

CLASSROOM RESPONSIBILITIES OF FACULTY & STUDENTS

Students and faculty both have responsibilities for maintaining an appropriate learning environment based on mutual respect, in which the academic freedom of both is protected. Classroom disruptions interfere with the academic mission of the university. Faculty members in particular have the professional responsibility to treat students with understanding, dignity and fairness, and to guide classroom discussion. They should establish clear and reasonable norms for the manner in which students express opinions. Faculty members are expected to serve as role models for appropriate conduct. According to the University's Code of Student Conduct, "The primary responsibility for managing the classroom environment rests with the faculty."

Respectful expression of disagreement with the course instructor or other students, during times when the instructor permits discussion, is a normal and valuable part of the educational process. Disagreement per se should not be construed as disruptive behavior, nor should the provisions of these guidelines be used to punish classroom dissent. Students are permitted to ask relevant questions and voice opinions, but not in such a manner as to insult the instructor or other members of the class. Students who believe that they have been treated in an arbitrary or punitive manner by their instructors should review the matter with the faculty member, then the department chair (if necessary), and finally the Dean of Students (if necessary).

CLASSROOM DISRUPTION

Students may not disturb normal classroom procedures by distracting or disruptive behavior. Examples of disruptive behavior include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Repeatedly leaving and entering the classroom without authorization
- Answering cellular phone or allowing pager to beep
- Making loud or distracting noises
- Repeatedly speaking without being recognized, interrupting the instructor or other students, or otherwise acting in disregard of the instructor's requests

· Resorting to physical threats or violence directed toward the instructor or other students.*

*Physical threats or violence are a violation of the University's Code of Student Conduct and incidents should be referred to the Dean of Students immediately. Please consult "Standards of Classroom Behavior," in The University Code of Student Conduct

<http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/files/documents/UCSCJuly2011.pdf>

and the University's "Policy against Verbal Assault, Defamation and Harassment"

<http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/files/documents/PolicyAgainstVerbalAssault.pdf> for further information.

STRATEGIES FOR ADDRESSING CLASSROOM DISRUPTION

In the unfortunate circumstance that a student is engaging in disruptive behavior, the following responses should be considered.

- If an instructor believes that inappropriate behavior is occurring, he/she should consider a general word of caution rather than warning a particular student.
- If the behavior is irritating but not disruptive, the instructor may try speaking with the student(s) involved outside of class.
- There may be circumstances when it is necessary to speak to a student during class about his/her behavior. This should be done in a firm, respectful, and non-threatening manner.
- A student who persists in being disruptive may be asked to leave the class for the remainder of the period. (<http://studentconduct.rutgers.edu/files/documents/UCSCJuly2011.pdf>)
- If the disruption is serious, and other reasonable measures have failed to stop the disruptive activities, the class may be adjourned, and the University Police may be summoned, if necessary, to remove the disruptive student from the classroom safely.
- The faculty member should meet with the disruptive student to determine if an agreement can be reached for the student to continue in the class.
- If no agreement is reached, the faculty member should seek intervention by the Departmental Chair to resolve the problem.
- If the problem cannot be resolved by the faculty member and departmental chair, the matter should be referred to the Dean of Students. In most cases, disruption problems can be resolved through informal discussion of the Dean of Students with the parties involved.
- In the rare cases when the issue of a dispute cannot be informally resolved, the Dean of Students will determine whether a violation of the University's Code of Student Conduct has occurred. If a serious, unresolvable violation has occurred, a Hearing or Disciplinary Conference will be scheduled and may result in the student's suspension from the class or the college. Procedures for disciplinary hearings and the sanctions imposed will be conducted in accordance with the University's Code of Student Conduct.
- All faculty and students are entitled to the assistance of a campus advisor in resolving disputes brought to the Dean of Students. A list of trained campus advisors is available from the Dean of Students, but any member of the Rutgers community (faculty, staff, or student) may serve in this capacity. (For information on campus advisors, see <http://deanofstudents.camden.rutgers.edu/sites/default/files/Camden%20Campus%20Advisers.pdf>)

Adopted by the CCAS Faculty Senate 12/05