

Annotated Lesson Plan Template for New Faculty at DCTC and IHCC

~ 50 minutes

Before the semester begins

Send your students a “Welcome to (insert your course name here)” email: *This will allow students to have an idea of what to expect on the first day. It will also make students feel more comfortable with you and your class on the first day because they will already have been acclimated to your style of teaching and communicating.*

Take stock of your course materials: *Your students come from diverse backgrounds that differ from one another. To ensure that your students feel represented and included in the curriculum of the course, you may want to take stock of your course materials to ensure diverse perspectives and backgrounds are represented.*

Analyze the language of your syllabus: *Approaching the language of your syllabus from an asset mindset rather than a deficit mindset will allow students to feel empowered to be successful. To do this, focus on the opportunities rather than the problems. For example, instead of saying “Students who are absent will (insert penalty for not attending)” say “Students who attend class are (insert benefit of attending).” This shows students that they are supported and can be successful.*

During the first day of class*

**Planned for a 50-minute class, though the lesson can be tailored as needed*

Before class begins, you might want to write a brief agenda on the whiteboard for students to follow. You also may choose to write the homework assignment on the whiteboard, too, to remind students of what’s next. Additionally, you may choose to greet students as they trickle into the classroom, so they feel seen and welcomed.

Welcome students to class: *This is an opportunity to set the tone for your class – being approachable and welcoming will allow students to know that you are there to help guide them through the course.*

Introduce yourself: *This is an opportunity to establish your credibility (ethos) among your students. You may choose to tell your students your name (including your preferred name, like Professor ____), your academic background, your career background, and your interests outside of work and education. This allows students to get to know you while also building your credibility as their instructor. This would also be a wonderful time to provide a brief synopsis of what students can expect from the course.*

Icebreaker Activity: *There are many great icebreakers out there! One thing I like to have students do is stand up and get out of their seats and find one student to introduce themselves to – I usually provide 3-4 things they should share. Then, after they have introduced themselves to one student, I have them find another student to meet. They do this 3-4 times (one-on-one conversations the whole time) and then we go around the room and everyone introduces themselves to the class. You may choose to model how you want students to respond using your own information before having students partner up.*

Reflection: *Students reflect for 5-10 minutes on the subject being taught. Coming from an English background, I would have students reflect on the qualities of skillful writing by asking, “What does skillful writing entail?” but this can easily extend to other subjects. For instance, for a First-Year Experience course, “What are some questions you have about the college experience” or “what are some traits of a successful student.” From there, students independently generate a list of traits or questions or qualities.*

Group brainstorm: *Then, after students have had 5-10 minutes to independently brainstorm, you may choose to put students into groups to unpack their ideas. In the past, I would put students into groups of 4-5 for 20-30 minutes to create a list (this usually is a good number of people for a group because then shy students can participate without being overwhelmed by having to speak too much).*

Class discussion: *After students have created lists in their groups, you may have the groups voluntarily share out their ideas to the class and write their ideas on the whiteboard. Together, the class creates a comprehensive list. *I usually take a photo of the list so we can revisit it at the end of the semester before students write a final reflection.*

Connect to Student Learning Outcomes of course/ future assignments: *Once the class has created a solid list, you may provide students with a course syllabus, so you are able to begin connecting the list to the Student Learning Outcomes of the course. You may even choose to connect the Student Learning Outcomes to specific assignments within the course.*

Review policies, expectations, and course calendar: *Following this, you may want to emphasize that all students have the potential to be successful in the course regardless of their ability and then tell them how to be successful in the course. It is important to make expectations and policies clear and communicate them to students, so they know specifically what they need to do to do well.*

Show students how to use classroom technologies: *Some students may be new to D2L or Outlook email. It is helpful to students to show them how to navigate D2L because instructors often have different approaches to the design of the course on D2L. Additionally, students may not be in the habit of using their college-issued email accounts through Outlook, so it is vital to first explain the importance of checking this email account with frequency and then ensure that students know how to log into their accounts and have the correct login credentials by giving them a few minutes in class to do so.*

Mini tour of relevant resources: *Once students are familiar with the course policies and expectations, you may want to walk them around campus and provide a tour of resources that might be useful to students. I like to show students where resources are located and then put the resource in the context of my course; for example: “If you ever find that you are unable to pay attention to a lecture in my course due to hunger, please know we have a food pantry available to support students.” **Some resources worth sharing with students include: the food pantry, your office (for office hours), the advising office, mental health resources, career services, tutoring services, TRiO, computer spaces, etc.***

Following this, you may want to walk your students back to the classroom, reiterate the homework assignment, invite them to your office hours (explaining what they are, when they are, and where they are located), and send the students off!

Bonus: *Another thing you might consider doing is taking time out of the first class period so students can sign up to meet one-on-one with you during your second scheduled class session (which would mean that you would have to cancel class to meet with students). This can also help to increase student success and retention because students feel known and supported and are able to develop a relationship with their professor early on. Additionally, when students are comfortable meeting one-on-one with their professors, they are more likely to visit office hours. Easing into the semester helps make the transition for students more possible which in turn increases student success.*

After the first day of class

Email your students after each class session: *After each class, you may want to send your students an email that (1) captures the gist of what happened during the class period and (2) tells students what they need to do to prepare for the next class. To do this, you might go into D2L and create an “Announcement” with the subject line of the class period date. Then, once you publish the announcement, you may choose to copy and paste the announcement to be sent via email to students’ email accounts (this can also be done through D2L by clicking on “Classlist” - from that page, there will be an option to email your classlist).*

Reach out to struggling students: *When a student is struggling, they may not know it (students don’t always check their grades). Sending students personalized emails that demonstrate empathy and understanding can help them to reclaim their goals by reengaging in their courses. If a struggling student does not respond to the email in a timely manner, you may choose to call the student and speak to them over the phone. Students’ contact information is stored in E-Services.*

Soft transfer struggling students to necessary resources: *If you have a student who needs counseling or another service, you may want to walk the student to the office when able and introduce the student to the office where the help is located.*

Talk with your students about their academic and professional goals: *Many students do not know what opportunities exist following graduation, nor do they know what they are interested in studying or doing for a career. Having conversations with students about their goals and interests prompts them to reflect on what they want to study; in turn, these conversations can lead to students selecting majors that best align with their interests and strengths.*