

10 Things I Wish I Knew as a New Faculty

1. Find a list of student support services and add it to your syllabus. Alternatively, turn it into a scavenger hunt on campus during the first week. It'll help you, and your students, get to know the campus better.
2. Don't be afraid to ask for personal needs (e.g., bathrooms, food/eateries, printshop, an office, or other services). Take care of yourself and remember to balance work, family, and life.
3. Use your discipline, department, or division meetings to form relationships.
4. Get to know your librarians. They will help you with resources and materials, and even do guest lectures to help your students with research projects. And don't forget to request two desk copies --one for your car and one for home.
5. Get your faculty ID--you qualify for teacher/faculty discounts.
6. If you have student loans: depending on your campus, you may qualify for Public Service Loan Forgiveness. Bring this up to your loan counselor, if it's not a private loan. Don't forget to write off your paid student loan interest and teaching supplies from your taxes.
7. Read your contract and get to know your collective bargaining unit or union representatives to ask questions. Some campuses will increase your base rate pay if you have post-graduation units completed or offer you free tuition. Taking a summer "for fun" course could be free and even increase your earnings next semester.
8. Wear comfortable shoes. Dressing nice and professional is important, but walking around campus and standing a good chunk of the day trumps fashion.
9. Use a roller backpack. Briefcases look nice, but when you're carrying around tons of papers or textbooks on a daily basis, investing in a nice rolling backpack or cart will have your back thanking you later.
10. Find your spot on campus. As part-time faculty, we can often feel rushed from campus to campus. Finding a bench, a tree, or some other place to take a few minutes to yourself during the day can help the campus feel less hectic.