Humor serves to increase student engagement, even in cases where it is not related to the educational material. Additionally, the use of humor improves student retention of information, builds instructor-student rapport, and has the potential to make the course more enjoyable.

**Usage**: 63% of instructors did not use humor; 21% used humor once, 10% used humor 2 to 5 times, and 6% used humor 6 or more times in a particular class

**Presentation Methods**:
- Humorous comments typically last only a few seconds
- Funny stories often lasted a minute or more, but were more related to the educational material, justifying the time spent
- Only 10% of the humor being classified as distracting

**Character Involvement**: 38% of the humor involved a character outside the classroom; 17% involved a student, 15% involved the instructor

**Disparagement**: 5% of the humor involved instructor disparagement, 7% student disparagement, and 19% disparagement of a non-present character

**Temporal Location of Humor Use with Respect to Minute of Class Elapsed**

**Timing**: Clusters at the beginning of the class set the tone for the class; later uses of humor reengage students whose attention has wandered

**Student Engagement**: In classes where humor was used by the instructor:
- Students asked more questions
- Instructors used more anecdotes and connections to student experience
- No statistically significant difference in the use of other teaching techniques in comparison to classes that did not include humor

**REFERENCES**


