



Northeastern

FROM THE NORTHEASTERN CODE OF STUDENT CONDUCT:

"Students are expected to display proper respect for the rights and privileges of other members of the University community and their guests. The atmosphere in classes and laboratories must be free from any sort of disruption."



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DISRUPTIVE STUDENTS IN THE CLASSROOM

A FACULTY RESOURCE GUIDE



WHAT IS DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR?

Generally, any behavior that interferes with the instructor's ability to conduct the class, or the ability of other students to profit from the instruction, may be considered disruptive.

Disruptive behavior may take various forms and can be dependent upon many factors including: class size, subject matter, and the relationship between faculty and student.

Examples of disruptive behavior may include:

- Persistent speaking without permission
- Repeated and unauthorized use of electronic devices, cell phones/pagers
- Threats of any kind
- Excessive lateness
- Eating/drinking in class without permission
- Disputing authority and arguing with faculty and other students
- Harassment
- Physical disruptions or physical altercations
- Behavior or activities that could negatively impact the health or safety of others

PREVENTING DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

Setting clear guidelines at the start of each term will aid in setting the tone in the classroom. This small investment in time will aid in keeping disruptions to a minimum and hold students accountable to a known standard. Clear expectations should be discussed with students and detailed in the course syllabus.

Points to review:

- Student responsibility and the Northeastern Code of Student Conduct
- Academic Integrity
- Attendance and Punctuality
- Outline guidelines for class participation, discussion, and questions
- Address any issues that you deem important: cell phones, gum-chewing, eating, breaks, etc.

SAFETY: WHEN SHOULD YOU CALL THE POLICE?

- Whenever there is a question of personal safety, immediately remove yourself and others from the situation and immediately notify the University Police at 617.373.3333
- When a student does not comply with your request to leave the class
- When any unlawful act takes place

RESPONDING TO DISRUPTION

- Remain calm
- Do not raise your voice, challenge, threaten or humiliate a student
- Do not get too close to a student or allow that student to get too close to you
- Never touch a student
- Remind the student of classroom expectations, discuss his/her concerns and offer solutions, if possible
- Document the incident with your Chair, Dean, and the Office of Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution
- Follow-up with the student, outlining why the behavior was inappropriate

“Clear expectations should be discussed with students and detailed in the course syllabus.”

- Minor disruptions may be addressed through non-verbal cues or calling on the student to cease the behavior

If a student continues to be disruptive, you may request that s/he leave for the remainder of the class period.

University Police may need to be called if a student does not comply with your request to exit the class.

The offending student should have an opportunity to speak with the faculty member soon after the incident. In the follow-up meeting, outline why the behavior was inappropriate and remind him/her of the expectations outlined in the first class meeting and the syllabus.

Acknowledge any student concern and offer solutions if possible. Document the incident and follow-up with a letter or e-mail to the student.

HOW LONG SHOULD I WAIT TO TAKE ACTION?

It is often an error to assume that inappropriate behavior will stop on its own. Progressive discipline should entail addressing minor disturbances before they can develop into a serious disruption.

REFERRALS

Any faculty member may refer a student for disciplinary action. If a faculty member is unsure if an action warrants disciplinary attention, they should consult with their Chair and the Office of Student Conduct & Conflict Resolution to determine if a referral is appropriate. Once a referral is made, the formal disciplinary process is followed. Students cannot be permanently removed from a class or the University without a University Conduct Hearing.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS:

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Student Judicial Affairs, University of South Carolina

