

Remembering students' names

- 1. Verify the name.** Whether you get your students to introduce themselves or each other make sure you have the correct given name. "How do you spell that?" "What name do you prefer?" Just make sure you have the correct name.
- 2. Say the name quickly.** Make some statement that includes the name right after the introduction e.g. 'What was the last movie you saw Greg?' immediately after Greg has nominated movies as one of his interests.
- 3. Relate the name.** Relate this person to a person or thing or a word or image that will cue you to remember the name again.
- 4. Ask a question including the name.** See point 1 above but continue to use the person's name during the lesson. You might direct a question to them or you might restate something they have said. Just make sure you use their name.
- 5. Use the name frequently.** See step 4 above
- 6. Mention the name to someone else.** When you are summarising or referring to a student's work use their name. After the lesson try to remember where they were sitting. Mentally go through the list as you complete your class record or enter marks.
- 7. Use name plates or tags.** Make up cardboard 'tents' for the students to write their names on in thick pen and place on the desk in front of them. Ask students to write their name on both sides of the 'tent' so that you and other students can see their name from anywhere in the room. Ask students to bring the name plate each week.
- 8. Use the attendance list.** When you mark the roll make sure you look at the face of each student so that you begin to associate the name and face. Make a note in the margin (in pencil) of some obvious characteristic of each student to help trigger your memory of who they are.
- 9. Use the attendance list to select a few names beforehand** to ask questions of those students during the tutorial. At least you are then calling on students by name and will be able to learn their names more quickly.
- 10. Write down or remember one thing** about each student e.g. their major or where they work and draw on that information when asking questions if appropriate. For example, "Asha, you've worked for an NGO, would you like to comment on your experience in relation to topic Y?"
- 11. Use a seating plan.** Draw a plan of the room and write each student's name in the space where they sit. You'll find that after the second or third week they settle into the same spot each session and from then on you can just glance at your 'map' to see who you're talking to. Variation: Ask the students to sit in the same place each week.
- 12. Ask the students to help you.** Admit to the students that you have trouble with names. Make it a practice to call them by name whenever you talk to them or they respond to a question. Ask them to help you out and don't worry if you get a name wrong. For a while they'll need to prompt you but soon you'll find yourself remembering more and more names and faces in the group.

Adapted from http://www.icvet.tafensw.edu.au/resources/qanda/teaching_tips1.htm and http://www.icvet.tafensw.edu.au/resources/qanda/teaching_tips3.htm by Dr Amani Bell, Faculty of Economics and Business, University of Sydney