

UNCP CODE OF CONDUCT

As is stated in the UNCP Code of Conduct, the handling of disruptive behavior in the classroom is left to the discretion of the individual faculty member. However, it is suggested that the faculty member make clear to the class in the syllabus or at an early class meeting that any behaviors that disrupt the teaching and/or educational process will not be tolerated. If a student displays such behavior, the faculty member should deal with it early and directly by speaking to the student. If it continues to be a problem, the faculty member may ask the student to leave the classroom and should report the student to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs. Written documentation should be kept for each instance including how it was handled. At the faculty member's request and with appropriate documentation, the Office for Academic Affairs will administratively withdraw the student from the class or classes as a result of repeated disruptions to the academic process.

EXAMPLES OF DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Disruptive behavior is defined as repeated, continuous, and/or other multiple student behaviors that hamper the ability of instructors to teach and students to learn. Examples include, but are not limited to:

- Eating in class
- Failing to respect the rights of other students
- Talking when the instructor is speaking
- Constant questions or interruptions
- Overt inattentiveness
- Creating excessive noise
- Entering class late or leaving early
- Use of pagers or cell phones in the classroom

Extreme examples include, but are not limited to:

- Use of profanity or pejorative language
- Intoxication
- Verbal abuse
- Harassment
- Threats to harm oneself or others
- Physical violence

Note: *Conditions attributed to physical or psychological disabilities are not considered a legitimate excuse for disruptive behavior.*

AVOIDING PROBLEMS

Serve as a model by demonstrating appropriate, respectful, and responsible behavior in all interactions with students.

Establish specific course and behavioral norms for your students in the course syllabus and specify consequences for disruptive behavior.

During the first class, carefully review the contents of the syllabus to ensure that students understand course objectives, expectations, and evaluation criteria.

Maintain a positive attitude with students and demonstrate interest in them. Antisocial behavior such as aloofness and disinterest can invite antagonistic student reactions and retaliation.

If it is possible, arrange seating so that you can move among the class; an instructor who seems less distant, even physically, from students will experience fewer behavioral infractions.

Rather than reacting and entering into feuds with students, simply acknowledge students concerns and empathize with their disappointment or frustration.

RESPONDING TO DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Some general suggestions for dealing with the disruptive student behavior are:

1. Address the entire class about a concern instead of identifying one student may effectively deter the disruptive behavior.
2. Deal with the disruptive behavior immediately. Ignoring behavior will likely cause it to increase.
3. If the student's behavior is irritating, but not particularly disruptive, consider talking with the student privately after class.
4. Sometimes a note to a student about his or her behavior at the bottom of a returned assignment or test can solve the problem.
5. If it is necessary to deal with a student's behavior during class, you should calmly but firmly inform the student that the behavior is disruptive and ask that it be stopped. Example "Your use of your cell phone is bothering me and disrupting the class. Please end your conversation now and refrain from in-class phone calls in the future."
6. If the disruptive behavior continues during either the present or some future class, meet with the student in private to discuss that the continued behavior may result in student disciplinary action.
7. If the student continues the disruptive behavior despite this warning, the student should be informed that she/he will be referred for disciplinary action and should then be instructed to leave the classroom. Following the class, the instructor should contact the Office of Student Affairs and provide pertinent information about the student's behavior.
8. Do not threaten the student or reference action that you are not willing to take.

EXTREME SITUATIONS

Do not try to reason with the student if the student appears extremely agitated, irrational, or very scared.

Do not put yourself or your students in harm's way. If the student is violent or threatening, ask the student to leave the classroom. If the student refuses, immediately dismiss the class and notify Campus Police.

AFTER CONFLICT OCCURS

DOCUMENT

Document in writing every aspect of the problem and your attempts to resolve the situation, from its first appearance to its ultimate resolution.

SEEK CONSULTATION

Keep your department chair informed and as situations develop, ask for guidance and support.

Consult with the Office of Student Affairs about the Judicial Process. With appropriate documentation, a faculty member may request that the Office of Academic Affairs withdraw the student from the class or classes.

REVIEW YOUR ROUTINES

Continually examine how personal teaching styles, conduct, and interpersonal communication styles can inadvertently contribute to unruly and potentially dangerous classroom environments. Remain introspective regarding personal attitudes and behaviors; doing so can avoid unnecessary conflict with students and the personal distress associated with such conflict.

REMAIN AWARE

Remain aware of changing trends and the outcome that these trends can have on the classroom environment. Changes such as larger student numbers in classes, student-as-consumer perspective, pressure to obtain degrees for employment, and students diagnosed with psychiatric disorders will affect and most likely increase the number of incidents of disruptive behavior in classrooms.

This publication is available in alternative formats upon request. Please contact Disability Support Services, DF Lowry Building, 521-6695.

IMPORTANT TELEPHONE NUMBERS

In an Emergency Call.....911
Campus Police.....521-6235
Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs.....521-6226
Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs.....521-6211
Counseling and Testing Center.....521-6202



STUDENT AFFAIRS

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OFFICE OF THE VICE CHANCELLOR FOR STUDENT AFFAIRS



DEALING WITH DISRUPTIVE STUDENTS

*In the middle of difficulty
lies opportunity.*

-Albert Einstein

THE UNIVERSITY OF NORTH CAROLINA
AT PEMBROKE