Starting Off Right: Ideas for Preventing Classroom Incivility Starting on the First Day of Class

Strategy #1: Set the stage for talking about civility
Use institutional and professional resources to provide context
- Institutional Vision and Mission Statements (http://academics.boisestate.edu/chartingthecourse/)
- Codes of Conduct and Statement of Shared Values http://www.boisestate.edu/osrr/sosv/info.html
- Conflict Negotiation and Academic Dishonesty Policies
- Professional Behaviors and Expectations
- Teaching Philosophies
- Department Norms

Strategy #2: Co-create norms
- Involve students in generating expectations for behaviors to which they will adhere throughout the semester
- Consider creating a syllabus addendum with the list of these ideas

Strategy #3: Use Behavioral Outcomes
Examples
- Interactions reflect professionalism and civility as evidenced by academic excellence, caring, citizenship, fairness, respect, responsibility, and trustworthiness
- Demonstrates accountability for one’s own personal and professional conduct which reflect the standards, values and ethical behaviors of the profession [or discipline]
- Models the professional nursing role based on acceptable standards of practice and ethical principles, including being accountable for one’s personal and professional behaviors and development

Strategy #4: Set the tone with your own behaviors
- Greet students at the door
- Use Name Tents
- Start and end class on time
- Take attendance (sign-in sheet, clickers)
- Be creative with faculty and student introductions
- Cover substantial content the first day
- Give a relevant assignment the first day

For Further Reading:
Clark, C.M. (2010). Reflections on Nursing Leadership, 36(1), Sigma Theta Tau International
What Faculty Can Do To Foster Civility
www.reflectionsonnursingleadership.org/Pages/Vol36_2_Clar3k3.aspx
What Students Can Do To Foster Civility
www.reflectionsonnursingleadership.org/Pages/Vol36_2_Clar3k4_Cardoni.aspx
http://www.ucalgary.ca/iejll/morrissette

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