

I. DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR POLICY STATEMENT

The College of Arts and Sciences strives to maintain a positive learning environment and educational opportunity for all students. Consequently, patterns of behavior which obstruct or disrupt the learning environment of the classroom or other educational facilities will be addressed.

- The instructor is in charge of the course. This includes assignments, due dates, methods and standards of grading, and policies regarding attendance, tardiness, late assignments, outside conferences, etc.
- The instructor is in charge of the classroom. This includes the times and extent to which he or she allows questions or discussion, the level of respect with which he or she and other students are to be treated, and the specific behaviors he or she will allow within their classes. Open discussion of an honest opinion about the subject of a course is encouraged, but the manner in which the class is conducted is a decision of the instructor.
- An instructor is entitled to maintain order in his or her class and has an obligation to other students to do so. Toward that end, an instructor is authorized and expected to inform a student that his or her behavior is disrupting a class and to instruct the student to stop that behavior. If the student persists, the instructor is authorized to direct the student to leave the class. If the student fails to comply with a directive to leave the class, the instructor may call Public Safety to assist with the student's removal.
- Instructors of online courses have the same rights and responsibilities for maintaining order in their online course. Disruptive student behaviors may include inappropriate, offensive, or abusive language in emails, postings, and/or other posted or submitted work. If disruptive behavior occurs, the instructor should contact the student in a private manner (email, phone call, etc) to inform the student that his or her behavior is disrupting the class and instruct the student to stop that behavior. To ensure other class members are not impacted, the instructor has the right to delete any postings that he/she deems offensive or inappropriate.
- Instructors should include a statement regarding their expectations for appropriate online behavior in their posted syllabus. Instructors may want to reference the "Ferris-Connetiquette" guidelines (published by the E-Learning Management Advisory Team.) Instructors may also want to include the potential consequences of offensive postings and the instructor's right to remove inappropriate content.
- If a student persists in a pattern or recurrent disruptive behavior, then the student may be subject to administrative action up to and including an involuntary withdrawal from the course, following administrative review by the Arts and Sciences Dean's office, and/or University disciplinary proceedings. (University disciplinary procedures are delineated in the "Student Conduct and Discipline Policy" reprinted in the FSU Student Handbook.)
- Disruptive behavior cannot be sanctioned by a lowered course grade (e.g., from a B to a C) except insofar as quality of classroom participation has been incorporated into the instructor's grading policy for all students. (Note: Academic misconduct, which is covered by other regulations, can be a legitimate basis for lowering a grade or failing the student.)
- Students as well as employees are bound by the University's policy against harassment, in any form. Harassment will not be tolerated.
- The student's Dean's office will be notified of any serious pattern or instance of disruptive behavior.

II. GUIDELINES FOR INSTRUCTORS AND OTHER PERSONNEL

- Please review the University's Policy on Student Conduct (reprinted in the FSU Student Handbook) so that you are fully aware of both the student's responsibility for appropriate conduct and the University's disciplinary procedures pertaining thereto.
- If you have specific behavioral expectations for your classes, you may find it helpful to include these in your syllabus and/or review them with all students at the beginning of the term.
- When disruptive behavior occurs in class or another educational setting (e.g., computer lab, tutoring room), confront it directly and simply. Label the behavior as disruptive, and tell the student to stop the behavior. Example: "Your throwing spit balls is disrupting the class. Please stop." Or "Your talking is interfering with my ability to lecture, and it is disrupting the class. Please stop, or I will ask you to leave the room." It is best to respond early, while you are most likely to be able to do so with little emotion.
- If the student does not stop, do ask the student to leave the room. Make a note of that (e.g., on your grade book or office calendar). Do not tell the student he or she cannot return to class at a later session, however, as this violates University policy. If the student refuses to leave, either dismiss the class or excuse yourself for a few minutes and call Public Safety (extension #5000) from a nearby office or courtesy phone.

Note: When in doubt, don't hesitate to talk to senior colleagues, your department head, or the Dean's office. Most problems can be resolved if addressed early and unambiguously. We are here to help you maintain a quality learning environment and the integrity of the classroom.