

Classroom Behavior Policy Toward a Model of Community

Preamble

Purdue University Northwest supports the principles of freedom of expression for both faculty and students. The University respects the rights of faculty to teach and students to learn. Maintenance of these rights requires conditions in the learning environment that do not impede the learning process. Disruptive behavior will not be tolerated. An individual engaging in such behavior may be subject to disciplinary action.

Definition of Civil Behaviors

Purdue University Northwest places a priority on student learning. We value the inherent worth and dignity of every person, thereby fostering a community of mutual respect. We believe that in order to achieve these ideals, all Purdue University Northwest students are expected, while in the role as student or representative of the university, to exhibit and practice civil behaviors, defined as behaviors that:

1. **Communicate** in a professional and courteous manner in all forms, and at all times, whether verbal, non-verbal or written.
2. **Respect** faculty, staff, fellow students, guests, and all university property, policies, rules, and regulations.
3. **Take responsibility** for one's choices and actions.
4. **Accept consequences** of one's inappropriate choices and actions.

Other Definitions

1. **Learning environments** shall include any interaction of faculty member(s) and students for the purposes of teaching and learning authorized by Purdue University Northwest or any of its units.
2. **Faculty member** shall include all persons authorized by Purdue University Northwest or any of its units to conduct instruction of students enrolled in the University's courses or programs.
3. **Obstruction or Disruption of a University activity** means unlawful or objectionable acts or conduct (1) which seriously threaten the ability of the University to maintain its facilities available for performance of its educational activities, (2) which are in violation of the reasonable rules and standards of the University designed to protect the academic community from unlawful conduct, or (3) which present a serious threat to person or property of the academic community.
4. **University activity** means any teaching, research, administrative, disciplinary function, proceedings, ceremony, or activity conducted by or under the authority of the University.
5. **University property** means property owned, controlled, used, or occupied by the University.

Students' Rights and Responsibilities

Students have the right to a learning environment free of disruptive behaviors.

Faculty Rights and Responsibilities

Faculty has the right and responsibility to define expected behavior consistent with university policy, as well as address and manage disruptive student behavior. Faculty reserves the right to adjust behavior expectations at any given time.

Learning Environment Behavior

In order to effectively communicate behavioral expectations to students, it is recommended that faculty include expected behaviors in their course syllabus. Students are expected to comply with regulations regarding civility, attendance, and appropriate behavior.

Recommended Guidelines for Managing and Addressing Student Incivility in a Learning Environment:

- 1. Include a clear statement of behavior expectations as part of your syllabus, and also explain them at the start of the course.**
The most important step in managing and/or addressing student behavior is to define behavior expectations at the start of the course and reinforce (communicate) them throughout the semester, or as needed. Many problems arise in the learning environment when there is a difference of opinion in what is acceptable behavior. A student may assume certain types of behaviors are appropriate and then proceed to practice them. As the instructor, you are the authority and it is your expectations, as consistent with university policy, which must be followed. Therefore, define your expectations and explain them to students so that all students will know acceptable standards of behavior in our university setting. **Consult addendum for sample wording on syllabus regarding civility.**
- 2. Reinforce behavior expectations by explaining them, and therefore reinforcing them (communicate) throughout the semester, or as needed.**
Because students may enter the university without adequate knowledge of the behaviors that are appropriate to our educational environment, you may need to educate and remind them of the expectations.
- 3. Explain that your clearly defined statement of behavior expectations is not an exhaustive list; therefore, no disruptive behavior will be tolerated.**
Disruptive behavior is a violation of the **Regulations Governing Student Conduct, Disciplinary Proceedings and Appeals**, and may be sanctioned under these regulations. The latest copy of the **Regulations Governing Student Conduct, Disciplinary Proceedings and Appeals** is available on-line.

Recommended Progressive Approach to Handling Disruption in the Learning Environment

A progressive approach is recommended. It is strongly encouraged that the instructor attempt to speak directly with the student about the incident to explain the disruptive nature of the behavior and the further consequences for the student should the behavior continue. The goal is to remediate the situation BEFORE elevating to Level 1. Instructors may wish to review the behavioral expectations again with the entire class. They may remind the class that no disruptive behavior will be tolerated. However, there are some behaviors that may require more immediate and severe action, including dismissing the class or calling the University Police. Faculty may go directly to level three, if needed. Some examples of when this may occur could include but are not limited to the following: physical violence is being threatened or has erupted, appears imminent, and/or loud arguments have ensued, to the point that the entire integrity of the educational environment has been seriously diminished or compromised. Actions addressing the disruptive behavior will be recorded on the **Handling Disruption in Learning Environments** form.

Level 1 of Disruptive Behavior: Personal, Specific Informal Warning

If the verbal attempt is not successful and the disruptive behavior continues, the instructor will record disruption and discussion/action on **Handling Disruption in the Learning Environment** form, give the student a copy, keep a copy as part of their files, and forward the original document to the department head. Also, the student should review the **Regulations Governing Student Conduct, Disciplinary Proceedings and Appeals**. The student may also record his/her comments on form. This communication serves as the first warning. Instructors are encouraged to document this communication through electronic modes such as email, as appropriate.

Level 2 of Disruptive Behavior: Personal, Specific Formal Warning

If the informal written warning is not successful and the disruptive behavior, the instructor will document the incident. The student will be given a written warning and the specific disruptive behavior exhibited will be documented on the **Handling Disruption in Learning Environments** form. At this point, the student is REQUIRED to meet, in person, with both the instructor AND the Department Head to discuss the further consequences for the student should the behavior continue. The student will not be permitted to attend the class until AFTER this meeting. The option to move the student to another section, with knowledge and permission of instructor, department head and/or Dean, should be explored. The student will receive a copy, a copy will be kept as part of their files, and the original document will be forwarded to the department head. The Office of the Dean of Students should be notified about the incident prior to meeting with the student. A representative from the Office of the Dean of Students may attend the meeting.

Level 3 of Disruptive Behavior: Action Taken

If disruptive behavior continues, to be taken as follows:

- Record disruption and discussion/action on Handling Disruption in Learning Environments form, give the student a copy (Student may also record his/her comments on form.), keep a copy as part of your files, and forward the original document to the department head and
- The instructor will petition to have the student removed from the course, and
- The Dept. Head will:
 - refer the student to The Office of the Dean of Students for further discussion/actions, and
 - send copies of the documentation of the incidents to the Dean of Students Office
 - send a request to the Registrar to have the student administratively withdrawn from the course, and

When to Call the University Police?

If, at any time, a student is posing a threat of violence or unlawful behavior to him/herself or others by being verbally or physically abusive, aggressive, or refusing to leave the classroom upon your request, call, or instruct a student to call, the University Police immediately. Any threat of violence should be taken seriously.

Counseling Center

A primary purpose of the Counseling Center is to provide counseling and psychotherapy to Purdue Northwest students experiencing emotional concerns. Counseling Center personnel are also available to consult with staff and faculty members on how to help emotionally distressed students.

Sample Syllabus Language

In order to effectively communicate behavioral expectations to students, it is recommended that the following language be included in each course syllabus:

Students are expected to comply with University regulations regarding civility, attendance, and appropriate classroom behavior. What are examples of disruptive behavior?

Classroom behaviors

- Inappropriate use of personal technology (cell phones, laptops, etc.)
- Yelling and/or screaming during class
- Threats of violence or physical assault
- Actions that intimidate and/or harass others
- Excessive noise or movement
- Excessive tardiness
- Coming to class inebriated

Handling Disruption in Learning Environments – Template

From:

Re:

Student ID:

CRN-Course-Section:

Semester/Year:

Instructions: Record disruption and action. Give student a copy of form and forward original copy to the department for review/action and placement in the student’s file. Document the interactions electronically, as appropriate.

- **Level 1 of Disruptive Behavior Remediation:** Explain Verbal Informal Warning and Discussion/electronic communication (attach email, if appropriate)
- **Level 2 of Disruptive Behavior Remediation:** Explain Written Formal Warning and Discussion/electronic communication (attach email, if appropriate)
- **Level 3 of Disruptive Behavior Remediation:** Explain
Please indicate action to be taken:
 - Administratively withdraw student from class (must have signature approval of Dept. Head or Dean and refer to Dean of Students for further discussion/action). Student may appeal. See Appeal Process.
 - Change student to another section (with knowledge and permission of instructor, Dept. Head/Dean).
 - Other action as deemed necessary.
Explain:

Faculty Signature: _____ **Date:** _____

Other Approval: _____ **Date:** _____

Student Signature Acknowledges Receipt of Notice: _____ **Date:** _____

Student Comments: _____