

TEACHING TIPS OF THE MONTH FROM THE MC COMMUNITY

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Theme: Starting the Semester

Tip 1: Name Games

Description: The first days of class are usually spent on introductions—to the content and to your students. What better way to get to know your students than to learn their names! Name Games are an easy way for the class to learn each other's names. One simple way is for students to sit in a circle. Each student presents his/her own name then memorizes the names of fellow students who previously introduced themselves. If the class is too large, do it in smaller groups. For more ideas on learning students' names, check out [these strategies](#) described by other college professors.



For questions about this tip, contact [Alla Webb](mailto:Alla.Webb@montgomerycollege.edu).

Tip 2: Student Surveys

Description: Another useful tool for learning more about your students is a survey. Use or adapt the [Getting to Know You Survey](#) to discover useful information about your students' lives, interests, learning preferences, or experience in the discipline. The data you gather from the



surveys can help you refer students to campus resources, adapt assignments, and plan activities that incorporate students' interests.

Tip 3: Syllabus Search

Description: On the first day of class, several information questions about the syllabus on the screen. For example, "What are my office hours?" and "What is my homework policy?" Give students 5-10 minutes to find the answers. They can just note in the syllabus where the answers are located. Then go over the answers as a class along with any other key points from the syllabus you'd like to highlight.



This strategy forces students to become familiar with your syllabus and key policies. Telling them to just read the syllabus at home is a recipe for not reading the syllabus at all, which could result in much unnecessary misunderstandings and headaches later in the semester.

For questions about this tip, contact [Ray Gonzales](mailto:Ray.gonzales@montgomerycollege.edu).

"Teaching Tips of the Month" began as a project of Program for Active Learning in STEM (PALS) and Teaching to Increase Diversity and Equity in STEM (TIDES) grants. Many thanks to Ray Gonzales and Alla Webb, who served as Principle Investigators of the TIDES grants and Kris Lui, who was lead for the PALS grant. You can view [archived Teaching Tips of the Month](#) on [The Hub](#). We welcome feedback and invite you to submit ideas for this publication to [Angela Lanier](mailto:angela.lanier@montgomerycollege.edu).