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

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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

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
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
Activity

- 4- Squares- in groups move from one chart paper to the next
- Decorum, Disrespect, Disruption, Danger
- List one or more examples on each chart paper
- Move to next group
- Discuss as group
### Examples of the 4Ds of Behavior

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<td>personal choice - may not be a concern to some faculty - some may see as disrespectful</td>
<td>towards learning and learning environment, towards peers, or towards faculty-in-class or on-line - may overlap with disruption</td>
<td>interferes with learning of others - may include some disrespectful behavior and/or could escalate to dangerous behaviors</td>
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| 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
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)
Characteristics: involve both faculty & students

- Responsibility
- Opportunities
- Engagement
- Demonstration
- Risk Taking
- Instruction
- Response
- Choice
- Time
- 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 creating a community of learners

2. Get to know your students

3. Set high standards but provide ways to support students' success

4. Provide engaging activities.

5. Be well prepared for class (in-class and on-line) and be at class on time (or early)

6. Be specific, detailed and consistent

7. Be responsive to your students

8. Encourage cooperation, interaction and collaboration amongst students

9. Set personal boundaries

10. Be human
Activity

- In same small groups, select some of the scenarios, describe what you have done and discuss possible alternatives
- how would you respond to each situation?
- Move through each group
- Share back in large group
Share back in large group

- Discuss some examples back in large group and hear different perspectives and responses
# Responses to Behaviors

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<td>CALL CAMPUS POLICE, SECURITY and/or DEAN of STUDENTS OFFICE</td>
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<td>Provide Texting/email breaks during class. Consider integrating the text/computer/email in your class</td>
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<td>Consider your own tolerance level. Pick your &quot;battles&quot;. Is this something that I really need to concern myself with?</td>
<td>Contact specific student and set up time to meet to address issue - if student does not follow-up, contact Dean of Students or appropriate university service</td>
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<td>Follow University policies regarding plagiarism, cheating, grade change appeals etc. including reporting to Dean of Students</td>
<td>May need to refer to student support services - Disability Support Services, Counseling as issues may involve emotional/behavioral problems</td>
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## FOUR D’s of PROBLEM CLASSROOM BEHAVIORS

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- Follow University policies regarding plagiarism, cheating, grade change appeals etc. including reporting to Dean of Students

### IMMEDIATE ACTION

- Call Campus Police, Security and/or Dean of Student’s Office
- Activate University Safety Procedures
Debrief and Summarize

• Questions and Answers

• Reflection on Learning Outcomes:

Participants will be able to:

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