Because, my 1st year in college, I confess …

1. “I had no idea my instructor would be upset that I didn’t come to the first day of class.”

Man, it turns out, my instructor thought I just didn’t care when I missed the first day. Luckily, I also found out that my instructor could be forgiving of that first impression once I began working hard and showing a genuine interest in the class.

2. “I had no idea what instructors wanted.”

Then, I found out it’s easy. They wanted me to show up to class on time, sit near the front and regularly contribute to the class discussion. They liked when I asked questions, paid attention and completed the assignments thoroughly. Boom. I was golden.

3. “I had no idea my instructor actually liked it when I stopped to talk after class.”

I always felt shy about speaking to or even making eye contact with my instructor. I thought I shouldn’t do that. Then I found out they actually want that! They wanted me to take a minute to stop to chat after class so they could get to know who I am.

4. “I had no idea my instructors worked so hard to help me succeed.”

Then, I found out they’ve actually put a lot of thought into letting me know how to meet course expectations—it’s all in their syllabi. I also found out it really helps to do more than the bare minimum to stand out. If I read the assignment, pay attention and participate in class, my grades improve!

5. “I had no idea my instructor wanted me to ask questions or comment during lecture.”

I thought they wanted me to just listen and not interrupt. It turns out they want to get a good discussion going! It gives the instructor a better idea of how to relate the coursework to their students’ lives. That makes the subject a lot more interesting.

6. “I had no idea how much time it took for my instructor to grade all those papers and tests.”

It turns out that if I turned in an organized paper with a clear point of view, I’d not only be saving my instructor time, but earn a better grade,. I found out they really like good grammar, too!
7. “I had no idea what my instructor actually wanted on an assignment.”

It turns out that is where tutors and the writing center staff come in. They know how to read the assignment! They’re a huge help in creating a clear thesis and topic sentence. They’re also great in knowing what’s important to study. I understood the material better & got the good grade!

8. “I had no idea my instructor saw right through fake excuses but recognized real emergencies.”

It turns out they do understand if I have to leave because of a family emergency or am really feeling stressed. They get it that sometimes I have a lot of things going on in my life. As I said, it was important that I was involved in class and took the time to get to know them. (See #s 2, 3 & 5)

9. “I had no idea my instructor would make an exception if I had to turn something in late.

I found out my instructors really want the best for me. It turns out they are being clear about their expectations so we can plan. However, they do realize that sometimes things come up. Instructors are much more likely to cut you some slack if you’ve shown that you care about doing well, participate & turn assignments in on time. (See #3.)

10. “I had no idea how important it was to come to class—especially before a test.”

It turns out, the instructor is trying to let us know what’s important to take notes on—She’ll write it on the board. She’ll repeat it. She’ll put it in a PowerPoint—particularly before an exam. I found out that if I paid attention & took notes (like usual😊), I’d learn more & know what was going to be on the test.

If only...someone had told me

about my college instructors...

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