

RAPPORT WITH STUDENTS

- 57) Invite students to eat lunch with you once or twice a week at a prearranged time and place. Encourage teaching assistants to also attend.
- 58) Visit all the recitation sections or labs at least once during the semester.
- 59) Occasionally discuss teaching as an issue.
- 60) Solicit student reactions to, or criticisms of, the course structure.
- One professor develops her own very specific course questionnaire so that she can have detailed feedback about all aspects of her teaching.
- 61) Reserve the last five or ten minutes of each lecture for students' questions.
- 62) Do demonstrations in which classroom volunteers can participate.
- 63) Come to the classroom a few minutes before the lecture and stay a few minutes later so that students can ask you questions.
- One professor goes to his large lecture classroom early "to chat with a few individuals about basketball, their weekend etc. It allows me to make contact with a few individuals and as the other students come into the classroom, they see that I am human and interested in them."
- 64) Require some or all students to come to office hours.
- One professor requires visits of all students getting either A's or D's. She writes a list of students names on the board after the first two assignments and announces, "These are the people who have either done very well, or who haven't done as well as you or I would have liked, so I'd like to meet with you..." She finds that students are generally grateful for the personal attention.
 - Another professor asks via a written note on homework or exams that certain students come in during office hours or at an appointed time. When the students do come in, he learns their name and a bit of personal information about them.
- 65) Urge the students repeatedly, over the course of the semester, to come to your office hours.
- One faculty member writes his office hours on the board every several weeks and makes a pitch to students to come in. He finds it easier to remember to do this if he writes it in his lecture.
 - Include office hours on homeworks and handouts as a reminder of when you are available.

- 66) Watch students in the front of the hall for cues as to how the lecture is going.
- All the professors interviewed noted that experience has taught them to read student faces. "When I can tell that they're not following me, I explain the point again and ask for questions."
- 67) Never give any hint that a student's question is too elementary.
- Two faculty members remarked that in their experience, comments which suggest a student's question is elementary discourage other students from asking questions.
- 68) Leave the first few minutes of class for questions about the previous lecture.
- 69) State your expectations, objectives, and requirements clearly on the syllabus.
- All of the professors interviewed feel it is extremely important to let students know exactly what is expected of them.
- 70) Warn the class in advance that a certain topic will be difficult and they should be certain to ask questions.
- One instructor says he feels students are less reluctant to ask questions when the topic is "officially" designated as "tough." He also makes a point of explaining difficult concepts twice.
- 71) If students look drowsy, open the windows and let them stretch.
- One professor says, "If it's a really awful day, and they're all looking bored and sleepy, and the windows are shut, I will generally open the windows and suggest that everybody stand up. I tell them, 'It seems kind of a waste of time for me to be lecturing when you all look so sleepy, so let's do something about it.'"
- 72) Teach a recitation section.
- From the questions students asked in recitation, one professor says that he has a much better idea of what concepts aren't presented clearly in lecture. Because he teaches recitation, he recognizes more faces and knows more names in the lecture classroom. An additional benefit is that the recitation students are less reluctant to ask questions in the lecture, and this in turn encourages other students to speak up when they have questions.
- 73) Encourage students to call you at home on a second line.
- One faculty member writes her phone number and suggested hours to call (not after 10 p.m.) on the syllabus. She feels it's more efficient for her and her students; they don't have to make a trip to the office, and she doesn't have to set up so many appointments. She also has an answering machine on that line, so that she doesn't have to take the calls when they come in. (And it's tax deductible!)

- 74) **Learn as many student names as you can.**
- **All the professors interviewed make an effort to learn student names. A professor of a year-long course has each student photographed in his/her recitation section. Another says that any time students ask questions in class or come to office hours, he asks the student to identify themselves. Another professor makes a seating chart for the 70 students in class, so that she can call on them by name. Even if you can only remember 25 names, addressing some students by name creates a more personal atmosphere in the lecture hall.**
 - **Have the students make name cards for their desks and use them for the first half of the semester.**
 - **Ask the students to state their name before they answer a question.**
- 75) **Give students the opportunity to get to know one another.**
- **Several faculty members ask students to introduce themselves to the class. Another professor plans a field trip in the first month of class so that the students can develop an "esprit de corps." Others type up lists of student's names, phone numbers, and preferred hours for study groups.**
- 76) **Invite a specialist from the Academic Skills Center to talk with your students about the study skills that are important to success in your class.**
- **Academic Skills Center Personnel can talk with your students about note-taking, test-taking, memory habits, and efficient reading.**
- 77) **At the beginning of the semester set office hours by discussing with the students the times that work best for them.**
- 78) **Hold office hours outside of your office.**
- **One professor explains that "Every week I hold some office hours in the UMC-- on students' territory, a place where they feel comfortable. I tell them that I'll be there and they can come to talk about biology or anything. Many of them do respond to the invitation."**
- 79) **Acknowledge students' contributions.**
- **One professor suggests that "if someone has made a point and you pick up on it or come back to it, refer to the student by name and give them credit for the contribution."**
- 80) **Use humor.**
- **One professor uses humor to create a relaxed atmosphere. "If students feel relaxed and confident, they will perform better."**

- Another faculty member finds that "humor is an underrated vehicle. I find it important to laugh at myself so that students may learn to separate their work in a class from their personal identity."
- 81) Offer more than the required number of office hours.
- One professor admits that " all of the designated office hours are not taken up with students, but it communicates to them that I care about them and am here to help them."
- 82) Use electronic mail to communicate with those students who have a computer.
- A faculty member in Engineering asked students to do problem sets on the computer and he sent back information to all of the students and answered individual questions on the computer.
- 83) Collect homework assignments and in-class quizzes.
- One professor tries to collect 20-25 pieces of work a semester. He noted that "even if I don't meet with a student in person, I can learn about him/her through his/her work."
- 84) If a few students come to office hours with a particular problem, present that problem to the whole class. Students who do come to office hours often pose the problems that many of the students are having.
- 85) To solicit student feedback give out a mid-term course evaluation which will give you a chance to make adjustments for the rest of the semester.
- 86) In addition to the FCQ, give your own end of course evaluation and share the comments with the class.