

“What do you mean I have to deal with
Disruptive Behaviors?
I thought I was here to Teach!”

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So you want to Teach...

So we all come to teaching in higher education thinking that we are going to empower all of our students to become critical thinkers and we are going to share our expert knowledge, facilitate their understanding and learning and help them develop essential skills and dispositions.....and then we end up dealing with disruptive behaviors....



Think- Pair-Share

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What behavior “presses your buttons”
in class?



Welcome and Introductions

- Who I am
- Who you are



Agenda

So you want to teach...

Activity-Think-Pair-Share- What presses your buttons?

Welcome-Agenda-Learning Outcomes

Video and My First Day

Incivility and Problem Behavior

4 Ds of Problem Behavior

Decorum, Disrespect, Disruption, Danger

Activity- List examples

Chart of examples

Why the increase?

Antidote- Community of Learners

Faculty Role

Activity- Brainstorm and Discuss Strategies for examples

Share back in large group

Wrap-Up -Debrief and Reflect



Learning Outcomes

Participants will be able to:

1. Define and describe types of problem behaviors that interfere with learning in higher education
2. Describe the context of learning (adult learning, cultural, historical) and how it impacts “incivility” and “disruptive behaviors”
3. Demonstrate how a “community of learners” can be an antidote to disruptive behaviors
4. List ways to prevent, intervene and address problem behaviors
5. Using case scenarios and real-life classroom examples, brainstorm and problem-solve ways in which faculty/instructors can address and deal with problem behaviors



Video Clip- "Grade Negotiations"



My first day!

- Narrative of “explosive student”



Incivility and Problem Behaviors

- In the research, classroom behavior issues are often referred to as “incivility”
- “Any action that interferes with the harmonious and cooperative learning atmosphere in the classroom” (Davis, 2009; Feldmann, 2001)



The 4 “D”s of Problem Behaviors (Ableser, 2012)

Danger

Disruption

Disrespect

Decorum

Decorum

- Most common/least problematic (if remains at this level)
- Annoyances
- Up to each individual professor to set tone and clearly state behavioral expectations
- Personal preferences and practices
- “not professional”
- dependent on context/culture/preference
- Examples include:
 - wearing a hat in class
 - chewing gum
 - eating
 - inappropriate clothing- tube top/low cut top for women....pants worn to show “crack” on men

Disrespect

- Can be red flags to more serious issues and should be addressed initially to all students by stating behavioral expectations and then 1:1 when student demonstrates repeated behaviors
- Often can be seen as “disruptive” as well
- Disrespect towards:
 - Professor- rude
 - Peers- bullying- rude- in class and on-line
 - Learning- not doing assignments or missing classes and upset when not doing well, not taking the course seriously
 - Learning Environment

Disruptions

- Often the most frustrating for faculty and for other students
- State expectations, address issues 1:1 and have plan/consequences that you can follow through on
- Examples include:
 - Arriving late/ leaving early and drawing attention to it
 - interrupting
 - going off on tangents or “hogging” conversations
 - talking to peers (off task)
 - talking on phone, phone ringing
 - texting, emailing, on web (if disruptive)

Danger

- Most serious/least common
 - Can be toward faculty, peers, self or campus
 - Prevention and early intervention intervening and referring early and promptly (to Office of the Dean, Student Services, Disability Support, Safety/Police)
 - Campus should have Emergency Preparedness System in place and should train all faculty and staff in how to deal with situations
 - Follow-through and follow-up
 - Examples include:
 - Verbal or physical threats – in class, in office, on campus, on-line
 - Explosive behaviors
 - Violent behaviors
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Activity

- In small groups
- Each group select one of the 4 Ds (decorum, disrespect, disruption, danger)
- Describe a range of scenarios that would fall into that particular category
- (later we will try to address some of these)



Examples of the 4Ds of Behavior

DECORUM personal choice- may not be a concern to some faculty- some may see as disrespectful	DISRESPECT towards learning and learning environment, towards peers, or towards faculty-in-class or on-line- may overlap with disruption	DISRUPTIVE interferes with learning of others- may include some disrespectful behavior and/or could escalate to dangerous behaviors	DANGER putting individuals at risk- may be in-class, on-line, or on campus
Inappropriate clothing - Pants hanging so low can see "crack" - Overly revealing clothing/short skirts/shorts or low cut tops for women - T-shirts with inappropriate slogans/language	Coming to class unprepared	Non-productive talking in class-side conversations	Aggressive comments
Texting during class	Not attending	Interrupting others	Threatening Comments
Playing games on devices	Making unreasonable or repeated excuses for not having work done or missing classes	Arriving late	Angry comments
Reading Newspaper or other non-related materials	Demanding grade change	Leaving early	Emotional Outbursts
Doodling/drawing	Cheating	Cell phone ringing/talking on cell phone	Escalating or Explosive Behaviors
Wearing a hat	Plagiarism	Dominating class discussion	Violent Behaviors
Putting on make-up, brushing hair, doing nails	Asking for unreasonable extensions	Embarrassing or non-appropriate argumentative questioning to put someone on the spot	Signs of potential self-harming or suicidal behaviors
Eating or drinking	Rude behavior	Asking the same question repeatedly	Physical destruction of property
Surfing web or emails not related to class	Sleeping in class	Going off on tangents	
Chewing gum	Discriminatory/racist comments or behaviors	Attention-seeking behaviors	
	Inappropriate language- swearing, culturally insensitive	Inattention that disrupts	
	Non-compliant behaviors	Movement or noise that disrupts class	
	Coming to class under the influence of alcohol or drugs	Disorders or conditions that may create disruptions	

Why the increase in problem behaviors?

1. Cultural

- More informal society
- If we encourage critical and creative thinking in our students, we may encourage them to speak up and out
- Less respect for authority
- More freedom of expression
- Higher Education is now often regarded as a “high priced commodity” and students see themselves as customers who are entitled to “high grades” have expectations as consumers



cont.

2. Student/Faculty characteristics

- Young female and minority professors report more difficulty establishing respect and authority in class (Miller & Chamberlin, 2000; Turner & Myers, 2000)
- Mental health issues of students- in a national survey (2008) 13% of students had been diagnosed with a mental health condition (Hemphill & LaBanc, 2010)
- Older students (may be older than faculty with more life experience)
- Stress and demands on student life- taking too many courses, not prepared, working and raising a family, financial stress, crisis in family



What can we do?

- We cannot eliminate all such behaviors, but we can have an impact by fostering a

Community of Learners



Community of Learners vs. Learning Communities

- **Community of Learners-** Creating a safe learning environment that fosters trust, risk-taking, respect, value in and ownership of learning. (May include creating learning communities)
- **Learning Communities-** Cohorts or groups of individuals who share common emotions, values or beliefs, are actively engaged in learning together and from each other (within a course, within a program or across the university campus)



Tompkins (2010) Community of Learners Revised- note: originally developed for k-12 Literacy

Characteristic	Faculty's Role	Student's Role
Responsibility	Faculty set guidelines and expect students to be responsible. They also model responsible behavior.	Students assume responsibility for their learning and behavior in the classroom.
Opportunities	Faculty provide opportunities for students to engage in genuine and meaningful activities.	Students actively participate in activities.
Engagement	Faculty nurture students' engagement through authentic activities and opportunities to work with classmates.	Students become more engaged in activities
Demonstration	Faculty model what good learners/thinkers do using think-alouds to explain their thinking.	Students carefully observe teachers' demonstrations and then practice by modeling their thinking for classmates.
Risk Taking	Faculty encourage students to take risks while exploring a new idea and de-emphasize the need to always get things "right."	Students understand that learning is a process of taking risks and exploring ideas.
Instruction	Faculty provide explicit instruction through minilessons and provide opportunities for guided practice.	Students participate in minilessons and apply what they're learning in literacy activities.
Response	Faculty provide opportunities for students to respond to articles/books/videos they're reading and to classmates' responses	Students respond to readings in reading logs and grand conversations and listen attentively to classmates share their writing.
Choice	Faculty offer choices because they understand that students are more motivated when they can make choices.	Students make choices about some works they read, projects they create, and compositions they write.
Time	Faculty organize the schedule with large chunks of time for active learning and engagement	Students understand the classroom schedule and complete assignments when they're due.
Assessment	Faculty monitor students' learning and set guidelines about how students will be graded.	Students understand how they will be assessed and often participate in self-assessment.

Suggestions in *Tools for Teaching* (Davis, 2009)

1. Balance authority and approachability
2. Show that you care
3. Reward civil behavior
4. Model correct behavior
 - Undergraduate students' perceptions of irritating faculty behavior include (Nilson, 2010):
 1. Showing up late for class
 2. Not being on-time for office hours
 3. Insulting and making students feel dumb
 4. Not getting to know students
 5. Talking to the board
 6. Not following the syllabus
4. Engage students in active participation in-class



Faculty's Role in Creating a Community of Learners

1. Set the tone for a creating a community of learners
 - Discuss what a “community of learners” is and why it is important
 - Stress the value of course and what they will learn
 - Show passion and interest in what you are teaching
 - Create a safe, trusting, risk-taking environment where inquiry and critical thinking are rewarded
 - Reinforce appropriate behaviors
 - If you observe signs of inappropriate behaviors (disrespect, disruption, danger) respond accordingly
2. Get to know your students
 - Learn their names- even in large classes, try to use strategies to learn names
 - Have them complete a “personal overview” at beginning of semester to learn things about them including their interests, life experience, helpful things to know about them
 - Assess their prior knowledge
 - Welcome and interact with them beginning of each class
 - If you notice student suddenly is not attending or turning in assignments, contact them (email , phone). Follow up with Student Support Services if concerned
 - Use personal examples and life experiences in discussion
3. Set high standards but provide ways to support students success
 - Have clear learning outcomes and assignments and activities that assess the learning outcomes
 - Provide rubrics or marking schemes with assignments
 - Provide clear marking and grading criteria
 - Allow for revisions and rewrites of assignments to demonstrate mastery and improvement
 - Provide strategies and assistance to review material prior to test or due dates
 - Provide referrals for help with tutoring, writing, research, study skills
 - Provide referrals for disability support services, mental health and social work services
 - Have policy for dealing with extenuating circumstances (i.e. death in family, major illness)
 - Encourage students to come to office hours and be available at those times
4. Provide engaging activities.
 - Less teaching=more learning.
 - Have students take ownership for their own learning.
 - Limit “lectures”. Use mini-lessons (10-15 minutes) and then engage in active learning
5. Be well prepared for class (in-class and on-line) and be at class on time (or early)
 - Have all materials and resources ready for class
 - Know how to use the technology and have a back up plan if it doesn't work

Cont.

6. Be specific, detailed and consistent

- Review syllabus, all assignments, schedule and due dates at beginning of semester and do not change them (as circumstance allows).
- If you must change something (schedule due to absence etc.) explain why you are doing this.
- In syllabus, include your behavioral expectations and consequences (i.e. attendance policy, late assignment policy, make-up/extensions, your “decorum expectations”, plagiarism)
- No surprises. Do not add in or change assignments or tests or grading during the semester

7. Be responsive to your students

- Respond quickly to students emails, questions on-line, on-line discussions
- Mark and return exams and assignments quickly
- Provide feedback throughout semester (do not wait until grades are due)
- Post grades quickly
- Set boundaries that support your students but allow you to have some private time- i.e. explain that you will respond to emails within 24 hours between 9-5 on Mondays to Fridays (or what you are comfortable with)

8. Encourage cooperation, interaction and collaboration amongst students

- Provide activities for students to work in groups
- Give thought to how you structure group formation
- Give thought to whether you want to “grade” group work

9. Set personal boundaries

- Time
- Decide if you are going to share your home/cell phone- if you are tell them when they can call and for what reasons (may want to only share your number with graduate students)
- Recommend that you do not allow your students on your personal Facebook/twitter and do not “friend” them. You may want to create a Facebook space for the course
- Encourage students to meet you during your office hours or be willing to set up time that works for both of you. For your protection, keep door ajar, unless a confidential situation needs to be discussed.
- Recommend that you do not socialize with your students 1:1
- Do not “party” or go “drinking” with your students

10. Be human

- Apologize
 - Be honest
 - Admit that you do not know everything
 - Treat students with respect
 - Treat students as adults
 - Use humor
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Activity

- In same small groups, select some of the scenarios, describe what you have done and discuss possible alternatives
- Share back in large group



Share back in large group

- Discuss some examples back in large group and hear different perspectives and responses



Debrief and Summarize

- Questions and Answers
- Reflection on Learning Outcomes:

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