

Tips for Teaching First-Year Students at GVSU

GVSU FACULTY SUGGESTIONS FOR HELPING FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS SUCCEED

- Clearly establishing academic expectations
 - Making these explicit using the syllabus and in-class discussions about expectations
 - Reiterating these expectations throughout the semester
- Willingness to discuss study skills and effective methods of studying
 - Talking about how college expectations may differ from their past experiences
 - Having conversations about study skills
- Being approachable
 - Establishing a classroom climate that encourages students to ask questions
 - Demonstrating genuine concern for students' success
- Using instructional techniques that promote deep learning
 - Active learning
 - Collaborative work in class

EXAMPLES: TECHNIQUES YOU CAN USE TO HELP FIRST-YEAR STUDENTS SUCCEED

- Ways to clearly establish academic expectations
 - Provide a rubric or detailed description of how the assignment will be graded
 - As assignment/exam deadlines approach, take time to review your expectations
- Ways to demonstrate a willingness to discuss study skills and effective methods of studying
 - Explicitly describe how reading academic material differs from reading recreational material
 - Provide examples of specific study techniques that have worked for previous students, i.e. flash cards
- Ways to be approachable
 - Make use of the Class Photo Roster feature in Blackboard to learn names
 - Never underestimate the impact a casual conversation with a faculty member can have on a student's commitment to your course
- Ways to use instructional techniques that promote deep learning
 - At various points in class, stop and ask students to summarize the key points so far
 - Provide time for students to work together on a problem before you show the solution

For more information and access to a “living” collection of materials that can be dropped into your Blackboard course visit: <http://www.gvsu.edu/ftlc/strong-start-initiative-199.htm>.