

Distinguishing Traits & Practices of Optimistic and Pessimistic College Instructors *

Teaching Practices	Pessimistic Instructors	Optimistic Instructors
Instructor's Office	<i>Plain door</i> <i>Limited student seating</i> <i>Office hours not posted</i> <i>Few office decorations</i> <i>Cool & formal</i>	<i>Decorated door</i> <i>Generous student seating</i> <i>Office hours usually posted</i> <i>Self-revealing decorations</i> <i>Warm & welcoming</i>
Assignments	<i>Intimidating</i> <i>Limited group work</i> <i>Low learning task variety</i> <i>Generalized</i> <i>Sticks with old assignments</i>	<i>Challenging</i> <i>Significant group work</i> <i>High learning task variety</i> <i>Individualized</i> <i>Tries new assignments</i>
Testing & Evaluation	<i>Infrequent feedback</i> <i>Mostly summative feedback</i> <i>Uses unannounced tests</i> <i>Does not offer second chances</i> <i>Administers difficult tests</i>	<i>Frequent Feedback</i> <i>Mostly formative feedback</i> <i>Prefers not to use unannounced tests</i> <i>Retesting sometimes offered</i> <i>Tests are moderately difficult</i>
Grading Systems	<i>Standard percent</i> <i>No extra credit opportunities</i> <i>Noncompliance punished</i> <i>Failure punished</i> <i>Elaborate plagiarism policy</i>	<i>Complex point systems</i> <i>Some extra credit available</i> <i>Compliance reinforced</i> <i>Success reinforced</i> <i>Uses the college's plagiarism policy</i>
Classroom Management	<i>Nonattendance punished</i> <i>Lectures with limited discussion</i> <i>Tries but abandons new methods</i> <i>Overuses Power Point</i> <i>Not deliberate about rapport</i> <i>Some humor & laughter</i> <i>Cool classroom climate</i>	<i>Attendance reinforced</i> <i>More discussion than lecture</i> <i>Tinkers & experiments frequently</i> <i>Uses a variety of new technology</i> <i>Actively establishes rapport</i> <i>A lot of humor & laughter</i> <i>Warm classroom climate</i>

* Taken from Walker, C. J., Rohan, K., & Scott, F. (1993). *Instructor optimism and syllabus content: Associations with teaching effectiveness*. Research presented at the national convention of the American Psychological Society held in Chicago, and Walker, C. J. & Paluch, R. (2004). *Instructor optimism and teaching effectiveness*. University manuscript, Department of Psychology, St. Bonaventure University.