Humor serves to increase student engagement, even in cases where it is
not related 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

**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

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**REFERENCES**


