Before the Semester Begins: A Checklist for a Successful First Class

- **Attend graduate student teacher orientation.** Get advice from faculty and fellow graduate students. Participate in workshops on a wide variety of topics on university teaching and learning.

- **Review TLTC’s “How do I…?” teaching resources.** Visit our website at tltc.umd.edu/how-do-I for tips on effective, efficient, and engaging teaching.

- **Find the room where your class is located.** Make sure you can get into the room and that any technology or supplies you need are there and working. If you are running a lab, make sure you know what supplies you might need, where to find them, and whether you need to bring them to your lab.

- **Talk through what you plan to say and do during class.** Create an agenda of things you and your students need to accomplish during the class/lab and practice running through it. You might even practice in the classroom, in front of a mirror, with friends, or with a video camera to make sure you’re ready.

- **Print a copy of your class roster.** Go to umeg.umd.edu for access to a class roster, student pictures, and a demographic and academic profile of your students.

- **Log on to Canvas.** Make sure that you have access to the course site and a general familiarity of Canvas. To sign in and to access tutorials, go to elms.umd.edu.

- **Get feedback on your syllabus.** Be sure that it addresses all of the key policies (see faculty.umd.edu/teach/syllabus) and establishes clear expectations. For example, Can students submit assignments late? What is the re-grade policy? When and how can students contact you? Do you allow laptops or food in your classroom?

- **Arrive at least 10 minutes early.** Set up any materials and chat with your students. Don’t be afraid to ask them questions to start to get to know them: What are you hoping to get out of this course? What did you do over the break? What other courses are you taking?