

Ybor City Community:

After many discussions with and much input from faculty, staff, administrators, and students, I have pieced together what I am calling *First Week*. *First Week* is not designed to be a new set of rules or a new program, but rather a way of thinking – culture of responsibility. This culture centers on everyone at the campus taking an active role as a Learning Leader. **Each of us, faculty, staff, administrators, and student leaders is a role model for our students. Each of us is a Learning Leader.** As role models for our students, Learning Leaders not only demonstrate good practices, but we help our students to learn them.

As Learning Leaders, we should envision the campus in the ideal, not in the mundane or from the perspective of “my job.” **We should envision the campus as a place for everyone to learn how to be better people, better citizens, better leaders, better employees, better supervisors, and better learners.** It shouldn't (and honestly, it doesn't) matter what you do at the college, because **we are all here to support, enhance, and reinforce the learning process.** Every person on campus has an impact on student learning – from the first person a prospective student talks to on campus, to the bookstore employee who shelves the texts, to the faculty member in the classroom, and even the president who sets the tone for the campus.

So, **let's envision a campus where students are prepared to learn on the first day of class and where the faculty members are prepared to teach them on the first day of class** and if the first class ends even a minute short, the faculty and students feel a deep sense of loss. Imagine a system in which prospective students are not only aware of the online resources of the college, but those resources are part of the classroom, not just student services. **Imagine a partnership between the academic side of the house and the student services side of the house in which Learning Leaders share ways to help students get ready for the first day of class and work together on helping the students succeed in the classroom.** Standards must be kept high, but so should the expectations of the students.

The students should expect their Learning Leaders to guide them in the ways of sound learning. Students don't always know that missing class is a big deal --- sometimes it is because we have told them that by our actions, such as letting class out early or just passing out a syllabus on the first day of class. Most students want to be successful and they expect for us to design our systems, our courses, and our campus in such a way that they can be successful both here and when they leave us. **Again, our expectations must be high, but we must also be ready to help our students meet those expectations.**

To help our campus along on this path, here are the *First Week* guiding principles. It is not an exhaustive list and nor are the principles in any order of priority. However, these principles will help us interact with students in more consistent manner that is focused on the entire learning experience of our students. In addition to the guiding principles, you will find a set of scenarios to assist you with working with students during the upcoming registration period. I encourage teaching faculty to share these principles with your students. Expect to see signage around campus in student areas with these principles.