

Instructor talk categories/examples

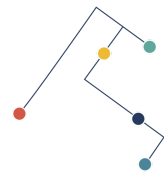
Based on Seidel, Shannon et al. (2015). "Beyond the Biology: A Systematic Investigation of Noncontent Talk in the Biology Classroom." *CBE Life Sciences Education* DOI:10.1187/cbe.15-03-0049

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The takeaway: Studying a biology course, Seidel and colleagues hypothesize that using different kinds of "non-content talk" can increase engagement and buy-in, mitigate stereotype threat, and decrease the perceived distance between students and instructor.

This handout summarizes some of the categories of talk they identified. It also provides examples of that talk that you might build upon.

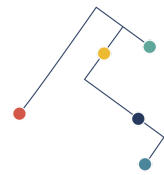
Category	Example
Demonstrating respect for students	"People bring different experience and knowledge to this question: I want to value what you bring in."
Revealing (course related) secrets	"I want you to take notes, but you don't need to copy the slides - those are posted. Write down things you want to remember, things you want to ask, things that seem important."
Boosting self-efficacy	"You came up with some really cool answers. I love the way everybody thinks about this a little differently."
Preframing classroom activities	"Remember that one of our key concepts is <this>. We're going to do <this activity> as a way to practice with <this thing/this element of the thing.>"
Practicing <disciplinary> habits of mind	"That's a big part of learning - by the end of this class, I hope you're starting to think like a <biologist, literary scholar, etc.>"



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Building a community among students	"Some of the most important people in this room for you to be successful are sitting around you - you can learn from each other."
Giving credit to colleagues	"I couldn't have made this course without learning from <another person/group of people> - we all do these things together."
Indicating it's okay to be wrong or disagree	"It doesn't matter if you agree - the norms in this class are that sometimes people who are holding the ground and disagreeing have the best ideas."
Supporting learning through teaching choices	"I know some of you are in your comfort zone and sometimes this class is going to take you out of that zone. I really try to mix up activities because everyone is a different kind of learner with different experiences."
Using student work to drive choices	"It's due Sunday night no later than 6pm so I can read it before I finish planning, because I want to be sure to be responsive to your thinking."
Connecting <discipline> to 'real world' and career	"When you go on to a job or to graduate school, you'll be better at <e.g., figuring out how to learn new expectations/dissecting scientific knowledge/other things in your course> after working on <this activity>."
Discussing how people learn	"We've got lots of data that [lecture only] doesn't work. That's why we're <doing this other thing, e.g., flipping the classroom>, because the data show it helps people learn more effectively."
Fostering learning for the long term	"The details here aren't as important. What will be most important for you to take away is/are <this thing> when you leave this class."
Recounting personal information/anecdotes (about yourself)	"I was born and raised in <here>, far from here. I'm first generation college-going." OR "How many people use Twitter? I'm a bit of a Twitter user, but I don't tweet - I just lurk."
Relating to student experiences	"I can guarantee that I don't remember much from undergrad - I would sit in the back and not talk. That's how I know it's so important to..."



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