you characterize your past and present relationships with: your parents; your family; your friends; your boyfriends or girlfriends; people you go to school with; people you work with; and people who don't yet know you? What pictures do all of these people have of you?

How would you describe your personality and your lifestyle as they are now, and why are they that way? How well do you like them? In the past, what conditions have given you the greatest happiness? What conditions do you anticipate will give you the greatest happiness in the future, and exactly how do you plan to bring these about? What are your most important strengths and shortcomings? What do you want to change about yourself, and realistically, how do you plan to do this?

What are your hopes and dreams for the future? Describe the life you see for yourself five, ten, and twenty years from now.

## 5. General Journal Assignment (taken verbatim from an actual syllabus)

Rather than do a library-style term paper, your writing assignment in this class will be to keep a journal. You must write an entry of *at least* three sentences each day, and four entries per week must be *at least* 150 words. Your longer entries should be divided into two sections: *Events*—i.e., what is happening in your life; and *Thoughts*—i.e., your ideas or thoughts about things. Often I will give you a specific topic to think about for one of your journal entries (or part of one); other times, you may write about your thoughts or ideas concerning anything you wish.

Each weekly journal will be *limited* to a *maximum* of five typed, double spaced pages. (It may be as short as 2-3 pages.) I do not want you to write more or less at random in some kind of extended stream of consciousness. First carefully think through what you want to say, and then write in it a concise and proper form. Often I will assign topics to include in your journal entries. If I have assigned journal topics, write down where I will find your discussion of each topic, before the text of your journal begins. (Do not skip assigned topics; skipping assigned topics lowers your grade substantially.) Each Friday you will hand in your journal entries for that week. Label entries for each day with both the date and the day of the week; put your name on each page, and *staple* each week's pages together in the upper left corner. After the course is over, I urge you to *save your journals*; in years to come, you will treasure having a record of your life events and your thinking during your first semester in college.

Early in the semester, in your journal I will ask you to write a short autobiography, both to get you thinking about yourself, and to help me get to know you; and late in the semester, I will give you another special topic for your journal that I think you will find very interesting to think and write about. For the semester that we have this course together, I can be something of an informal advisor and mentor for you, and in general I am quite interested in how you are doing, both in this course and in your life outside of our class. (Naturally, my interest in you does not stop when this course is over; I just won't have the pleasure of seeing you on a regular class schedule.) If for any reason, however, you are uncomfortable writing about yourself in your journal, just let me know at the *beginning* of the course, and I will arrange less personal, more academic assignments for you. In your journals, never tell me anything you don't want me to know; if an assigned topic is too personal for you, just say that (so I know you didn't simply forget the assignment) and write on a topic you do feel comfortable with. This is rarely a problem, however. The same principle applies to class discussions: If I ask you something you are not comfortable commenting on, just say that you don't really have any thoughts to share on that topic. Your journals are between you and me—normally I consider them entirely confidential, except for the very rare cases described immediately below.

And now for some "fine print" you must read: Normally, what you write in your journals is just between you and me; there are, however, rare exceptions that for legal reasons I must warn you about. If you describe to me suicidal or potentially suicidal thinking or behavior, or criminal plans or activity, I am legally bound to report that, and your journal would no longer be confidential. I hope it will reassure you to know that I cannot remember even one case in which I had to report something like that. There is also a small but significant possibility that your journal might be stolen or misplaced, in which case its confidentiality might be breached. Again, this has never actually happened in my experience, but there is a small risk of it, so if you aren't willing to take that chance—then don't. And one more time, this should be obvious: Don't put in your journal anything you don't want me to know! If you are uncomfortable with any topic I suggest or assign, simply tell me, and I will give you a substitute assignment. Really, I will be very surprised if any of you have problems with any of the things in this paragraph. Also please remember that when I grade your journals, I am not grading your life or your personality or your views; I am simply grading the evident effort and care and effectiveness you put into the assignment.

## 6. Glimpses of Student Life (sample journal entries from students, quoted with permission)

Remember Being Young? "After the meeting was over, I talked to Judy \_\_\_\_\_. Judy is a remarkably beautiful, compassionate, and sincere Christian who I've been thinking about asking out. I was doing my best to be cool and smooth while talking to her before I actually asked her for a date. I had it all planned out. I was going to take her out to eat Friday night and then we were going to an RUF party.

"It was going great until I offered to refill her mostly empty cup of Coke. I took her cup, turned toward the refreshment table, and I'm not sure what happened next. Somehow her cup went flying through the air, spewing Coke and ice on everyone around me. I don't understand how I did that, but I was so humiliated and my confidence was so shattered that I just couldn't go through with my plans. Maybe some other time.

"[next entry] I did it! I called Judy \_\_\_\_\_ and asked her for a date, and she said, "I'd love to." Not "yes" or "OK," but "I'd love to." Saturday night we're going to Columbus. We will eat at The Fisherman's Paradise, and we will go to a concert by Dallas Holmes, a Christian performer. It's going to be awesome!"

**A Non-Traditional Student** "Christ Almighty, what have I done? I felt over than God today when I looked around my classes and realized that my mates were four years old when I first started college. It took several hours of introspection before I was able to make this be okay.

"It certainly was more fun to buy books when my daddy paid for them. My God! I spent over \$200 and still haven't rounded up all the supplements. Oh, well, in for a penny, in for a pound. (I believe that's the way the old cliché goes.)

"I spent three hours struggling with my new Macintosh. It is not as fancy as I would like and I wish that it had CD-ROM. However, financial reality guided me to this model. I only used IBM machines in the military and enjoy the ease of the Mac. The aspect that I most like is, unlike DOS with its stodgy 8 letter-only file name, if I want to name a file "Pam's bunch of bull\*\*\*\*," my Mac will recognize it.

"Life grade: from a D this morning to an A by bedtime."

**Every Parent's Nightmare** "I told him that I wanted to go out with him tonight, so he came and picked me up. We went and hung out at the [fraternity] house where I met all his friends; it was fun. It was soo wild! I saw more drugs, drinking, and fighting in one night than I have in three months. Every guy there was a complete scammer. ...Tonight was soo much fun. All my friends came to the house to watch my brother's band play; we danced and drank and had a good time. It was completely wild. There were drug deals being made every time I turned around, and people doing pot in the room I was in; there were drunk ass\*\*\*\*\* fighting about nothing and some guy cutting his wrists in front of everyone. Things like this just don't happen at [home]."

**A Partial Orphan, and Feeling It** "I'm sitting in my dorm room by myself thinking too much, as usual. I really need to be studying, but I just cannot concentrate on school. It's weird how you don't think about something very often and then all of a sudden it hits you and then it's all you can think about. I miss my dad! It's been about nine years since he died and I can't believe how much of my life he's missed. The little girl I was when he died is barely the same woman I am now. Each day it gets harder to remember the way he looked in person or the way his voice sounded. I used to love to hear him laugh and now I can't even recall what his laugh sounded like. Maybe I'm thinking about him tonight because we had a parents' cookout this weekend. I loved having my mom and my step-dad there, but I would have given anything to have had my dad there. It's like he's half of me and none of my friends will ever see where that half originated. I never got a chance to really know about him like I know now about my mom. You know as you get older your parents start to share more about their past with you and you can laugh and relate with them. But, I didn't have that with my dad. Sometimes I do or say something and wonder if I got that from him. I hate nights like this. I miss him so much it literally hurts. When will I see him again? Will I ever see him again? The pain is unbearable."

**Why We Read All Those Journals** "I can't believe this will be my last journal. Although writing my journals requires a lot of time, I enjoy every minute of effort. Having to write down my thoughts and keep them organized, I'm able to better understand myself and my personality. These entries are my life. Regardless of how intimate I may become with someone, no one will ever know me in such depth. Twenty years from now, I'll be able to flip through this folder and remember exactly how I was at 21 years of age. Thanks for giving me this folder, Dr. C.!! I'll remember you always. When I am a professor, I'll tell my class all about you."

**Note.** Journals are a very good place to assign reactions to academic topics covered in class and/or readings, and we often use them for that; but when given no specific assignment, and/or in addition to an academic assignment, most journals turn personal. This too is good. Alexander Astin, in his extensive research described in a plenary session at FYE '94, found that while entering students are influenced most by their peers, the next most powerful influence on them is their *faculty*. Faculty-student *interaction* is positively correlated with student satisfaction, grades, graduation, honors, graduate school attendance, careers in teaching, positive self-concept measures, and even promoting racial understanding. And what could be a more powerful form of faculty-student *interaction* than the weekly dialogue/relationship that goes on in a good journal assignment?

## 7. Common Grammatical Mistakes (handout to students)

### One word or two?

a lot (not alot). I talk a lot—NEVER "I talk alot." /// all right (not alright, alright, etc.) /// cannot (not can not) /// everything (not every thing) /// everyday (adjective modifying a noun). I like attending to everyday details. /// every day (phrase modifying a verb). I'll write home every day. /// altogether (adverb modifying an adjective or verb). It was an

altogether delightful movie. Altogether it was an enjoyable evening. // all together (phrase modifying a verb; with each other) We went to the movie all together. // roommate (not room mate or roommate) // awhile (adverb modifying a verb). You should stay awhile. // a while (noun, object of a preposition). Stay for a while. (not stay for awhile)

#### Weird tenses and usage.

I used to live in Colorado. (not I use to) // I'm supposed to have this done tomorrow. (not suppose to) // I told Polly to try to finish tonight. (not try and finish) // I'll find the person who did it. (not that did it, or which did it; if you are referring to people, use who—or whom in the objective case) // Subjunctive tense. If I were a minister, I'd preach up a storm. (not if I was) // Plural subjects need plural verbs. Poetry and flowers are still the way to a girl's heart. (not poetry and flowers is the way to a girl's heart...) // Singular nouns need singular pronouns. A new student must have his or her ID card made right away. (not a new student must have their ID made...)

#### Similar sounding words or same words used right and wrong.

except—other than. Except for this, I'm done for the night. // accept—receive, admit. I accept what you say. // lose—misplace. Don't lose my pencil. // loose—not tight. A piece of trim in my car is loose and rattles. // breath (noun). I need to catch my breath. // breathe (verb). I can't breathe well in this heat. // affect—influence (verb). I can't affect what my former wife does. // effect—bring about (verb). I effected a change for the better. // effect—outcome (noun). The main effect of cutting class is failing. // their—belonging to them. When they see their grades, they'll groan. // there—in that place. Please park your car over there. // there (introducing a sentence or clause). There may be a storm today. // they're (contraction of "they are"). They're going home this weekend. // like (verb, implying affection or enjoyment). I like you. // like (preposition, meaning similar to). There no one quite like you. // like (conjunction, instead of "as if")—WRONG—can't be used this way. It seems as if this always happens—NOT it seems like it happens. // real (adjective, modifying a noun; actual, genuine). The seats are real leather. // really (adverb, modifying an adjective or verb). It's really hot out. (not "It's real hot out.") Did he really say that? // its (possessive—belonging to it) Each car has its problems. (not it's problems) // it's (contraction for "it is"). It's hot out today. // good (adjective). This is a good paper. // good (adverb)—NO SUCH THING—say well. I slept well. (NOT I slept good.) // sight (something you see). The repair truck was a welcome sight. // site (a place). This is a beautiful site for building a house.

**COMMA SPLICES! Two independent clauses (parts of a sentence with a subject and verb, which could stand alone as whole sentences) should NOT be connected with only a comma. Make separate sentences, or connect with a conjunction, or use a semicolon, dash, or colon as appropriate. (If you don't know what I'm talking about, then ask your English teacher or go to the Learning Center, 267 Allen Hall, and find out!)**

#### **WRONG:**

I was tired, I went to bed.

#### **ALL RIGHT:**

I was tired, and I went to bed.

I was tired. I went to bed.

I was tired; I went to bed.

I was tired—I went to bed!

#### Weird punctuation.

Separate two independent clauses with a comma (if you are using a comma instead of some other punctuation) at the end of the first clause. "At first I couldn't decide, but now I know what I want"—NOT "At first I couldn't decide but, now I know what I want." Also use commas after phrases or clauses when necessary to avoid confusion. "After we arrive, there will be plenty to do."

Use apostrophes for possessive cases. For singular nouns, put 's after the noun. Tom's car—NOT Toms car. (For singular proper nouns ending in s, you can put the apostrophe after the s. Tom Jones' voice is awful.) For plural nouns ending in s, put the apostrophe after the s. I like hearing the students' ideas.

Punctuation at the end of a direct quotation goes inside the quotation mark if it ends a sentence. The ad said, "Where's the beef?" Other times, commas and periods generally go inside the quotation mark, but other punctuation goes outside. I hope I don't get the "freshman fifteen," because I'm too fat already. I can't stand "morning people." I don't need that "freshman fifteen"; I'll settle for a "freshman five." Does everyone gain the "freshman fifteen"?

When using dashes, type two hyphens directly next to the two words the dash connects. I think—in fact, I'm sure—you do it this way. NOT "I think - in fact, I'm sure - you do it this way." (All these rules, examples, etc. have to be learned. I know you can do it!)

Avoid sexist language—i.e., language that makes it sound as if all people are male. **WRONG:** Each student picked up his ID card. **RIGHT:** Each student picked up his or her ID card. (Note: Don't use "his/her"—there is no such word.) **ALSO RIGHT:** The students picked up their ID cards. (Using plural subjects and pronouns avoids the problem of sexist language and doesn't require the repeated use of "his or her.")

#### **CAPITALIZATION.** Capitalize:

Names of people. (Tom Carskadon)

Names of geographic locations. (Starkville, Mississippi)

Days of the week and month. (Monday, September 28)

**Indefinite referents.** Don't use "this" when you really mean "a." "This" should refer to something or someone you have already specifically described. **Wrong:** "I met this girl at the dance; she was really wild." **All right:** I can print in Times or Bookman; this typeface is Bookman.

**References to people.** Use "who" rather than "that" or "which" when referring to people. **Wrong:** Students that take my classes need to observe these rules. **Correct:** Students who take my classes need to observe these rules.

### More Writing Mistakes on Papers

Reason.... *Don't* say "The reason was *because...*"; say "The reason was *that...*" Wrong: The reason I'm doing this is *because* you need to learn grammar. Right: The reason I'm doing this is *that* you need to learn grammar.

Waiting. Say *waiting for*, not *waiting on*. Right: I'm *waiting for* Susie. Wrong: I'm *waiting on* Susie.

Fixing. *Don't* use this word when you mean getting ready, intending, etc. Wrong: I'm *fixing* to have dinner soon. Right: I'm *going* to have dinner soon; I *plan* to have dinner soon; I *intend* to have dinner soon; etc.

*Would have* when you mean *had*. Wrong: If he *would have* helped me, I would have been here a lot sooner. Right: If he *had* helped me, I would have been here a lot sooner.

Like/love you to. *Don't* add an unnecessary *for*. Wrong: I'd love *for* you to see my new baby. Right: I'd love you *to* see my new baby. I'd love it if you saw my new baby.

Double end marks after quotations. If a quotation already contains an end mark, you generally *don't* put another one outside it to end your sentence. Wrong: He said, "Why do we have to learn grammar?". Right: He said, "Why do we have to learn grammar?"

Names of restaurants, stores, etc. Unless the name itself ends in *s*, names of restaurants, stores, etc. generally end in an *apostrophe s*. Wrong: I ate at *McDonalds*. I shop at *Macys*. right: I ate a *McDonald's*. I shop at *Macy's*.

End marks in parenthetical material. When a *complete sentence* is in parentheses, its end mark is within the parentheses, too (but *not* when the parenthetical material is not a complete sentence). Wrong: You should know this (most good high school English teachers cover it). Right: You should know this. (Most good high school English teachers cover it.)

Master's degree. Use the singular possessive form. Right: I got my *master's* degree in 1971. Wrong: I got my *masters* degree in 1971.

Doctoral degree. A Ph.D., or Doctor of Philosophy degree may be referred to as a *doctoral* degree but never a *doctorial* degree.

I, me, and myself. *Don't* use *myself* when you really mean *I*. (Usually, *myself* is used in the objective case.) Wrong: Jim Tina, and *myself* went to the show. Right: Jim, Tina, and *I* went to the show. Do use *myself* instead of *me* when you are referring to yourself in connection with your own action. Right: I gave *myself* a reward for sticking to my vow. Wrong: I gave *me* a reward for sticking to my vow.

Generally, *don't* begin sentences with *so*. Wrong: So now we've all got friends at Chase Manhattan. So the summer is over already.

One-sentence paragraphs. Generally, avoid one-sentence paragraphs. (Dialogue in which there is only one sentence before another person's would be an exception.)

Endless paragraphs. Avoid very long paragraphs. (It's rare for a good paragraph to go more than ten or fifteen lines.) Long paragraphs often contain different thoughts that would be better talked about in separate paragraphs.

Than... *Don't* use objective case for a pronoun that is the subject of an implied verb. Wrong: My wife is taller than *me*. Right: My wife is taller than *I*. (If you had the verb included, it would be "My wife is taller than *I am*." You wouldn't say, "My wife is taller than *me am*.")

Objective case for pronouns. Do use objective case for pronouns when appropriate. Wrong: I need you to hand Tim and *I* the tools. Right: I need you to hand Tim and *me* the tools. (When in doubt, remove all nouns and just consider the pronoun. You wouldn't say "Hand *I* the tools.")

Who and whom. Use *whom* for the objective case, even if you *don't* use it in everyday speech. Right: I don't know *whom* to give this to. Wrong: I don't know *who* to give this to. Do use *who* when it is not objective case, however. Right: People *who* learn this will be glad they did. I'll let *whoever* raises his or her hand answer the question.

Prejudice/prejudiced. *Prejudice* is a noun form; *prejudiced* is the verb form used to modify a noun. Right: I hope I can eliminate *prejudice* from my thinking. Wrong: He is *prejudice* against practically every minority group there is. Right: He is *prejudiced* against practically every minority group there is.

Use possessive pronouns rather than objective ones with gerunds. Wrong: I like *you* caring about others. Right: I like *your* caring about others.

That or as/like. *Don't* use *like* as a conjunction. Wrong: I feel *like* you need to learn grammar. Winston tastes good *like* a cigarette should. Right: I feel *that* you need to learn grammar. Winston tastes good as a cigarette should.

Sure/surely. *Don't* use *sure* as an adverb, even if you use it that way in everyday speech. Wrong: I *sure* love to eat. Right: I *surely* love to eat.

Superfluous *of*. *Don't* use *of* when it is unnecessary. Wrong: He made too big *of* a deal about grammar. Right: He made too big a deal about grammar.

Run-on sentences. *Don't* run one sentence into another without appropriate punctuation. Wrong: I hate grammar I'm not going to learn it. Right: I hate grammar. I'm not going to learn it. I hate grammar, I'm not going to learn it.

Comma/since. *Since* preceded by a comma means *because*; without a comma it refers to passage of *time*. Wrong: I went there since I felt I had to help. Right: I went there, since I felt I had to help. Wrong: I've been sick, since I began my vacation. Right: I've been sick since I began my vacation.

Comma/so. *So* preceded by a comma means *and therefore*; *so* without a comma means *in order that*. Wrong: I was there so I guess I know what I'm talking about. I'm teaching you this, so you'll know how to write more effectively. Right: I was there, so I guess I know what I'm talking about. I'm teaching you this so you'll know how to write more effectively.

\* Remember \* Remember \* Remember \*



You can find detailed coverage of these and many other important points in a good English Comp. book. If you don't understand something or need help, ask me, as your English teacher, or go to the Learning Center.

### 8. Weekly Summary Sheet for Student Use

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_

List each of your courses, and for each day list the time(s) (3:30-4:00, etc.) that you spent outside of class working on each course. Put the total amount of out-of-class time for each course for the whole week under TTL. List class attendance for each course (2/3 for 2 classes out of 3, etc.) under ATN, and for any classes missed, *give the reason* (skipped, overslept, sick, etc.). Finally, under GRA list any grades you got in each course, and what they were on (test, quiz, paper, etc.). Also, for each day indicate how your life is going ("A life," "B life," etc.). *Fill out this form each day as you go along during the week. (Don't rely on your memory at the end of the week.)*

COURSE	FRI	SAT	SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	TTL	ATN	GRA
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____	_____

"life grade"  
Good things that happened this week:  
Problems or bad things that happened this week:  
Important or interesting things learned this week:  
Any other comments on anything:

### 9. Who's on Welfare?

The purpose of this in-class discussion is to make students more aware of the public assistance that they receive that they probably haven't even thought about, and to get them to feel more responsibility for the way they spend their time. Indirectly, an exercise like this may help students be more sympathetic to people on more conventional kinds of public assistance ("welfare").

Begin by asking if the students have heard about the new welfare proposal; they're likely to give you a blank look, though several will probably evidence irritation at the very *mention* of welfare. Tell them you can't quite remember all the details, but the gist of it is this: It is a 5-year program. Recipients will be placed on jobs and receive minimum wage, to be provided by the government; employers will simply be asked to take the workers—there will be no cost to employers. In year 1, employees will simply have to show up, and observe; no work will be required, but they will be *paid* for full-time work. They *may* work if they want to, but the only *requirement* is that they be there and watch the *other* people work. In year 2, employees must work at least 10 hours a week (one-quarter time) in order to receive full-time pay; again, they *may* work more, but they do not have to. In year 3, employees must work 20 hours a week (one-half time) in order to receive pay for full-time work. In year 4, employees must work 30 hours a week (three-quarters time) for full-time pay. And in year 5, employees will have to work 40 hours a week (full time). After that, the program is over, and participants should be ready to go out on their own and find regular, full-time positions in the job market.

Ask for student reactions. Some will take the program at face value, and try to find value in it. Most will hotly protest, appalled that people can be allowed to take money to work full time but not actually have to do it. Expect some venomous comments about lazy people on welfare ripping off the system, etc. After a while, admit that there is no such program, but that you wanted to see how the students would react to the idea. Ask them why they think you did that. Then point out the difference between public and private education. In nice round figures, a college education at a place like Mississippi State will cost about \$30,000; yet at a good private college or university, it is about \$120,000. How can that be? Are the people running the private institutions stupid spendthrifts? Do we at Mississippi State know something they do not? Of course, the difference is in public, taxpayer support of state colleges and institutions. Indirectly, the average student at Mississippi State University is getting about \$22,500 in benefits each year—significantly more than the median salary of citizens employed at jobs full time. Assuming a 15-week semester, that boils down to about \$750 *per week* in "welfare" for each student. Should taxpayers expect *full time* work from students? Are students who take the money but "just watch" any better than the welfare recipients in the above story?

This simple exercise gets students thinking....

### 10. Suggested Class on "Cultural Literacy"

Our purpose is to introduce the students to the notion of cultural literacy. We cannot make up for the educational deficiencies of the last twelve years in just one course; but at least we can take one step in the right direction and light the proverbial candle instead of cursing the darkness.

One day early in the course ask the students to bring to class their copies of *The New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy*, by E. D. Hirsh, Jr., Joseph Kett, and James Trefil. Ask students what they think is meant by the term "cultural literacy," and why it might be important. It will probably take five or ten minutes to get some approximation of the definition that cultural literacy is that body of knowledge that we assume all educated members of our society share and that people make reference to without definition or explanation. Understanding each other, the media, our teachers, etc. thus requires a working cultural literacy.

Now put three chairs up at the front of the classroom, somewhat opposite you. Put the first three students in them, and rotate in a new trio of students every five minutes or so. Appoint one good student to be judge and scorekeeper. Have the remaining students take turns looking in the index of the *New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy* and picking out a term to ask. Have them state the term and also its page number in the dictionary, so the judge can find it quickly. Students can pick terms they know, or ones they would like to know, or ones they think will fool the contestants, etc. Let the three students at the front of the room with you work as a team and confer as much as they want. Let one item go to them first; if they get it right, they earn one point, but if they don't, then you get the chance to answer it correctly and earn a point. Let the next item go to you first, etc. Tell them you will see if you can demonstrate the value of a college education.

Believe it or not, most students will not know most of the terms. Furthermore, they will be astounded that you *do* know the majority of them. It will not be hard to demonstrate the value of a college education; but then you need to hit them with the fact that the items in the index are those that experts agree should be part of a good *high school* education! Explain that you do not blame the students for not knowing that which no one ever taught them; but that that is not a good excuse for failing to get a good education in college.

Pick one or two dozen terms from the *New Dictionary of Cultural Literacy* each week, and have students look them up and learn them. (See our sample lists.) Students should know not only what the terms mean, but also *why* they mean what they mean. Quiz students on these every week or two. Also, ask students to see how many of the terms they can find in the newspaper or hear on radio or television. Students are surprised and delighted when these leap out at them. Another common reaction is, "I always wondered what that meant."

Students rarely complain about this assignment, and most of them actually enjoy it. Contrary to popular opinion, students do not *want* to be ignorant.

## 11. Sample List of Cultural Literacy Terms (12 Weekly Lists) for a Semester

academic freedom / according to Hoyle / Achilles heel / acronym / read the riot act / ad hominem / Spiro Agnew / an albatross around one's neck / Horatio Alger/Horatio Alger story / allusion/allude / amicus curiae / And thereby hangs a tale / Maya Angelou / annus mirabilis / anti-Semitism / apocryphal / as the crow flies / Ask not... / Day of Atonement / Auschwitz / Bakke decision / Balkanization / bar/bat mitzvah / Bastille /

Bay of Pigs / beg the question / Berlin Airlift / beyond the pale / bite the bullet / Black Hole of Calcutta / Blarney Stone/blarney / blue laws / born-again Christian/born again / bourgeois / bowdlerize / brinkmanship / Battle of Britain / bury the hatchet / busman's holiday / buy a pig in a poke / Let them eat cake / Dale Carnegie / carpe diem / carry coals to Newcastle / cause celebre / Chanukah / Chesire cat / chutzpah /

circumlocution / feet of clay / closed shop / cogito ergo sum / sail under false colors / concentration camp / conflict of interest / constant dollars / counterculture / coup d'etat / coup de grace / creationism / critical mass / crocodile tears / cross the Rubicon / Cuban missile crisis / damn with faint praise / dark horse / a date which will live in infamy / de facto / de jure / determinism / give the devil his due / Discretion is the better part of valor /

Do not go gentle... / double jeopardy / double-entendre / draconian / eat crow / e.g. / Elysian Fields / the emperor's new clothes / ergo / esprit de corps / euphemism / ex post facto / Fabian tactics / fait accompli / Faustian bargain / The only thing we have to fear... / Good fences make good neighbors / fetish / fifth column / Final Solution / A foolish consistency... / free will / Freudian slip / future shock /

Society of Friends / fundamentalism / zero sum game / genre / Beware the Greeks bearing gifts / global village / golden mean / Holy Grail / Great Depression / Great Society / gross national product (GNP) / guru / halcyon days / handwriting on the wall / hara-kiri / hawks and doves / hearsay / heresy/heretic / hoi polloi / toot/blow one's own horn / Trojan Horse / humanist / hyperbole / idioms / i.e. / Ignorance is bliss /

In loco parentis / in vino veritas / Industrial revolution / inertia / Inquisition / insider trading / too many irons in the fire / Islam / jargon / jihad / John Birch Society / Johnny Appleseed / Jolly Roger / keeping up with the Joneses / Juggernaut/juggernaut / Kent State / kibbutz / knee-jerk reflex/knee-jerk response / Know-Nothings / left-handed compliment / left-wing / like lemmings to the sea / life of Riley / lip service / A little learning is a dangerous thing / at loggerheads /

lowest common denominator / Machiavelli/Machiavellian / perpetual motion machine / Maginot line / magnum opus / make a virtue of necessity / malapropism / mammon/can't serve God and mammon / manifest destiny / A man's reach should exceed his grasp / manslaughter / Marie Antoinette / McCarthyism / mea culpa / method in one's madness / Methuselah / microcosm / promises to keep/miles to go before I sleep / military-industrial complex / run of the mill / modus operandi (m.o.) / Moral Majority / moratorium / Murphy's Law / My Lai massacre / natural selection /

nature/nurture controversy / N.B. / Necessity is the mother of invention / Nemesis/nemesis / nepotism / Never in the field of human conflict... / non sequitur / nonaligned nations / nouveau riche / nuance / nuclear

family / Ockham's razor / Odyssey/odyssey / Oedipus complex / old boy network / olive branch / ombudsman / open shop / order of magnitude / ostracism/ostracize / oxymoron / Pandora's box / paraphrase / pariah / parody / pass the buck /

pecking order / per capita / per diem / persona non grata / Peter Principle / Philistines / planned obsolescence / play to the gallery / pocket veto / pogrom / pork barrel legislation / post mortem / pound of flesh / pro tempore (pro tem) / Prodigal Son / prognosis / proxy / Pygmalion / Pyrrhic victory / quantum leap / raison d'être / Renaissance Man / rhetorical question / rites of passage / The road to hell is paved with good intentions /

robber barons / fiddle while Rome burns / Roosevelt's Court packing plan / cross the Rubicon / sacred cow / salad days / sanctum sanctorum / Yes, Virginia, there is a Santa Claus / savoir-faire / The Scarlet Letter / schism / Scopes trial / Scylla and Charybdis / semantics / shalom / Shangri-La / shibboleth / shot heard round the world / chip on one's shoulder / Shylock / Sic transit Gloria mundi / silent majority / sine qua non / Sisyphus / Six Day War /

let sleeping dogs lie / Something is rotten... / Sparta/Spartan / Sputniks / star-crossed lovers / straw man / suffer fools gladly / sui generis / talk turkey / Tantalus / tarred with the same brush / Trail of Tears / tenure / thalidomide / Thames River / There is no joy in Mudville / Third World / Those who cannot remember the past... / three sheets to the wind / footprints on the sands of time / to the manner born / carry a torch for / tour de force / trial balloon /

trust busting / the Ugly American / Uncle Tom's Cabin/Uncle Tom / Urals / vested interest / Victorian / WASP / Watts riots / wear one's heart on one's sleeve / Mae West / Win this one for the Gipper / straw in the wind / Brevity is the soul of wit / Frank Lloyd Wright / yarmulke / Young Turk / Zeitgeist /

## 12. Flip a Coin (Pregnancy Prevention Exercise)

By now you have probably heard many times how important it is take precautions against contracting STDs and facing unwanted pregnancies when you are sexually active. Again and again, you are told to use condoms. We urge you to do this, too, *but* you must not let this give you a false sense of security. Answer the following questions—use your textbook for the basic information—and you will see why.

1. What is the *actual use failure rate of condoms*, and exactly what does that mean?
2. Given that rate, if Joe and Susie are sexually active while at college, and they spend the average five years here, and they use condoms for birth control, what are the odds that Joe and Susie will be facing a pregnancy before they graduate from college? Show exactly how you calculated this.

Watch out: The answer is really going to shock you, but the numbers do not lie! Now consider what *you* are going to do in light of them.

*Note to workshop participants:* According to the sex textbook we use, *Sexuality Today*, by Gary Kelly, in actual practice, the typical failure rate of male condoms is about 14%. (This is different from the theoretical, or perfect use failure rate, which is 3% but not indicative of the actual experience of couples in real life.) In other words, for every 100 couples using male condoms as their form of birth control, in one year on average 14% of those couples will face a pregnancy.

Now, to apply this to the example of Joe and Susie (above), the odds of their getting through their first year of college without a pregnancy are 0.86, or 86%. But the odds of their getting through their first *two* years are 0.86 multiplied again by 0.86, or 74%. For *three* years, it is  $0.86 \times 0.86 \times 0.86 = 64\%$ . For *four* years, it is  $0.86 \times 0.86 \times 0.86 \times 0.86 = 55\%$ . And for *five* years, it is  $0.86 \times 0.86 \times 0.86 \times 0.86 \times 0.86 = 47\%$ .

For all practical purposes, *Joe and Susie can flip a coin!*

Even though they are following the advice they always hear, and using condoms.

If you want to, you can pass out pennies at the beginning of class, and have everybody stand up and flip one after you have gone over the failure rate, the logic, and the calculations. You can have the "losers" remain standing and say to them, "You have a pregnancy!" And to the others you can say, "You're next!"

The visual and mathematical experience will be impactful, but be sure to talk about what students should *do* in light of these numbers.

## 13. The Sex Riddle: Suggestions for Instructors

1. Ask students to write down their estimate of when (at what age) the average person becomes sexually active nowadays. After they have written this down, call out some students' answers (or have them call them out).

Next call out a relatively low number (like 12) and ask everyone who guessed that or lower raise their hands *and keep them raised*.

Go up by 1-year intervals, until it is clear that at least half the hands in the room are up. Typical consensus will be 14-16 years.

2. Next ask students to write down their estimate of the interval after which the average single person will have a new sexual partner. (Every week? Every month? Every year? Etc.) After they have written them down, call out some students' answers (or have them call them out).

Next call out a relatively low estimate (like every 2 years) and ask everyone who guessed that or more to raise their hands *and keep them raised*.

Go up by intervals, until it is clear that at least half the hands in the room are up. Typical consensus will be 2-3 new partners a year.

3. Ask students how many people they would be willing to risk medical exposure to (not the number of direct partners, but the number of persons potentially contributing disease-causing microbes—some direct partners but probably a greater number of indirect “partners” as well). Have them write this number down if you do *not* want to have them called out; if you *do* want them to be called out, ask students to write down the number they think *their best friend* would put. (Obviously, this is to protect the privacy of the students in your class.) Ask them to keep this number in mind when they do the next exercise. (Numbers vary, but are seldom large, most often in the range of 0-12—which is a *great* deal less than the “sex riddle” exercise will yield.

4. Have them do the “sex riddle” exercise (see handout) and turn it in for credit. (The copy in this handout has the correct formulas written in, in case they do not come readily to mind when you first see the questions, but *don't* give these to the students in advance.) It will take significant time and effort to write out the exercise; we think this helps bring home the point. Some students can figure out the formulas, but others cannot. Give the formulas to them in class after the assignment is turned in.

5. Ask for a journal entry on the questions at the end of the exercise, if the students are comfortable writing about those issues. Tell them to think about them but *not* write about them if doing so would be uncomfortable for them.

6. Also use readings—we've had good response to the book *Sexuality Today*, by Gary Kelly—class discussion on the day the sex riddle is due, and maybe a guest lecture from a student health expert.

7. Give students certain types of test questions, and tell them in advance that they will have to answer these. We always ask the failure rate of condoms—most students are surprised at how high it is—and how that failure rate is defined—most students don't know. Ask a question similar to the one on the sex riddle exercise. Also ask one in a different form, such as: “The biggest lecture hall on our campus holds 250 people. If everyone had the same sexual history (and each person had sex with someone no one else in the group had), how many sex partners would it take for you to have had “sex”—i.e. medical exposure to the microbes of—the entire room full of people? (Answer: 8, since  $(2)^8 - 1 = 255$ .)

8. Bear in mind that this model is obviously simplistic. If you take it far enough, you can have people with prolific but believable sex lives having “sex” with more people than there are on the planet! This is because the model doesn't account for participants having multiple *shared* partners. Very few students think about this, but it is a handy example of the need for mathematical literacy (“numeracy”). If you want to, you can discuss what factors would need to be considered in a more comprehensive and sophisticated model. Used with relatively small numbers, though, the simple model makes the intended point in a vivid way.

9. Emphasize the statistical probability of pregnancy that people face *even when they are using recognized birth control devices*. (See “Flip a Coin.”)

## 14. The Sex Riddle: Form to Give Students

**Note:** For conference participants, answers appear in brackets, but give students this exercise *without* the answers.

For the sake of this exercise, assume that everyone has the same sexual history—i.e., starts having sex at the same age and has the same number of new partners each year. (Also assume that none of the people in this exercise have sex with more than one other person listed in the exercise—their other partners are not people listed here.) Give the first male you list a name beginning with A, the next one a name beginning with B, etc.; do the same for the females. Underline each new partner. Put each person's age at the time right *after* his or her name.

Assume—and this is probably a conservative assumption; the average single person your age probably started younger and had more sexual partners than this—that people start having sex on their sixteenth birthdays, and have a new partner every half year; let each new year begin with one new partner on the birthday, followed by another six months later.

You probably already realize that in terms of *medical* exposure—i.e., the number of persons whose disease-causing microbes you might be exposed to—you have to count not just the people you have sex with, but *also* all the people *they* had sex with (i.e., the people who had sex with the people you had sex with, etc.).

Plot the “sex” life of April in the way shown below, noting for each age and partner number, the number and names of known and unknown people she has had “sex” with in terms of medical risk, both at the point of that one partner, and cumulatively including all previous partners.

### EXAMPLE: April's Sex Life through her Seventeenth Birthday

#### Partner #1, Age 16

April 16 has sex with Arnie 16.

Immediate “partners” for April: 1 (Arnie).

Cumulative “partners” for April: 1: 1 known to April (Arnie) and 0 unknown to April.

#### Partner #2, Age 16.5

April 16.5 has sex with Bob 16.5

Bob 16 had sex with Betty 16.

Immediate “partners” for April: 2: 1 known to April (Bob) and 1 unknown to April (Betty).

Cumulative “partners” for April: 3: 2 known to April (Arnie and Bob) and 1 unknown to her (Betty).

### Partner #3, Age 17

April 17 has sex with Chad 17

Chad 16.5 had sex with Carol 16.5

Chad 16 had sex with Debbie 16.

Carol 16 had sex with Dick 16.

Immediate “partners” for April: 4: 1 known to April (Chad) and 3 unknown to April (Carol, Debbie, and Dick).

Cumulative “partners” for April: 7: 3 known to April (Arnie, Bob, and Chad) and 4 unknown to her (Betty, Carol, Debbie, and Dick).

Continue this progression another couple of rounds, writing down all steps, names, and numbers, until you see the exact mathematical pattern. Now answer the following questions:

*[Note to workshop participants: Answers are given in brackets for your benefit, but remove these when giving this exercise to students.]*

By the end of her 21<sup>st</sup> birthday (11<sup>th</sup> partner), how many people has April had “sex” with (i.e. made herself medically vulnerable to) since she became sexually active on her 16<sup>th</sup> birthday? [2047]

If  $n$  is the number of the partner ( $n = 1$  for the 1<sup>st</sup> partner,  $n = 2$  for the 2<sup>nd</sup> partner,  $n = 5$  for the 5<sup>th</sup> partner, etc.):

How do you calculate (what formula would you use for) the number of people you are having “sex” with at the moment you are having sex with that  $n$ th person? [ $2^{(n-1)}$ ]

How many of these people are known to you? [1]

How many are unknown to you? [ $(2^{(n-1)}) - 1$ ]

How do you calculate (what formula would you use for) the cumulative number of people that you have had “sex” with—i.e., have had direct or indirect medical exposure to—since you became sexually active? [ $(2^n) - 1$ ]

How many of these people are known to you? [ $n$ ]

How many are unknown to you? [ $(2^n) - 1 - n$ ]

#### **Consider:**

Is sex worth the risk at this point in your life?

Are you keeping your number of partners to a minimum?

Are you carefully investigating the possible health and sexual histories of your potential partners and making sober, rational, planned decisions about sex?

Are you practicing “safer sex”—i.e. using condoms ( in addition to supplemental forms of birth control ) if you are having sex?

Have you considered the relative safety yet significant satisfaction of “outercourse”—mutual sexual satisfaction *without* actual intercourse or exchange of bodily fluids?

Have you considered the safety and peace of mind of *abstinence*?

## 15. Barrier Issues: An Approach for Dealing with Issues of Cultural Diversity

Cultural diversity issues are still very salient on any college or university campus, but students may arrive somewhat jaded and unenthused about the subject, feeling that they have already heard more than they really want to on cultural diversity, they don't want to be beaten over the head with demands to be “politically correct,” they are tired of radical, seemingly foolish positions and assertions, etc.

One way we have found to get around this problem is to ask the students themselves to identify “barrier issues” that obstruct or prevent their understanding and appreciation of certain groups. Sometimes students will sit through a conventional presentation on cultural diversity and to their surprise find it pleasant and interesting; but they may still have a “yes, but” reaction afterwards, sort of like, “Yeah, I *an* understand *that* but what about *this*?”

We ask our students to write down for various groups, anonymously, whatever “hard questions” they have that they feel they have never received satisfactory answers to. We tell them not to be hateful, but not to feel they have to be polite, either, and that they should go ahead and ask the blunt and difficult questions that they might have.

Once we have the questions, we distill them and take them to our campus experts and ask for the best, most accurate, most persuasive answers. If we have guest lecturers, we send them the students' questions in advance. Since the students themselves have said that these are questions they want answers to, then they are more invested in listening to those answers, and in the process feels more self-driven and less imposed.

In covering issues of cultural diversity, we usually start with *psychological* diversity, using psychological type and the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator. This is typically fun and upbeat. Then we move to handicapped students. Few students feel hatred or prejudice toward them, but they do have a lot of questions about them, and there are definitely some stereotypes to deal with. *Then* we move on to the more controversial issues of gender, race, and sexual orientation. We also cover athletes as a misunderstood group on campus.

A unique approach to racial issues is to deal with *minority* stereotypes of the *majority*. Our colleague, Dr. Chante Cox of the Carnegie Mellon University Psychology Department, has some wonderful materials on Black stereotypes of Whites. (See below.) Most Whites are surprised that there *are* stereotypes about them! They are also astonished at how silly and/or inaccurate they are—which of course is the point: *all* stereotypes are silly!

## 16. The Affirmative Action Riddle

Before we examine the historical reasons for affirmative action and the benefits it may provide for a diverse society, let us consider the exact cost to the majority in a hypothetical case. (This case is strictly fictional, but the numbers are based on those of a *real* program.)

Suppose that Harvard Medical School creates a highly desirable program for prospective medical students: all their college expenses will be paid, at whatever institution they choose to attend, and upon graduation, they will be guaranteed admission to Harvard Medical School.

There are 12 places in the program, and 1200 students apply for them; 100 of those students are minority candidates. Harvard decides that at least two of the places will be filled by qualified minority candidates, even if the top 12 candidates contain no minorities.

In the worst case (no minorities in the initial top 12, but 2 qualified ones not too far behind) how much will Harvard's affirmative action commitment have changed the chances that a *non*-minority applicant will be admitted to this program? (Be exact and show your calculations.)

The answer may surprise you. Sometimes our personal and social perceptions of the effects of affirmative action commitments greatly exaggerate the mathematical reality of the situation. Bring your work and your thoughts and reactions with you to our next class discussion.

[*Note to conference participants:* Without affirmative action, there are 12 slots for 1200 applicants; the chances are 99% that a given applicant will *not* be admitted into the program. With affirmative action, for the majority there are now 10 slots for 1100 applicants; the chances are not 99.1% that a given applicant will *not* be admitted into the program! Is the majority's giving up *one* chance in a *thousand* a reasonable price for the program's achieving a diversity representative of the society as a whole? We might hope so.]

## 17. Stereotypes of White Americans Held by Black Americans © 2000 by Dr. Chante Cox

Below is a list of somewhat negative stereotypes known by most individuals in minority groups (especially African American) but not known by individuals in the stereotyped group—in this case Caucasians. It appears that negative stereotypes that can be viewed as positive in some ways (e.g., all white people are ambitious) are known by all groups; however, those stereotypes that are truly negative and offensive are not as widely known.

**Not Widely Known Stereotypes:** 1. Children talk back to their parents (don't respect them). 2. Parents try to be "friends" with their children. 3. Parents don't discipline their children. 4. Wear shorts the first day the temperature gets above 50. 5. Will go out with no shoes in the cold. 6. Don't wear coats when it is cold. 7. Don't dress children (especially babies) properly for cold weather. 8. Always get head lice. 9. Smell like dogs in the rain. 10. Nasty when it comes to animals (animals eat from the table/sleep in the bed). 11. Marry at an early age. 12. Drink and smoke early. 13. Are mean to the elderly. 14. Don't know how to swear properly. 15. Bathe with their children. 16. Are "back stabbers"—can't be trusted. 17. Are "two faced." 18. Are fake. 19. Women are weak. 20. Engage in unusual sex—especially the women. 21. Eat casseroles. 22. Date several people at once.

**Typical Stereotypes:** 1. Can't dance. 2. Racist. 3. Successful. 4. Wealthy. 5. Stuck up. 6. Not athletic. 7. Prejudiced. 8. Love country music. 9. Love having control. 10. Can't play basketball.

## 18. Adult Advice and Personal Happiness (sample paper assignment)

### Psychological Advice from Non-Psychologists, and Taking Charge of Your Future Happiness

Select five adults *over* twenty-five years old, whom you respect. Interview them in person if you possibly can, and ask them these questions:

1. What were the *best* decisions you made when you were 18-25? What things made you happiest at that age?
2. What were the biggest *mistakes* you made when you were 18-25? What things made you unhappiest at that age?
3. What things make you happiest and unhappiest now that you are an adult? How happy have you been with your adult life? What things, past or present, do you wish you could change?
4. What *advice* would you give someone who is about 18 years old? Would *you* have followed that advice when you were 18?

In writing your paper, identify and describe each person you interview, and then give their answers to each of the questions. After you have done this, try to pull together what you have been told. Do you think you have been given valid psychological insights, or not? Why? Exactly how could you put into effect any good advice you receive? Will you? Why or why not?

Also, consider your own personal happiness. When have you been happiest in the past, and in general, what conditions seemed to facilitate your happiness? Generally, how happy are you at your present stage in life? Again, what are the conditions that seem to make you happiest?

Give yourself your own advice for happiness—you may borrow from what you received above, but add to it, too, with your own thoughts and insights—and plan out specifically the things you can do at each major stage of your life in the future to ensure your own happiness: *Realistically*, what will be the conditions under which you will be happiest; *specifically*,

what can you do to attain these conditions; and psychologically, how will you evaluate your progress toward happiness and keep this goal for yourself in mind? (This may sound obvious or easy, but how many adults do you know who have somehow managed to neglect or damage their own happiness? Exactly how are you going to do better than *they* did?) Be sure to start early on this assignment, and give it careful thought; it will take a substantial amount of preparation and writing. It should, however, be both fun and interesting.

## 19. Suggested Parent Contact Time Line and Tips

### TIME LINE

**First class period.** Get students' written permission in advance. Explain your reasons and methods for parent contact, and let students know they can change their minds if they later feel uncomfortable. Virtually none will refuse.

**Ca. one month into the semester:** Write individual emails or letters to parents introducing yourself as the first-year seminar instructor, and describing the course and giving preliminary impressions of the student. Say you will be calling in a week or two.

**Ca. five to six weeks into the semester:** Call parents, setting aside 20-30 minutes per call, and discuss the student and respond to questions. Invite calls or letters if parents have any concerns during the semester (or later).

**Ca. three to four weeks before the end of the semester:** Send a "form" email or letter about the course, resources/options for students who do not do well, etc. Promise a personal letter to come at the end of the semester. Jot a short individual note at the end of the "form" letter.

**End of semester:** Write parents individual letters discussing grades, overall impressions, suggestions if any, etc.; invite future contact if you can *ever* be of help. (A few will take you up on this.) Enclose letters in Holiday cards. (Also send the students Holiday cards with personal notes.)

### TIPS

If you can't do all the above, do part; *even one good letter* does wonders!

Give information about yourself—background, interests, family, etc. Most parents like this a lot, perhaps because it individualizes and humanizes their son or daughter's teacher.

Let parents know in advance you will be calling them; otherwise, if they pick up the phone and hear "This is \_\_\_\_\_ from \_\_\_\_\_ University/College," they fear you are calling with bad news (death, accident, illness, problem, etc.).

Make it clear that individual letters are in fact individual. Share your knowledge of the individual students and make it clear you will be personally looking out for each young man or woman.

Encourage parents to monitor student progress, and always tout University resources that can help students; this is not only reassuring, but parents are often effective referral sources.

Give plenty of detail about what is in the course and why; most parents are quite interested in this. Send them a short, interesting reading or handout from your course if this is possible and appropriate.

Accentuate the positive when discussing students, but if there are problems, discuss them—parents can handle it, especially if you suggest solutions. (Rather than being surprised or offended, parents are often relieved that someone else has noticed and is trying to help.) Respect student's privacy, however; steer clear of their love lives and personal issues.

Anticipate a rewarding experience with all of this—most faculty find it *extremely* reinforcing, and parent contact is a *gold mine* of appreciation and long-term institutional support.

## 20. Sample Letter to Parents (one letter at end of semester)

Dear \_\_\_\_\_ [parent(s)]:

Please allow me to introduce myself. I am Dr. Tom Carskadon (or "Dr.C." as the students call me), \_\_\_\_\_'s professor this semester in our special First-Year Year Experience (FYE) section of General Psychology. The idea behind this FYE section was to have small, first-year sections of some of the more popular core curriculum courses that would fulfill requirements in almost any major. These small sections would be taught by award-winning faculty who would get to know each individual student well and try to give each of them guidance and advice when needed. Many first-year courses are taught by relatively inexperienced graduate students instead of regular faculty; others are taught by faculty, but the class sizes may be very large. For instance, my other section of General Psychology had 320 students in it, and I was not able to get to know them individually at all. In my FYE section of General Psychology, however, I had the pleasure of getting to know \_\_\_\_\_ individually, and I am very glad that she was part of my class.

I am happy to say that my FYE students and I had a very enjoyable course together. Before long, the whole class began to feel like a big family—in fact, I even invited the class over to my house for dinner. Our class had a wonderful mix of students: bright, interesting people from all over the University. The students worked hard and did well—significantly better, in fact, than the students in my large class fared. The FYE students wrote journals every week; that was good practice for them, and it also let me know how they were doing during their first semester of college. Urge \_\_\_\_\_ to keep the journal she wrote for this class. Twenty or thirty years from now, she will treasure having a record of what she was thinking and doing during her first semester of college. As a treat for *you*, I am enclosing a copy of a very short reading that I gave only to my FYE class. I consider it to be the neatest, most insightful three pages in Psychology. If Christmas seems nice, but not quite the way it used to be when you were young, this article will reassure you that the magic is still there; and if you have ever wondered how you can have a son or daughter in college and still not feel completely grown up and wise yourself—well, this

article will explain it. Oh, and I am enclosing one more thing: a picture of \_\_\_\_\_ on her very first day of college! I thought you or she might enjoy having it.

The class as a whole did very well, but I'm sure you would like to hear specifically about \_\_\_\_\_. \_\_\_\_\_ got a high "A" in the course. In fact, her test average was 100! She was a reliable and hard working student. Beyond that, she is an exceptional young lady. She is bright, warm, caring, respectful, and energetic. I hope she aims high in life, because she can achieve just about any goal she might choose. I wish I could meet you, for if I could, I would congratulate you on a fine job of parenting. People like \_\_\_\_\_ do not happen by accident, and the parental investment you have made has paid off beautifully. \_\_\_\_\_ has been a total pleasure to know and teach.

My course with \_\_\_\_\_ is now over, but my interest in her certainly will continue. If at any time in the future, \_\_\_\_\_ has a problem and isn't sure where to turn, she should find me. I cannot always solve the problem, but I almost always know who can. For future reference, I will mention the three campus resources our students use the most. The Career Services Center helps students determine the best major for them, and it provides extensive materials on job availability, degree requirements, starting salaries, etc. The average student here (and elsewhere) changes majors one to three times during college; this is normal and healthy as students start exploring all the options a comprehensive university has available for them. There is even a whole course on major and career search that can be taken for academic credit. The Counseling Center offers personal counseling for things like difficult decisions, dating dilemmas, anxiety, depression, alcohol or drug problems, etc. Believe it or not, most of their clients are *normal* students struggling with various difficulties. An unbiased outside viewpoint from a trained counselor can be quite helpful. Finally, our Learning Center offers free tutoring in math and English, help with study skills and time management, and even whole courses in these topics. When students' grades do not match their talents, I often recommend the Learning Center. In my experience, by the way, the most common reason for students' doing poorly is failing to treat college as a full-time job. I want the students to work as hard at college as *you* work to send them here. When students do not do as well as they should, I always ask: "Are you really, truly putting 40-50 hours a week on your studies? Are you in the right major for you? Are any personal problems getting in the way? Are you using campus resources to get help?" I also ask "Are you having fun?" College should be demanding, but also enjoyable; if it is not, then something is wrong.

In closing, I want to thank you for entrusting \_\_\_\_\_ to us, and add my personal welcome to the Mississippi State University family. As you probably know, MSU has the biggest and most talented student body in the state, and as a modern comprehensive university, we are one of the top 100 research institutions in the nation; but even though we have over 10,000 undergraduates here, let me assure you that *your* student is important to us! If you *ever* have a problem, question, or concern, please call or e-mail me. I promise that we care. University teaching is actually a high stress occupation—sometimes the students keep you young, and sometimes they age you fast—but I would not trade my job for any other. I have taught 30,000 students at Mississippi State, and I am here because I love teaching and I love students. Again I extend to you my thanks for the privilege of serving your family and for the pleasure of knowing \_\_\_\_\_. I wish all of you a warm and satisfying holiday season.

Sincerely,  
Tom Carskadon  
Professor of Psychology and  
John Grisham Master Teacher

*Note to FYE conference participants: The letter above was about a "model" student. Below is the individual part of another letter about a student who had some difficulties. As you can see, you can talk about problems in an upbeat way.*

The class as a whole did very well, but I bet you would like to hear specifically about your daughter. \_\_\_\_\_ is delightful, and I am so glad that she is a Psychology major—the only one in the class. She got a low "B" in the course due to low test grades. She never missed a day of class, though, and the journals she wrote were very good. \_\_\_\_\_ is going to have to work quite hard as a Psychology major, but she can do it. I strongly recommend that next semester she take the course LSK 1023, College Reading and Study Skills; it will help her in a wide range of academic skills she wasn't fully taught in high school, and it will help her handle more difficult courses to come. \_\_\_\_\_ is such a good person! She came hours early to help me the night I had the class over for dinner, and she seems to have a warm smile and a kind word for everyone she encounters. I know how proud you must be of her—and with good reason. People like \_\_\_\_\_ do not happen by accident, and I'm sure the wonderful person we see now is to a significant degree a result of the parenting that you have so wisely invested in her. My congratulations to both of you!

## 21. Sample Parent Responses

"I want to express my sincere appreciation for the manner in which you conducted the general psychology class during the fall semester. The individual attention that you provided to my son, \_\_\_\_\_, and the genuine concern for his academic and personal success certainly helped him during his first full semester at MSU.

"\_\_\_\_\_ conveyed several unusual sounding stories about this Dr. C. throughout the semester, including a class trip to his home for a get together. Although I did not read all of \_\_\_\_\_'s journal entries, I did have the chance to review a few of them during the semester. In many instances I was as interested in your comments as \_\_\_\_\_'s. Several times you provided him with solid encouragement and helpful advice. One can never tell how significant a single comment or word of encouragement may be to a student in transition from high school to college and from adolescence to adulthood. However, it



takes time and effort to learn to know the students and become part of their life. The letter that you shared with us regarding \_\_\_\_\_ and your experiences with him is something that we will always keep. Several of your comments indicate how well you came to know \_\_\_\_\_ and how perceptive you were regarding his personality and needs.

"I can't imagine a better classroom experience to help with the transition to university life. Thanks again for taking care of our 180 pound 'baby.'"

"As parents of \_\_\_\_\_, one of your first semester Freshman psychology majors, we want to say thank you for getting \_\_\_\_\_ off to a productive and worthwhile beginning in his chosen field. The Christmas greeting, summary of the course, and your personal comments about \_\_\_\_\_ were appreciated more than you know! Between the two of us, we have completed four college degrees and have never had a professor take such a personal interest as you have demonstrated. From your course outline and \_\_\_\_\_'s comments, you worked them pretty hard; but it seemed to make \_\_\_\_\_ all the more committed to his chosen field of study—one that he chose in the eighth grade. It is comforting for us here in \_\_\_\_\_, ten hours away from Starkville, that our son is so happy with his chosen University and is in such competent and caring hands. Thanks again for your concern and we look forward to \_\_\_\_\_ having other courses under your leadership."

"All semester I had planned to write a thank you for all that you were doing for \_\_\_\_\_, but I just let time slip by. She fell in love with you over the summer when you helped her work out her schedule. You proved to be just as nice as she thought.

"I was not expecting her to have to work so hard in general psychology—thank you! Your class was the hardest, but the most rewarding class she took. She has to write more and think more than she did even in English. (She told me that you were an English major; it shows.) [*Actually, I was a Psychology major; I just seem like an ex-English major to the students whose grammar I correct! –T.C.*] Often she would call home, excited about what she did that day. As a result of one assignment, she asked for a subscription to *U.S. News and World Report*, which she now avidly reads. Thank you for encouraging her to go beyond the psychology class. When she told me about the cultural literacy lists, I asked her to make a copy so that I could use them in my Honors classes. I also appreciated your making her dig out information on her own. The best of all was the journal. She brought her journals home and asked me to store them so that she could look back over them in later years. You certainly made her freshman year at MSU rewarding and fun. I know that you spend many more hours in grading because of the kind of assignments you give.

"Thank you for being a teacher who cares, one who sees human beings rather than social security numbers. I hope that \_\_\_\_\_ will stay in touch with you throughout her years at MSU, for you have been a positive influence in her life. She felt your personal touch, and so did we."

**Note to conference participants:** These responses are typical, but I cannot take credit for them personally. *Anyone* reasonably good could get similar results. *The "magic" is in the \*method\*, not the course content and not the personality of the instructor.* Anyone can do this, in any course. Try it!

## 22. 250 Random Acts of Kindness Toward Students

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Many items on this list are things we do or have tried; many other have been gleaned from "student friendly" colleagues; and still others were suggested by students themselves. No one could or should use *all* of these. Just consider this a menu of suggestions; perhaps somewhere in here you will find two or three or five or ten that appeal to *your* style of interaction with students. You may have colleagues who object that things like this amount to childish mollycoddling of students and contribute nothing to their education; our experience, however, is that the more kindness with which we treat our students, the more willing and eager they are to work unusually hard and accept the high standards we set for them. Most of these suggestions are easy, fun, and rewarding for *us* as well as for the students. Try a few! (And if you know some other good ones, we'd be delighted to have you share them with us so we may add them to this list.)

**Making Class Fun.** Come to class early and chat with students. /// Have students bring in tapes or CDs with their favorite songs on them; put them all onto one, and make a directory of who contributed what; or have one student each day bring in a favorite song on a tape or CD, and play it during the five minutes before class. /// To get students to class on time, instead of lowering their grade or locking the door if they're late, make them sing a song of the class's choosing; and if *you* are late, *you* have to sing, too. /// If the class agrees to it, charge a modest fee if students come in late (or a big one if *you* do), hold a lottery at the end of the course, and give the winner the accumulated cash. /// Begin each class by asking (show of hands) how many students are having an "A" life lately (things going great), "B" life (good), "C" life (problems), or lower than "C" (trouble, big time!). For the last two categories, ask if there is anything you can do. /// Begin class by asking the students if there is anything on their minds; allow the first five minutes of class to be used for whatever they bring up. /// Have a "norming session" near the beginning of the course: Discuss what is and is not appropriate behavior, let them know what ticks you off, and find out what *they* dislike, too. Type up and distribute a list of norms everyone agrees to. Then require a fee for norm violations (like interrupting another student, using foul language, etc.); use the money for class treats or a class party. (Have an alternative penalty for students short on cash.) /// Learn students' names immediately, and always greet/call on students by their names (or nicknames). Be sure to call them what they *want* to be called. /// Have some kind of

contest/incentive for students to learn each other's names. /// Early in the course, start using nicknames for each student, to be used in your class only. (If the class comes up with better ones, use them.) /// Bring a treat (cookies, candy, etc.) to class maybe once a week or on special days. /// Each Friday class, have two different students be responsible for bringing the class a treat. (Make a big fuss if they bring something homemade; you can even have a contest for the best treat of the semester.) /// Have class members have secret pals.

Have a "cap day" when everyone wears their favorite cap, and gives the reason or tells the story behind it. /// Have a "T-shirt day" when everyone wears their favorite T-shirt, and gives the reason or tells the story behind it. /// Give students a bit of extra credit for showing up in horrible weather, or for being there on the last day before a holiday (like the Wednesday before Thanksgiving). /// At the end of the course, give each student with perfect attendance a bookmark or some small souvenir. /// On discussion days, if the class is very small, repair to the bakery/fountain/whatever, buy them a treat, and have the discussion there. /// Have class outside on that perfect spring day. /// Take the whole class to the cafeteria and treat them to ice cream on a hot summer day. /// Have a class costume contest on Halloween. /// Give out Halloween candy on Halloween. /// Buy a box of valentines and give them to the students. /// Bring heart candy on Valentine's Day. /// Have cupcakes on Valentine's Day, some with red icing, and some with black; let students who love Valentine's Day have the red ones, and those who hate it have the black ones. (Students who hate it may need to have their feelings recognized/ventilated/validated.) /// On the last class before Christmas, have everyone bring an inexpensive gift, put them all in a "Santa sack," and have each person reach in without looking and take one. /// Celebrate holidays in class that students don't usually know about. /// Give a modest bonus when there's a big college/university victory. /// Take students somewhere interesting as an optional "field trip." /// Put down the lecture notes and have a spontaneous discussion about something interesting on campus or in the news. /// Tell the class as a whole how much you like them, how happy you are to be with them, and how much you enjoy teaching them. (Tell them often!) /// If you have good seats at an athletic or cultural event but won't be able to use them, bring them to class and give them to some students (by a drawing, or high grade on the last test, or whatever); an unexpected afternoon of baseball on a sunny spring day or a cool concert on an otherwise dreary evening can boost a student's morale! /// Have a bubble gum contest and see who can blow the biggest bubble (as judged by the class).

Have each student tell every other student something he or she likes about that student. /// Have a "warm fuzzy day": Ask your students to write one nice word about each other student; then put all the words for each student on the student's chair before class. /// Take pictures of your students—especially first-year—on the first day of class and then on the last day of class, return them in cards that say "Have you changed since this day?" /// Take pictures of your students—especially first-year—on the first day of class, and send them (with permission) to the students' parents, with a nice little note. /// Develop a class motto. /// Find out the interests of your students and draw on them if there is any way they could help you with the class (if they'd like to). /// On bad weather days, include some small bit of trivia in class, and include it as an extra credit question on the next test as a reward for those who braved the elements and came to class anyway. /// If appropriate, include some personal anecdotes as illustrations in your lectures; then give students a small extra credit bonus on their tests if they remember them. (This keeps students' ears pricked up in class!) /// Send your students half sheet notes called "happy grams" at random times during the semester. /// Have a "fun fact box": Have each student put a fun fact about himself or herself in it, read one at the beginning of class, and let the class try to figure out who it is. Then have that student tell the story behind the fun fact.

**Making Class Less Painful/More Bearable.** If the class is getting glassy-eyed from heavy going, give them one minute to stand up, stomp around, and get their energy/creativity going again. /// If most of your students are in the same classes, check with them and have some flexibility as to dates for tests and major assignments. /// Extend your office hours and/or offer to be called at home just before a big test. /// Give students your home telephone number and hours during which it is cool to call. (Most of them won't, and will be apologetic if they do; but they really appreciate having the option.) /// Bring extra supplies to class (pens, pencils, paper), especially on test days. /// Bring treats to class on test days. /// Put a cartoon at the end of a hard test. /// Jot a personal note at the end of a test. (Doing this on the test you hand them is very cool; or it can be on the test when you give it back.) /// Mark one test (subtly, in the middle of one of the questions) as a "lottery winner," and give the student who got it some small treat or prize. /// Let students have a "seventh inning stretch" during a long exam. /// After a killer test, meet students at a local relaxation spot and treat them to something. /// Bring a treat when handing back a test, especially if the class did very well or very poorly. /// If you don't let students keep their tests, put post-it notes on them with your comments (hopefully encouraging) so students can keep those. /// Give a free root beer, flower, or whatever to whoever makes the high grade on a test. /// Announce (with permission) names of students who have done very well on tests or improved greatly; make a big deal about it and make them feel special. /// Give a pop quiz; after you take it up, announce it was for extra credit. /// Give an extra credit test just before a holiday. /// Have a designated "gripe day" every now and then when students can gripe for a little while about the class, the test, their other courses, the university, their boss, their true love, their lack of a true love—anything! /// Forgive students unexpectedly once in a while when they screw up; this can be one student or all students.

**Making Office Hours Fun.** Put a "cartoon of the day" on your office door. /// Instead of a pad or card for messages, attach an etch-a-sketch to your door. /// Equip your office with a rocking chair, a funky old chair or couch, a bean-bag chair,

or something else unusual/fun/interesting for students to sit in. /// Have “toys” (cool games, puzzles, etc.) for office hours visitors to play with. /// Decorate your office with posters your students give you. /// Decorate your office with pictures of your students. /// Offer students the books you get sent that you don’t really want. If they take them, jot a personal note inside. /// Keep a small lending library of cool *non*-academic books and let students borrow them. Let them write a “blurb” inside (like those brief promotional quotes from reviewers) for other students who might consider reading that book. /// Give a bonus point to students who visit at least once during office hours. /// If a student comes by the office, take him or her for coffee or an ice cream cone. /// Keep a bowl of candy on your desk and invite students to help themselves to a piece whenever they would like.

**Humanizing Yourself.** Have an optional once a month (or whenever) old video and/or music get together in your home where you show/play things that were popular when you were in school. /// Share (briefly) your personal good—or bad—news with your students; most classes are surprisingly interested in it. /// Let students in on a big decision you are making, maybe even ask their opinion. /// Lend a student a favorite CD, book, or video. /// Let students join you in your hobbies: cook with you or sample your cooking, pet the dogs you raise, see or drive the car you love, etc. /// Invite students to walk/run/work out with you. (It’s easier with company.) /// Play pick-up games with students (hackey-sack, basketball, video games, etc.). /// If you see students in a restaurant or at a movie, invite them to sit with you or send them a free dessert. /// Invite a student or students to a campus event (baseball game, group run to a concert, etc.). /// Visit students’ parties (when invited).

**Humanizing/Appreciating/Respecting Your Students.** Go to your students’ award ceremonies, and stick around to congratulate/chat with them afterwards. /// Cut out newspaper stories about your students, congratulate them in class, and give them an extra copy of the story. /// If you know that a student has a special talent, ask if he or she would like to share it with the class. /// Compliment students on strengths that aren’t necessarily academic. /// Invite students to share interesting trivia about themselves. /// If the class is small enough, have a person of the week or person of the day, pay some special attention to them, give them a little happy, etc. /// Recognize students’ birthdays in class. /// Encourage graduate students to use your first name, which is a subtle way to treating them like colleagues. /// Take graduate students to lunch with the strict rule that you/they can talk about anything *other* than their thesis/dissertation research. /// When your graduate students are feeling self-doubts and stress from job searches, give your class a little change of pace and have them make themselves “affirmation cards” out of colored paper, glue and glitter, markers, stickers, etc. It takes them back in a warm and humorous way to a simpler time, subtly reminds them of how far they’ve come, and brings their strengths back to mind. /// Go to graduation and mingle and congratulate students before and after. /// Go to your students’ weddings (when invited). /// Let students try on your academic regalia, for an impactful preview of their ultimate goal: their own graduation. /// At the end of the semester, tell each student what *you* have learned from the *student*. /// Take a tour of the students’ rooms as a class (“Metropolitan Homes Tour”) and let the students vote on the coolest room. Reward the winner with a batch of homemade cookies provided by you. Alternatively, instead of an actual tour, have students bring in pictures of their rooms, with brief descriptions.

**Mom & Pop/Ozzie and Harriet Stuff.** Invite students over for a home cooked meal and some “family” time. /// Treat a student or students to a meal at that new restaurant in town. /// If a student’s parents can’t attend some function where parents are usually found, offer to go with the student. /// Before you hire outsiders (to wash your car, clean your house, etc.), ask if any students would like the work. (Sometimes they could use the money; sometimes they just like the contact.) /// When you need a babysitter, ask your students if any of them would like to do it, and pay them decently. (Many like a little family time and/or a little money.) /// Decorate the doors of your students who are in residence halls, especially early in their first semester. /// If students are in one residence hall section, make them breakfast in bed one day during the semester. (Reading day during exams is a good time.) /// At the beginning of the school year, “adopt” a couple of students drawn totally at random (pulled from the crowd at Orientation, for instance). Find out their residence halls, and drop by while they are moving in. Call them a couple of times during the semester and see how they are doing. /// Go to your students’ athletic events, plays, concerts, etc. /// Send a card (postal or electronic) to a student who is sick. /// Send a student a birthday card (postal or electronic). /// Send a Christmas/holiday card. /// Send a card to a student who doesn’t get much mail. /// If students are nervous, go with them to get a flu shot. If they’re scared to see a doctor but need to, offer to go along. /// If you think your students aren’t eating right, copy recipes for simple, easily prepared but nutritious meals. /// Offer a student an evening of using your washer and dryer. /// If students are grieving over a romantic break-up, give them a gift-wrapped copy of *How to Survive the Loss of a Love*. /// Send a card or letter to a student who is in crisis; express sympathy, invite an office visit, mention a good counselor. /// If students seem down, ask what’s wrong and if there’s anything you can do. /// Help out a student who is in desperate trouble, or take that student to someone who can. /// Send a note to students’ parents saying what a pleasure it is to know that student. /// If students are from out of state, send home a local souvenir for their folks. /// If you miss class for a trip, bring the students back some small souvenir. /// Leave a cheerful message on email or voice mail for a special occasion or for no particular reason. /// Make a homemade card for a student who seems to need a boost in spirits, has done something great, or just seems to be floating along. /// Call your students for a quick hello—no particular reason. /// For minority or international students who might be homesick, treat them to some ethnic cooking, and call them now and then to cheer them up.

**But Wait! There's More!** Tell students (especially new freshmen and transfers) where the best restaurants, car repair shops, doctors, vets, etc. are. /// If snow is rare, lead an expedition out to play in it (after class). /// If snow is rare, tell students where and when to meet you to try out a real sled (instead of a cafeteria tray, side of a cardboard box, etc.) /// Bring dog bones in for students who have dogs. (We know: Some of these suggestions sound a little weird; but one of our colleagues swears by this one.) /// Take class members on an expedition to the local animal shelter (pound) and save an animal. Make a big deal of it, give the class updates, etc. Keep the animal yourself (you have to be an animal lover for this), but the rule is you will only do it for that one semester. At end of the semester, someone from the class almost always adopts the animal. /// Send out good jokes to your students on email. /// Stay in email contact with students who have graduated, and keep them up-to-date on things back "home." /// Shake hands with each student as they leave class. /// If your students get in trouble, direct them to a good attorney, go to court with them, even bail them out of jail. /// Bring a roulette wheel to class. Pick a low odds event, spin the wheel each day, and if it comes up, give a small bonus, do something fun instead of lecture, etc. /// Have a cookie-baking contest, let everyone in class be judges, and eat all the entries! /// Around Halloween, have a pumpkin-carving contest. Put them all on a table outside the building one evening, light them up, and serve your students goodies. /// Email cool/interesting/thought-provoking quotes to your students. /// Post neat quotes on your office door and change them daily ("quote of the day"). /// Have a class dance. /// Once a week, give away a good paperback book to someone in the class drawn at random, and encourage the students to pass the books around. /// If you think there are particular students who would especially enjoy a paperback book, invite them to your office and give it to them. /// Post pictures of your kids, dogs, and family on your office door; students love to look at them. /// Get students to contribute photos and email them to the rest of the class, or else make a bulletin board outside your office or outside the classroom. /// When it is time to preregister for next semester's courses, bring or have students bring the course schedule and recommend specific courses and teachers in other departments as well as your own, that you know to be good. Offer to have students come by our office and have you check their tentative schedule; you may catch some obvious mistakes, and if you see students enrolling for a course or teacher you know to be terrible, develop a coughing fit until they take the hint. /// Plan (or even pull) a class prank. (Make sure it is harmless!)

Email daily cultural literacy or interesting vocabulary terms to your students. /// Take your class bowling or skating (as many as would like to participate). /// Make a class video, and make each student a copy. (Someday they'll treasure it! Their parents would probably enjoy seeing it, too.) /// Go as a group to a cultural or athletic event, especially if one of the students in your class is in it. /// Invite your students who are here for the weekend to prowl garage sales with you. You could even organize a class garage sale of your own at your place if you wanted to. /// Invite you class to watch a popular TV show together. /// If there is an especially popular TV show, videotape it for any students who had to miss it. /// Give students your old books or unsolicited publisher's freebies. /// Bring in your magazines once you have read them and see if any of your students would like them. /// If you have a cool video game, invite students to play. (You will probably lose, by the way.) /// If you teach a tough, high-attrition course, have a "survivor party" at the end for those who stuck it out and made it. /// Lend your extra copy of the textbook to a poor student, or lend desperate students money to buy the book for your course; you will almost always be repaid. /// Create a "MASH sign" of arrows showing how many miles to each student's home. /// Meet students in organizations you advise in your home, and serve them some treats. /// Post notes from students on your office walls; this lets other students know that it's okay and fun to get to know their profs. /// Have students send you postcards from where they travel, and post them; students like to send them, and other students like to see them. /// At the beginning of a school break, leave short messages on students' home answering machines, wishing them a happy vacation, etc. They will be delighted when they find these waiting for them when they get home. /// Display pictures of everyone in your class in your office; this shows that students are important. /// Display special occasion pictures (marriages, awards, new babies, etc.) of your current and former students. /// Once in a while, offer to pick up any carless students and drive them on a run to Wal-Mart.

Put a message board on your door where students can leave you—and each other—messages and funny comments. /// Wear a costume to class every Halloween, dress as Santa around Christmas, etc. /// Get free samples from department stores, food stores, etc. and give them to students in your class or in a residence hall section. /// Take interested class members on a cooperative team-building adventure like rope climbing, etc. /// When you have international students in your class, make a point of learning a few words or phrases in their language. /// Invite anyone who would like to stop by to a "Tuesday Night at the Movies" at your house. /// Give each student a "Get Out of Jail Free" card or an "Emotional Wellness Day" that they can use to miss class on any *one* non-test day without penalty. (They're probably going to miss one, anyway, so why not make them feel special instead of guilty about it?) /// Bring some big balloons and let the students bat them around before class. (Works great in a big auditorium!) /// Students love to be listened to, so invite them to your office individually to get better acquainted and/or talk about anything they would like to for fifteen or twenty minutes. /// Bring a helium balloon to class and tie it to a lucky student's wrist with a ribbon. /// Make it a habit to stay in the classroom until the last student has left, and if possible chat with any who want to. /// Have a day when all students who wear a certain kind of clothing (like green on St. Patrick's Day) get a small bonus, or tell students that each day until it happens you will flip three coins, and when they all come up heads, whoever is wearing that particular color will get a small bonus. /// In the spring, give each student a bulb or seed to plant, and have each student write down a hope it will symbolize.

Have a costume day for the class, like Elvis Day or 50s Day or 70s Day, and give prizes for the best results. /// Have each student bring in a flower, and make a class arrangement; or, you bring the arrangement, and have each student leave with a flower! /// Take up a collection for a student in need. (Make sure donations are anonymous and no one feels pressured.) /// One day have students bring in pictures of “hot women” or “hot men” and display them. It’s fun, and then you can talk about how silly this is and how those of us “whose only hope of being on Bay Watch is as a drowning victim” should not take these ideals too seriously. /// If it’s feasible, one day bring a dog or cat or two to class for the students to pet while class is going on. /// Give each student a poem, or have each student bring one in, and then pass them out at random so each student gets one. /// Give each student a candle, and let it symbolize something special to that student. /// Adopt a sick kid at the local hospital. Send cards, happies, even visit. /// Talk to the student who is always late. Show concern and make sure nothing is wrong, but also let them know that they can’t be late all the time. The student feels noticed and cared about, and the late behavior usually improves without any unpleasantness. /// Talk to the student who is down or always silent. Maybe that student needs help with something, or maybe that student is shy. /// Have a Dr. Seuss reading party, in class or out, where each participating student reads a selection. Or make it a welcome back after a big vacation. Give silly prizes for the best readings. (Try Fox and Socks for laughs!) Serve milk and cookies. Ah, childhood again! /// Students are often frustrated with their dating lives. Put students in groups and have them come up with David Letterman style “Ten Best (or Worst) Pick-Up Lines” or “Ten Biggest Grips About Men (or Women).” It helps to laugh!

**And Still More!** Celebrate birthdays! Have the class sing a jazzy version of Happy Birthday for each student, and let every student whose birthday doesn’t happen during the class pick a “birthday” that does! Buy a birthday package at the arcade, bowling alley, or wherever and hold a joint celebration for everyone. /// Have a closing ceremony for your class, in which each student contributes one gift—maximum value \$3—and tells why he or she chose it. It may be homemade. At the ceremony, each student draws one of the gifts at random. /// Play “Johnny Carson” on the last day of class. Remember how Ed McMahon used to begin each show by saying “And now, heeeeeeeeeere’s JOHNNY!” (Actually, your students will *not* remember!) Anyway, gather in a circle, introduce each student (“Heeere’s Karen!”) one by one, and everybody clap and cheer. Everyone deserves a standing ovation! It really ends the course on a distinctive, high note. /// Have some office hours in residence halls, especially in the evening. /// ~~Spent a night (or two) in residence halls.~~ /// As a group, offer to fix up needy houses in the community, clear storm debris, etc. /// Eat a few meals with students in their dining halls. /// In your office (or you can bring it to class), have a Magic 8 Ball, only the students must ask their questions out loud. /// ~~Have a class dinner at your house—or maybe your president would like to host.~~ /// Invite your president to have lunch with your class—he or she just might surprise you and accept! /// Invite your president, provost, or whomever to come speak to your class, and stress to the class beforehand what an honor it is! /// If you have a big old attic or whatever, offer to let students, especially international students, store some stuff there, like over the summer. /// Have a pancake and prayer breakfast for your class—or just the pancakes. /// Students love sing-alongs! Have one on campus or at your home. /// Give out “Smarties” candies with your test. /// Invite students to your home to work on a class project. /// Get students to show you the cool stuff: cool slang, handshakes, hip styles, etc. /// Bring a popcorn popper to your test, and make the students some popcorn—or let the first student done with the test start popping it for everybody else. (Make sure the students agree that the popping won’t be a distraction.) /// Let students call you by your first name.

Let the students give you a nickname and be the only ones to call you that. /// Take your class on a field trip to a giant bookstore like Barnes and Noble, let everyone look for possibilities, and let the class vote on a class book that everyone will read. Or stay at home, and do it using Amazon.com or a similar online outfit. /// Let international students write your name in their language on your door, and/or let them do it for the other students in your class. /// Put a world map on the wall of your office or classroom, and mark where your students are from. /// Give each student a “survival kit” in one of those zipping plastic bags, containing Smarties candy (“smart pills”), a rubber band (symbolizes flexibility), lifesavers, Hershey chocolate (hugs and kisses), two tea bags (to share a cup with a friend), note cards, pencils, etc. /// Have students write a “one minute paper” asking a question about class material or reacting to it, expressing a personal concern, or whatever. /// Have students *practice* diversity by doing something out of their normal comfort zone (talking to a homeless person, maybe, or attending a racially or ethnically different church) and reporting back to the class. /// Divide the students into work/study groups where they will get to know each other and do better on the material!

If there is a good pay-per-view event, buy it and invite your students over to watch it. /// During finals, serve your students a late-night “breakfast” or other treats in the residence hall. /// Perform a community service project and take students out for pizza afterwards. /// Give the students a big pizza or two, with one topping for each “A” on the last test. /// Hold your FYE class in a residence hall instead of a classroom. /// Wait in line with students and help them through the red tape of registering, etc., and/or have groups of students in your class do it together. /// Never throw anything away without first checking with your students. Your discarded furniture, clothes, etc. just might find a new home! /// If you know a student is sick, recommend a good doctor. (When students are new, they probably don’t know one.) /// When students are very sick, visit them in the hospital, and/or send teams of classmates. /// When you are teaching a course for the first time, give each student a “guinea pig award”—a certificate of achievement for surviving and helping with the first run of your course. /// Have office hours at the dining hall once a week. /// Buy a couple of extra sleds, and bring them to campus for your students when it snows. /// Bring food to class that relates to what you are studying. (For instance, if a botany class is studying roses, bring blackberry pies or cobbles, as blackberries are part of the rose family.) /// At the end of the course, have students

make something on an 8.5 x 11 inch sheet of paper (drawing, collage, poem, whatever) that represents their FYE experience, and share these with the class. /// With students' permission, write a letter to their parents, telling them how well they did, what good kids they are, how much you appreciate their sending their children to your school.

**Even More Added: We're Now Over 250!** Create an electronic message/bulletin board website for your class; have them use it to discuss class topics and just fun, silly stuff. /// Adopt a class TV show: Choose it democratically, encourage everyone to watch it, and take a few moments to talk about it before class begins. /// Lots of students don't watch the news. Record the TV news, and when there is an especially interesting story, play it just before class or at the beginning of class. /// Cut out interesting stories/letters/editorials from newspapers or magazines, and pass them out as "food for thought" for journal entries. /// Put a "riddle of the day" on your door and/or e-mail it to your students. /// Have your students keep an eye out for something and bring it to you, like a Sweet 'n' Low sweetener packet or a paper grocery sack they weren't going to keep. For some reason, students love doing this! /// De-mystify the college or university core curriculum requirements for your students by creating a simple, straightforward, student-friendly form or check sheet they can use. (Most university course catalogs are dreadful!) /// Break up class lectures with video examples from popular TV shows or movies. /// Have students take turns sharing their dream vacation fantasies: They can do this in class or, even more fun, email websites to the rest of the class. /// Have students do as above, but with their dream cars. /// Have a karaoke night with your students. It's a riot! /// Give every student a map (these are usually free) of the campus and/or community, but personalize them by marking cool places. /// Have a cool necktie contest. (Include the women!) /// If any of your students wait tables, take them out to dinner so *they* can be waited on! /// At the last class of the spring semester, give each student a cool stamp—the Post Office has booklets of neat commemoratives, etc.—and invite them to drop you a line during the summer and let you know how things are going. /// Bookstores rip off students by paying them very little for their used books, and then tacking on an exorbitant mark-up for the next students buying them. Help your students out by buying a safe number of books at the end of the course, for more than the bookstore would pay, and then sell them to the students in the next class you teach for the same price, which will be much less than the bookstore would charge. Both the buyers and the sellers win! (Make sure this is legal and will not violate any contractual agreement your college or university may have.)

Since students usually don't read the newspaper, bring in coupons you aren't going to use and let the students have them for shopping. /// If you have a suitable set-up, let students wash their cars at your place. /// Find an interesting "website of the day" and email the address to your students. // ~~encourage them to email each other cool concepts~~ // announce or email health and nutrition tips and warnings. Your student health center will be only too happy to give you some. /// Take an out-of-class field trip to a cool but little known campus attraction. /// Have each student pick a favorite actor/actress/singer, etc. and make a large place card for their desk. Now call on them using that name! /// If you have already read the morning paper and aren't planning to keep it, bring it in and offer it to your students. Same thing for magazines. /// Have an out-of-class book club. Pick a cool book to read each month, then get together to talk about it. /// If you have a large class, have a lottery each class, each Friday, or whatever by drawing seat numbers out of a hat and awarding some small prize. You may even engage students to contribute nifty prizes for the lottery! /// Have an official "paper airplane day." Give each student a sheet of paper, have them each make a paper airplane, and on the count of three, have everybody launch them. You can even have re-launches if you want to. In a big class, it is quite an effect! (Be sure to clean up afterwards.) /// Add some cultural diversity by noting non-Christian, non-American holidays and special occasions/anniversaries, etc. /// If you have one and know how to use it, play your portable instrument in class one day. (What student will forget the teacher who marched into class and played the jazz trombone?) /// Show your students this list, and have them vote for a few to try!

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**One last note:** We couldn't possible do *all* these things, nor could we do a lot of them for *all* our students; but we could do some for all our students, and a few more for some of our students. If every "student friendly" faculty member and administrator adopted even a few students, think how many students we would reach in total, and what a pleasant educational community we would create. Don't *we* remember kindnesses people did for *us* in school? Our students' memories of our kindnesses may literally exceed our own longevity.

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**FINAL NOTE TO CONFERENCE PARTICIPANTS:** *Thank you* for squinting your way through this handout! The small print and tight spacing allowed me to give you twice as much material as I could have otherwise. Feel free to contact me for further details or if you would like to arrange a workshop like this on your campus. —Tom

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