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Dean of Students
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uky.edu/concern
uky.edu/studentconduct

Suggested Responses to Distressed or Distressing Behavior during Class: A Guide for Faculty

The chart below was created based on commonly asked questions regarding student behavior received in UK's Dean of Students Office. This chart is meant to serve as a guide only. The Center for the Enhancement of Learning and Teaching (CELT) <http://www.uky.edu/celt/> is another resource for instructors to discuss proactive strategies to prevent or mitigate incivility.

Action of Concern: Classroom Behavior	Recommended Response
Student is inappropriately using cell phone, tablet, computer, etc. during class	Include technology policy in syllabus, ask to speak with student after class.
Student is disrespectful when disagreeing with peers and/or instructor	Calmly remind students that the university welcomes diverse opinions, but that civility is key
Student refuses to participate	Ask to speak with student after class; contact CELT for strategies to increase student participation.
Student curses at or threatens peers and/or instructor	* Ask the student to leave the class; contact the Office of Student Conduct ¹ ; refer to the Center for Support and Intervention
Actions of Concern: Substance Abuse, Mental Health, and Reports of Violence	Recommended Response
Student appears to be under the influence of alcohol or drugs	**Ask the student to leave the class OR ask to speak with student after class. Additionally, contact the Office of Student Conduct.
Student is not maintaining self-care (Showering, brushing teeth, etc. Faculty has a concern about a student's mental health but is not sure how to reach out to the student	Speak with student after class and/or refer to the Center for Support and Intervention
Faculty has a concern about a student's mental health but is not sure how to reach out to the student	Contact the Center for Support and Intervention for guidance on approaching the student with an ethic of care and accountability
Student expresses current thoughts to harm self in a paper, email, etc.	*Respond to student with immediate resources - UKPD, UKCC, Suicide Prevention Lifeline 1-800-273-TALK (8255) etc.- and refer to the Center for Support and Intervention
Student discloses that they or someone they know is experiencing hazing	Contact the office of Student Conduct or the Center for Support and Intervention
Student discloses that they or someone they know has experienced violence	Contact the office of Student Conduct or the Center for Support and Intervention
Student discloses that they or someone they know is being stalked, or has been sexually assaulted, or is experiencing dating or domestic violence	Faculty are required to contact the Title IX Coordinator or report sexual misconduct, dating violence and domestic violence to the Office of Student Conduct. Faculty cannot promise to maintain a student's confidence regarding sexual misconduct, dating violence or domestic violence but can promise privacy. In addition to reporting their knowledge to the Title IX Coordinator, faculty should also refer students to the VIP (https://www.uky.edu/vipcenter/)

***Contact UKPD immediately anytime an active threat of harm is made 859-257-8573**

****Contact UKPD immediately if you have a concern that the student is so impaired that they will be a harm to themselves or others if they walk or drive home**

¹ Office of Student Conduct, 859-257-3755, <http://www.uky.edu/studentconduct/>. If you want a student removed from your class you must allow them the chance to complete assignments while the investigation is ongoing.

² Martha Alexander, Executive Director & Title IX Coordinator, 859-257-8927, <http://www.uky.edu/EVPFA/EEO/index.html>

³ Violence Intervention and Prevention Center, 859-257-3574, <http://www.uky.edu/StudentAffairs/VIPCenter/index.php>

NOTE: Per the Code of Student Conduct, faculty members are responsible for managing the classroom environment. Faculty are encouraged to include classroom decorum and civility expectations in their syllabus. Please see page two of this guide for sample syllabus language regarding classroom behavior.

Key Rules Related to Student Conduct in the Classroom

Code of Student Conduct (AR 4.10), Section V, Letter J, Instructional Setting Behavior

“The primary responsibility for managing the instructional setting rests with the instructor. Students who engage in conduct that results in disruption of an instructional setting may be directed by the instructor to leave the class for the remainder of the instructional setting period. A student conduct meeting as outlined in this Code must precede longer separations from an instructional setting.”

University Senate Rules, 6.1.3.2, Academic Evaluation

“Students have the right to receive grades based only upon fair and just evaluation of their performance in a course as measured by the standards announced by their instructor(s) in the written course syllabus at the first class meeting.”

University Senate Rules, 6.1.2, Contrary Opinion

“A student has the right to take reasoned exception to the data or views offered in the classroom without being penalized.”

Setting Standards for Classroom Decorum and Behavior Begins in the Syllabus

Faculty should be explicit in the syllabus in defining expectations about classroom behavior, classroom participation, class attendance, and civil discourse. Additionally, if the faculty member has standards and expectations related to the use of technology (earbuds, cell phones, tablets, laptops, etc.) in the classroom, these guidelines should be clearly articulated in the course syllabus. Any such policy must provide for reasonable exceptions. If the faculty member has standards and expectations for food and beverage within the classroom, these guidelines should also be clearly articulated in the course syllabus.

Outlining Consequences for Violating Classroom Decorum and Behavior Standards

To create a learning environment characterized by civility, faculty should begin by articulating clear expectations for student decorum and behavior in both the syllabus and in class. Consequences for violating classroom behavior standards could include participation point deduction, treating violations as an “unexcused absence”, and/or reduction of the student’s final grade. The syllabus must clearly identify/define the amount of reduction for a violation. Faculty who reduce a student’s grade based on violation of classroom behavior policies should maintain records of the date and nature of any such violation.

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