Creating a Positive Classroom Climate

Creating a welcoming physical and psychological/emotional climate is the first step toward promoting active learning in the classroom. Set the tone on the first day…and, as always, make sure your expectations are CLEAR.

**Tips for creating a positive physical climate** (Coyle-Rogers, 2008):
- Consider arranging seating in a circle or semi-circle
- Adjust lighting for classroom activities (full lighting for discussion; dim lights in front of room for video/PowerPoint)
- Maintain classroom temperature between 68-72 degrees Fahrenheit (depending on season)
- Close windows, doors, and blinds to avoid distractions
- Ensure that audio/visual equipment works: Always test ahead of time!

**Tips for creating a positive psychological/emotional environment** (Coyle-Rogers, 2008):
- Learn students’ names! There is power in using someone’s name in conversation.
- Your department may have student photo banks (these also may be available on ami.creighton.edu).
- Review the syllabus on the first day to make expectations clear (see “syllabus construction” on vCTE website).
- Arrive early to class and be willing to stay after (make sure office hours are in syllabus) so that you are accessible to students.
- Be responsive to student emails (establish timeline for replying to emails in syllabus).
- Demonstrate that you are respectful to diverse viewpoints
- Use humor in the classroom carefully
- Use gender-neutral language
- Work with the students to establish ground rules for when others speak.

Let students know what is expected of them. For example, you may expect them to:
- Come to class prepared (be specific about what that means)
- Demonstrate respect of others’ values and viewpoints
- Complete all assigned out-of-class work on time
- Be active learners

**LINKS:** [Solve a Teaching Problem](#) and [Classroom Management](#)

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**REFERENCES:**