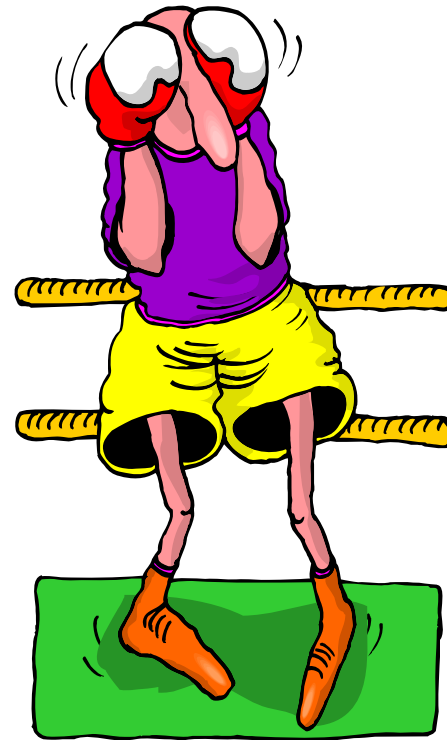


Are your students uncomfortable in your class?

Do you want to have a way to connect with them at the beginning of the semester?

Do you want to improve comfort level for beginning students?



1st Assignment: Connecting with Students



Observations

- ❖ Students rarely feel a “connection” with the professor at the beginning of the semester.
- ❖ Because a student’s comfort level in a class is associated with willingness to ask questions and even success in the course, some way of reaching out to students early on in the course is important.

1st Assignment: Connecting with Students

- ❖ I use the first assignment in my class as a way of knowing something about my students so to be able to correspond with them by e-mail about something personal to them.
- ❖ The first assignment is called a Bio sketch. I ask questions such as what is your major and hobbies/interests/talents, what concerns you most about this class and what are 3 goals you have for this semester and this class.
- ❖ The student’s answers provide some topics for an e-mail correspondence to each student in the class. Students receive a personal e-mail from me during the first two weeks of class.
- ❖ Response to this attempt to connect with students has been very positive. Students have replied to my e-mails and/or talked to me personally stating their appreciation of the personal message.

Conclusions

- ❖ A first assignment which gives the instructor personal topics to use for corresponding to students enhances student comfort level in the class at the beginning of the semester.
- ❖ Students respond positively with a knowledge that the instructor has sent them a personal message.



1st Assignment: Connecting with Students

Dr. Brenda Wilson
Department of Computer Science
& Information Systems
Murray State University
652-P Business Bldg. S.
Murray, KY 42071
270-762-6210
brenda.wilson@murraystate.edu

