

Civility in The Classroom Workshop

Prepared By Janet Wolstenholme
September 2010



Civility in the Classroom Workshop

Agenda

- Introductions
- What is incivility?
- Strategies for Prevention
- Tips
- Resources



Civility in the Classroom Workshop

What is Incivility?

For me incivility in the
classroom is

-
-
-
-
-



Examples of Troublesome Student Behaviors in the Classroom

1. Having authority challenged
2. Talking out of turn
3. Making statements that seemingly have nothing to do with topic
4. Coming late to class
5. Leaving early w/o notification
6. Backpack shuffle
7. Eating in the classroom
8. Doing homework for other classes
9. Reading the newspaper
10. Sleeping
11. Visiting
12. Making racist, sexist, homophobic remarks about others
13. Talking about students behind their backs
14. Consumer mentality: I paid for this therefore I want . . .
15. Using the classroom as a political/religious platform
16. Dominating discussion
17. Refusing to participate
18. Discrediting person rather than disagreeing with idea
19. Coming to class unprepared
20. Missing deadlines
21. Constantly phoning office or home
22. Missing class with no notice or legitimate reason and then demanding make ups, etc.
23. Arguing relentlessly over a grade
24. Demanding special treatment because of . . . whatever. . . (Extra Credit, another test date, drop a grade, etc.)
25. Cheating (another entire session)
26. Fraudulent excuse making
27. Sexual hits & sexual harassment
28. Hostile verbal attacks

Contact:

Rosalind Reed, Ph.D.
Department of Health and Community Services
College of Behavioral and Social Sciences
California State University, Chico
E-mail: reed@oavax.csuchico.edu

Source:

<http://www.ntlf.com/html/pi/9710/strat.htm>



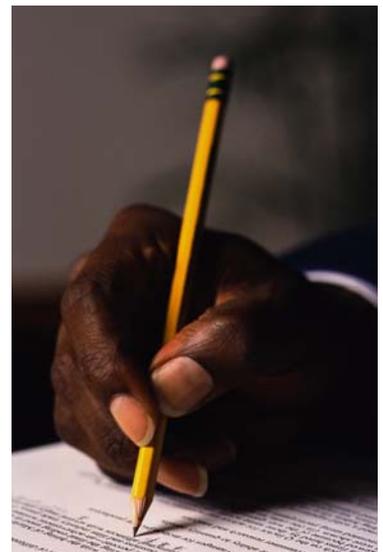
What strategies would you enact for the following situations?

1. Consistently on Facebook
2. Viewing pornography in class
3. Challenging your authority
4. Talking out of turn
5. Making statements that seemingly have nothing to do with topic
6. Backpack shuffle
7. Reading the newspaper
8. Sleeping
9. Visiting
10. Making racist, sexist, homophobic remarks about others
11. Consumer mentality: I paid for this therefore I want . . .
12. Refusing to participate
13. Discrediting person rather than disagreeing with idea
14. Constantly phoning office or home
15. Sexual hits & sexual harassment
16. Hostile verbal attacks

Civility in the Classroom Workshop

Strategies

-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-
-



Strategies For Dealing with Troublesome Behaviors in the Classroom

*Courtesy of
Rosalind Reed, Ph.D.
Department of Health and Community Services
College of Behavioral and Social Sciences
California State University, Chico*

A. Talking and inattention

1. Make direct eye contact
2. Stop talking or stop whomever has the flood and hold
3. Don't START talking until have full attention
4. Physically move to that part of classroom
5. Vary methods of presenting content
6. Speak to the student(s) privately

B. Unpreparedness, missed deadlines and tests, and fraudulent excuse making

1. Design class (syllabus) so there are logical consequences to this behavior. Follow through, be consistent. Don't rescue and don't enable.
2. Require evidence of preparation for class (check off & return immediately.)
 - Note cards
 - 2 minute written/on-spot reflective feedback (quiz) on assign.
 - Call on students by name for input
3. Be a good role model. Consistently meet your agenda deadlines with class
4. Excuse making: Clearly state policy at beginning of semester about excuses with regard to absences, missed exams, etc. For example: validate certain excuses, no make-up exams, all make up exams vary, one day in semester only to make up.

C. Lateness and inattendance

1. Establish a policy and expectations from the beginning.
 - You expect them to be on time and leave on time.
 - Start class on time and finish on time (role model)
 - If going to be absent (professional classes), call and inform ahead of time. (Sets behavior for social and professional life.)



Strategies For Dealing with Troublesome Behaviors in the Classroom

C. Lateness and inattendance (continued)

2. Have a ritual at starting time especially in large classes.
 - Whatever suits style. Something students would hate to miss or be embarrassed to miss.
3. Speak privately to chronically late students.
4. Made sure content covered and learning activities are crucial.
 - Keep class discussion focused on issues related to content and to all members of the class.
5. Logical consequences to missing and being late. Instructor does not own the problem. Do not reteach class.
 - Student is responsible for getting missed assignments and material.
 - Don't rescue.
6. Specifically recognize a late student when he/she comes in. "Hi how are you today." Have them sing, or other."

D. Challenges to authority

1. Don't become defensive. Explain (not defend) instructional objectives and how assignments fit.
2. If student presses in class, ask to continue discussion later, privately
3. Be honest if something REALLY isn't working (but watch for manipulations)
4. Saying NO assertively (not aggressively or submissively).

E. Overt HOSTILITY from a student

Verbally aggressive. Usually become verbally abusive in frustrating situations which they see as being beyond their control; anger and frustration becomes displaced onto others; fear of rejection and feelings of righteous indignation are frequently associated with this pattern.

1. Talk to student privately
 - In neutral setting
 - Try to find a common ground
2. Write letter to student describing his/her behavior, how behavior disrupts you and others, restate expectations and request behavior change. Copy letter to . . .

Strategies For Dealing with Troublesome Behaviors

E. Overt HOSTILITY from a student (continued)

3. Check out your interaction style with someone or the person
 - defensive?
 - authoritarian?
 - condescending?
 - loaded words?
 - flaunting power?
 - unreasonable, unclear demands
 - atmosphere of mistrust
 - There may be times when ignoring is best . . .
 - Violent, aggressive verbal attack

DO

- i. Allow them to ventilate
- ii. Recognize feelings. "I can see you're very upset."
- iii. Tell them that you can't deal with verbal abuse "When you yell at me, it's hard to hear what you are saying."
- iv. Reduce stimulation. Invite person to a quiet place to talk

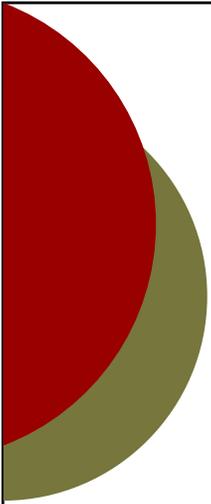
DON'T

- i. Get in an argument
- ii. Press for explanation of behavior "Why are you acting like this?"
- iii. Walk away from person
- iv. Get others to help you quiet them down i.e. other students, faculty, etc.
- v. Circum to requests for special consideration, e.g. extra credit, retake test, reschedule final, redo paper, unless the same contract is offered to all students in the course. You must however, consider your time on and value of

G. Sexual hits and sexual harassment

1. Ignore come-ons. Act as if you are not aware. Don't reinforce in any way. Keep with professional agenda.
2. Address harassment personally, privately, and directly. Request the ceasing of specified behaviors. If not, see Dean and take through the process.





Keys For Managing Challenging Student Behavior

MANAGING CHALLENGING STUDENT BEHAVIORS

- Instead of holding your students with an iron grip, allow them to be themselves until (and unless) their behavior distracts you or others in the class.
- When you notice unproductive behavior, nip it in the bud. Otherwise, you send a clear message to the students that it's OK for them to talk while you are talking, etc.
- Use classroom management techniques before you become irritated, impatient or upset. We are much more powerful when we are centered, when we like out students, and when we view our students with fondness rather than impatience.
- Allow students to save face. When we put students down in front of others, the entire class of students will turn against us.
- Do all you can to feel good about yourself and others on a daily basis. Your attitude will come across to your students, so it is important to be in good mental and physical shape.
- If, by chance, you feel that you have spoken sharply in an attempt to manager your students, own up to it. "Wow- that sounded harsh. Forgive me!"
- Remind yourself: "If teaching were easy, everyone would be doing it." Teaching in front of a classroom full of students can be challenging, but on the other hand, very rewarding!



*Courtesy of
Rosalind Reed, Ph.D.
Department of Health and Community Services
College of Behavioral and Social Sciences
California State University, Chico*

Civility in the Classroom Workshop

Tips

- Set-up clear classroom expectations at the beginning of term
- Include expectations on syllabus
- Have students draft a “code of conduct” for the classroom
- Defuse potential conflict by remaining calm when speaking—suggest picking up the issue at another time
- Speak to chronic disturbers outside of class
- Do address the situation
- Remind the students that they need to respect the learning of others in the classroom
- Don’t embarrass the disruptive student—make global statements if there is a need to address students
- Remember you have the right to ask a student to leave the classroom
- Stay positive at all times
- Consult colleagues about their techniques



Civility in the Classroom Workshop



Resources

Internet

- <http://ftad.osu.edu/publications/teachinghandbook/chap-8.pdf>

Discussion of solving problem situations and harassment

- <http://isites.harvard.edu/fs/html/icb.topic58474/hotmoments.html>

Managing hot moments in the classroom

Print

- *Teaching Large Class: Tools & Strategies* by Elisa Carbone. Managing Student Behavior. London: Sage Publications. Vol. 19 pp 75-84. 1998.

