



# Teaching Concerns

Newsletter of the Teaching Resource Center for Faculty and Teaching Assistants

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## **Teaching Tip: Unprepared Students?**

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As teaching assistants and faculty members, we have all experienced the frustration of having students come to class unprepared. In desperation, I was considering remedying the situation by administering pop-quizzes. But I was advised to try something else first: short conferences with unprepared students. During these meetings, your goal is to let these students know that you, as instructor, are aware of their lack of preparation, and that you want to help them overcome this handicap. During your brief conferences with individual students, find out why they don't prepare, advise them how to resolve the problem, and let them know that preparation is crucial to their success in your class and that you care about their success. This method works wonders with most students' problems of preparation: poor grades, tardiness, lack of participation. Students who may balk at punitive measures respond very positively to your show of interest and offer to help.