

Ice Breakers: Getting to know you activities

Ice breakers are a fun way to begin establishing a positive classroom climate. They help “break the ice” by providing a structured format for you to begin getting to know your students and for them to initiate relationships with each other. There are many ice breakers you can use. You can find some examples at crlt.umich.edu/blog/breaking-ice-your-students

Not all ice-breakers are created equal.

Some seem overly silly, while others may ask students to answer or do something that makes them feel even more excluded than before. For instance, asking where everyone is going on winter break. Not everyone has the time or financial means to go on a trip.

Try to use questions that are not overly personal, but that can give participants some choice about what they share as well as starting points to get to know each other better. Some ideas include:

- 1. If you weren't pursuing your current degree/program, what would your dream job or fallback career be?**
- 2. (Group people in 4-6 individual teams) Find one thing you all have in common.** Try to find something non-trivial or creative (“We are all UM students” doesn’t count.).
- 3. What is a favorite location in Ann Arbor?** (For instance, the Ann Arbor library loans our framed artwork for 2-3 months at a time, for free).
- 4. What is your favorite engineering class you’ve taken so far? Why?**