

BEHAVIORAL CONCERNS IN THE CLASSROOM

Common Behavioral Issues

Most of these problems can be handled with traditional classroom management techniques. The bulleted items are suggestions for dealing with each type of issue; please consider these options and any other good practices you know of.

Cell Phones (Ringing, Talking, Texting)

- Make clear your policy from the beginning
- Ask the student to stay after class to discuss the problem/follow up with an email to reiterate expectations
- Use humor

Tardiness, Leaving Early, Leaving Class Frequently

- Make clear your policy from the beginning and include expectations in your syllabus
- Ask the student to stay after class to discuss the problem/follow up with an email to reiterate expectations
- Focus on distraction to others and content missed
- Ask student if there's a reason (transportation, childcare, etc.)

Inappropriate Chatter

- Casually move toward/stand by the talkers while instructing to better control the classroom space
- Ask (without sarcasm) for their input
- Call on others near them
- Make a general statement that you need everyone's attention
- Ask the student(s) to stay after class to discuss problems/follow up with an email to reiterate expectations

Domination of Discussions

- Ask others to "add to Bill's response"
- Call on individual students
- Ask for an answer from another section of the room
- Talk with the student outside of class, pointing out the importance of letting other students answer

Shyness/Nonparticipation

- Ask a variety of questions (factual, open-ended, exploratory, etc.)
- Create small groups
- Draw on students' individual experiences
- Provide a writing prompt first, and then ask people to share ideas

Sleeping

- Stand near the student
- Talk with the student outside of class to determine what's causing the problem and reiterate expectations

Arguing/Whining/Being Negative

- Remain calm and professional
- Acknowledge the student's feelings
- Ask the student to explain, support his/her argument
- Point out that the work is required
- Mention that you'll think about, look into complaints
- Speak to the student outside of class

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Disrespect

- Stay calm; keep in mind that the student may have other issues
- Talk very quietly to the student
- Tell the student you will be happy to talk after class
- Give the student a way to back down without losing face

Flirting with Instructor/Students

- Talk to the student outside of class about appropriate behavior
- Warn the student that his/her actions could be taken as harassment

Alcohol/Marijuana Smell (no clear impairment)

- Take note of the situation and see if it happens again
- Talk to the student outside of class/email, delicately, and give information on policies/expectations about the College's resources

Excessive Absences

- Make sure you have a clear make-up policy in the syllabus
- Email/call to find out the problem and explain consequences of absence
- Speak with the student outside of class about the problem and effects
- Tell the student you will be happy to allow make-up work if he/she can provide documentation of a serious situation.

ANY OF THE ABOVE PROBLEMS COULD ESCALATE INTO A SERIOUS BEHAVIORAL ISSUE. IF YOU FEEL THAT STANDARD CLASSROOM MANAGEMENT TECHNIQUES ARE NOT WORKING AND THE SITUATION IS WORSENING, PLEASE FOLLOW THE PLAN OUTLINED BELOW.

Serious Behavioral Issues

These types of problems require prompt action on the part of the instructor:

Threats/physical violence

Obvious intoxication/impairment

Elevated disruption/cursing directed at instructor/students

Behaviors presenting as psychological issues

Suicidal/homicidal behavior

Sexual harassment

For emergency or immediate assistance, call the Columbus State Police Department at 614-287-2525 or 9-1-1 from any location. CSCC has a Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT) to follow up with and provide support for serious issues. In non-emergency situations, submit a report or consult with a member of the BIT. They will coordinate a team response to the issue and keep you informed. Please also inform your supervisor or chairperson about the ongoing issue. Again, if you feel threatened, trust your instincts and call the Columbus State Police Department—better safe than sorry.

For a link to the Behavior Intervention Team Brochure with additional resources, please view <https://www.csccl.edu/employee/faculty/classroom-management/behavioral-intervention-team.shtml>

Department of Student Life • Office of Student Conduct