



# INNOVATION ABSTRACTS

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## COLLEGE 101: MAKING THE GREATEST FIRST IMPRESSION ON YOUR NEW INSTRUCTOR AND CLASSMATES

It is the first class of the semester. As a student, you are naturally nervous about attending your first class and meeting your new instructor and classmates. This article will summarize some pointers, from my many years of experience in the classroom, to help you as a student make the greatest first impression.

**Be on time.** Go to class early, and sit where you prefer. Front row seats are recommended because you can see the blackboard, the projection screen, and the instructor; and the instructor is able to see you. Take a notebook or three-ring binder with paper, the required textbook, pens (with different color ink), pencils with erasers, underlining markers; and get ready to use them. Prepare for the first chapter and think about questions you may want to ask. Become a self-starting, self-motivating person. Prepare for the first day. Read the course syllabus to become familiar with course requirements.

**Be friendly.** Have a nice smile. Say a warm HELLO to your new instructor and classmates (this will make them feel comfortable and more willing to help you).

**Dress appropriately.** Wear standard college clothing—no cutoffs; short-shorts; skimpy attire; mini-skirts; visible, large tattoos; or excessive amounts of jewelry. When in doubt, choose to be conservative.

**Be ready to show interest and a positive attitude.** Engage the instructor, class subject, lecture, classroom setting, and classmates.

**Be ready to read.** Read the assigned chapters or pages before class. This will give you an introduction, expose you to the material, and allow you to create questions to ask in class. Paying attention in class and listening to the lecture will be your second exposure to the material. You may need to take fewer notes and focus more on listening. If you have a learning disability or want to record the lecture on tape, please seek permission.

**Be ready to do more reading.** You may be assigned specific chapters in the textbook; additional pages in other books, magazines, newspapers, or journals; or specific databanks on named websites. Read them to obtain new knowledge and a better understanding of the material. Check your course syllabus for the names of additional reference sources.

**Be ready to demonstrate that you are prepared for class.** Read the assigned materials, complete all homework, and hand it in on time. Be committed to doing your best. Do not forget that any assignment you hand in to your instructor should include your name, course name, section number, or info about meeting days, time, and class location, instructor's name, assignment title or number, date, and numbered pages either stapled or clipped.

**Be ready to do some writing.** You may be required to write cases, exercises, term papers, essays, or summaries of articles or current literature.

**Be ready to take good class notes.** Include definitions, new terms and concepts, real-life applications, and examples.

**Be ready to make class presentations and/or speeches.** You may need flash cards or notes about the message you want to deliver.

**Be ready to study hard.** Recognize your study preferences—studying alone in quiet places, listening to loud music, or studying with classmates in a study group with scheduled meetings. You do not need a large block of time in which to study; do it between classes or while riding the bus.

**Be ready to develop a schedule to take care of all course requirements.** Complete assignments on time, set goals, and meet deadlines. Do not procrastinate. Study and review regularly. Do not “cram” the night before an exam.

**Be ready to be thoughtful about the drinks you bring to class.** Many students drink water, soft drinks, or coffee in class. Avoid spilling liquids on desks or classroom floor. Put plastic bottles and aluminum cans in appropriate trash containers for recycling. Demonstrate your personal concern for a clean environment.



**Turn your cellular phone OFF.** Nothing disturbs a class more than a cell phone's ring. Do not bring an MP3 player or Walkman to listen to music or a laptop to play "Jeopardy" or solitaire during class.

**Be ready to do some learning.** Plan to act like a student and be an excellent one, always eager to learn new ideas and concepts, and research new topics and sources. Maintain an open and inquiring mind, adopt new terms, and create a new personal vocabulary.

**Be present for every class.** Do not make anything else more important than being in class—not a doctor's appointment, a date, or social activities during the time you should be in class. If you must be absent, send your instructor an e-mail with the date of the absence and the

reason it was necessary. When possible, write a note to the instructor and deliver it *before* the absence. Make up any homework or reading assignment as soon as possible.

**Be a good consumer.** You have paid your tuition for this class, so take advantage of all the help and assistance you need to maximize learning.

**Felipe H. Chia**, *Professor, Management and Marketing, and Coordinator, Business Management Programs*

For further information, contact the author at Harrisburg Area Community College, One HACC Drive, Harrisburg, PA 17110-2999. Email: fhchia@hacc.edu

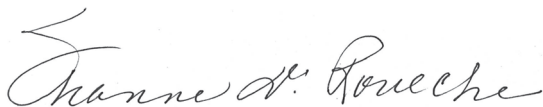
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Suanne D. Roueche  
Editor, NISOD Publications

Suanne D. Roueche, Editor

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