How to Successfully Add (Crash) a Class

Start Early. Contact the instructor before classes begin. Find out the instructor’s email, voicemail and/or office location. You can usually find this info on the college’s web-site or in their catalog.

Be courteous. You are asking for a favor and the instructor is under no obligation to add you. Thank them for considering your request. Address them as, “Professor” and strike a professional tone (no text/IM style here).

Be specific and brief. Request the exact course (section number, dates and times) you would like to add. Briefly describe the reasons you would like to add the course. If you have a good reason for not registering before the class closed, mention it.

Project commitment. Instructors want hard-working and motivated students in their classes. Establish yourself as such in your communication. Lazy students who simply waited till the last minute have less of a chance of getting in.

Attend early the first day. If you can’t contact the instructor in advance or you do not hear back from them, go to the first class meeting. Arrive early. Ask the instructor if s/he will be accepting adds. If the answer is yes, ask if you can be put on the add list. If not, politely excuse yourself and move on to the next potential class.

Be persistent. If the instructor expressed a chance that you may add, tell him/her that you would like to keep attending for a space that may become available. Often one or more students will drop the course and you may end up with a spot.

No whining. Do not insist or beg the instructor. It won’t get you anywhere and it’s embarrassing.

Show gratitude. If the instructor allows you to add the class, thank the instructor immediately. But perhaps the best way to give thanks is to be a positive, involved and hard-working student in the course.

Add codes are valuable. If you accept an add code, commit to registering for the course right away. If you are given an add code and decide not to register for the course, inform the instructor immediately so that another student can take your seat.

Be responsible. If you are allowed to add the class /late, take responsibility for catching up. Find out the instructor’s office hours and make the time for a visit to collect any class materials you have missed. Talk to other students to get notes on what you have missed.

Plan ahead. Next time, plan your registration so you are on the roster the first day and won’t have to go through the stress of adding.

Never show up in the middle or at the end of a class and ask, “Can I add your class?” This does not make you look like a dedicated student. It’s easy to say no to someone who hasn’t even bothered to be there on time.

The information above won’t guarantee a successful add, but it will help. Stay positive and persistent. Next time, plan your registration so you are on the roster the first day and won’t have to go through the anxiety of crashing.

- Adapted from an article by Janice Peterson, retired SBCC Communication Professor