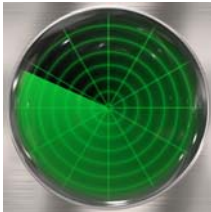


Dealing with a Range of Inappropriate Student Behaviors



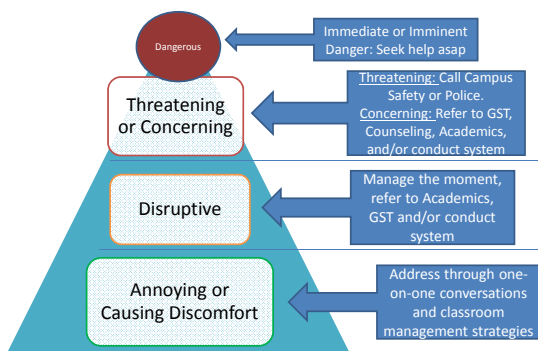
Sarah Holtan, Ph.D.
Dean of Students
Associate Professor of Communication

Students May:

- Have an “odd” personality
- Have a psychological condition or physical or learning disability
- Challenge your opinions or information (in a respectful, appropriate manner)
- Have a criminal history
- Have different cultural expectations
- Be socially immature

Students May Not:

- Significantly disrupt the educational environment so that others cannot learn
- Engage in or threaten violence
- Steal, cheat, harrass, etc.
- Fail to comply with directions of University officials
- Violate the set policies or standards of the University, class, or office



The Range of Inappropriate Behaviors

Indicators of Threatening & Concerning Behaviors

- Threats of violence, direct or indirect
- Acts of physical aggression
- Articulation of depression, hopelessness, or self-harm*
- Mention of weapons or violence as a way to solve problems*
- Expressions of anger, agitation, inability to cope with stress*
- Reports of abuse, domestic violence, sexual assault*

**Often mentioned in written work; consult with Dave Enters or Dr. Anne Spahr in Counseling*

Threatening Behaviors: Managing the Moment

- If there is no apparent immediate or imminent danger, but you feel compromised:
 - Protect yourself and others by clearing the room
 - Set immediate goals, if appropriate
 - Walk individual to place of support (e.g., Counseling Center, Campus Safety)
 - Call Campus Safety or police if warranted
 - **Tip:** Have a couple students and yourself pre-program the C.S. and local police # into cell phones and/or empower all students to call if they believe assistance is needed
 - **Tip:** Carry a two-way radio (obtained through C.S.)
 - Be cautious about body language and personal limitations; don't talk down or show fear to student
 - If behavior escalates, tell student you need a short break and call/go for help

Threatening Behaviors: Following Up

- Refer to Good Samaritan Team and/or Academics, if appropriate
 - Call or email any GST member, such as:
 - Sarah Holtan
 - Randy Ferguson
 - Dave Enters or Anne Spahr
- Refer to the conduct system by calling or emailing Sarah Holtan (documentation helpful)

Indicators of Disruptive Behaviors

- Yelling or being excessively loud
- Distracting other students
- Major hygiene concerns
- Seemingly under the influence of substances
- Refusing to leave or cooperate
- Destruction of property
- Not complying with instructions
- Escalating low-level behaviors

What to do with Disruptive Behaviors

- Manage the Moment:
 - Can excuse student from class or give reminder of appropriate behavior
 - Pull aside after class or set up private meeting
 - Clarify expectations and what will happen if not met going forward (e.g., conduct system)
- Refer to Dr. Randy Ferguson in Academics, with documentation
- Refer to GST, if appropriate (Randy is a member of GST)
- Consult with Dave Enters or Anne Spahr in Counseling
- If behavior continues, refer to conduct system, if appropriate, by calling or emailing Sarah Holtan (documentation helpful)

Indicators of Annoying or Causing Discomfort Behaviors

- Staring
- Not picking up on social cues
- Interrupting you or others
- Talking loudly
- Asking excessive questions
- Talking about irrelevant topics
- Violating personal space boundaries
- Rude/disrespectful behavior (e.g., swearing)
- Threatening to sue you or asking to speak to your supervisor
- Monopolizing your time
- Crying
- Inappropriate use of cell phone, laptop, etc.
- Not engaging in class or doing homework

How have we responded to these kinds of behaviors in the past? How do we feel during these incidents?

- Ignored them
- Got defensive
- Sat the student down for a private conversation
- Referred out
- Others...?

How have we responded to these kinds of behaviors in the past? How do we feel during these incidents?

- Ignored them
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- Sat the student down for a private conversation
- Referred out
- Others...?
- Do you respond differently when you know the student?
- The unknown student may seem "scarier."

How have we responded to these kinds of behaviors in the past? How do we feel during these incidents?

- Ignored them
- Got defensive
- Sat the student down for a private conversation
- Referred out
- Others...?

Give yourself permission to feel uncomfortable. And trust your instincts when something feels "off."

Annoying and Uncomfortable Behaviors: Managing the Moment

- Address it in the moment as best you can
 - **Tip:** Can address behavior in general to whole class first rather than specific offenders
- Determine best way to talk to student individually (consult if not sure)
- Use clear, direct, respectful communication to set expectations and consequences
- Provide opportunity and support for student to comply

Reasons to Act...

- To stop the behavior, and to prevent escalation of behaviors
- Maintain the quality of the educational environment (and your credibility as a professional)
 - Ignoring the situation may leave other students feeling vulnerable and victimized and give tacit permission for the behavior to continue.
- Role model life skills by providing feedback and setting expectations for changed behavior

How to Act

- 1) Manage/address what you can
 - **Tip:** Explain ahead of time any material or topic you plan to introduce that is sensitive or controversial, so that students are prepared. Discuss expectations for the dialogue and provide students with specific ways to frame their opinions. Model expected behavior. If a student is struggling, connect him/her to Counseling services.
- 2) Document the facts and observed behaviors related to the incident in an objective way
 - See *handout titled, "Guidelines and Sample Documentation of Incidents"*
- 3) Refer and/or report the behaviors you are unable to manage/address

When to Refer and/or Report

	MPD/911/Campus Safety	Student Conduct
What	Emergencies, immediate safety concerns, violations of law	Significant disruption, apparent violations of the Code of Student Conduct
Who	Any current or former student, faculty, or staff, visitor, etc.	Students only
When	Immediately	Timely manner, preferably the day of incident
Why	Immediate threats and for support	Formal action by University may be warranted
How	Call 911 or x4344	Online reporting form https://publicdocs.maxient.com/incidentreport.php?ConcordiaUnivWis or email
Note	Orders of protection, no contact, filing a report, escort service	Matters of academic misconduct are referred to Dr. Randy Ferguson

When to Refer and/or Report

	Counseling	GST
What	Assistance and support for suspected mental health, stress, or coping issues	Potential threat of violence or significant behavioral concerns
Who	Students are given priority; faculty and staff may be referred	Students only
When	As soon as possible	Timely manner, preferably the day of incident
Why	You want the student to receive trained and caring help and support	You want GST to be aware of situation to assess and act if warranted
How	Call or email Dave Enters or Anne Spahr or walk the student to their office area in AL111	Email or call any GST member
Note	Counseling is free and confidential	To report how you addressed a situation

Additional Campus Resources

- Use sample syllabus language for behavioral expectations – also verbally discuss near beginning of semester.
 - See handout titled, “Behavioral Expectations - Sample Syllabus Language”
- Referral guides for GST, Academic Misconduct
- Consultations with Dr. Ferguson, counselors, Campus Safety, Sarah Holtan, any member of GST
- Pre-arranged classroom observations with Randy Ferguson, Sarah Holtan, your chair or dean
- Code of Student Conduct, located at: www.cuw.edu/consumerinformation

Prevention is the Best Strategy: Faculty Tips

- Learn and use students’ names
- Display genuine care and concern for students
- Set and discuss behavioral expectations and consequences – in writing and verbally (*see sample syllabus language*)
- Anticipate high-risk/sensitive course content
- Manage your own personal triggers (e.g., misuse of electronic devices)
- Establish your authority and respond individually to inappropriate behaviors at the lowest possible level

Prevention is the Best Strategy: Staff Tips

- Post office expectations and discuss with student workers
- Discuss “what if” situations and have plans in place
- Provide phone scripts and suggested responses, especially for student workers
- Teach staff how to balance good customer service while not taking abuse
- Consult with counselors, GST members or others

Preparing for Difficult Conversations

- Remind yourself that the conversation is about the behavior but you still need to maintain a relationship with student – this is a delicate balancing act
- Be mindful that the behavior may be a symptom of a deeper issue; we are a compassionate, caring institution
- Identify and manage your own triggers
- Determine best/safest environment to meet
 - **Tip:** May want to have a third party present.
- Seek to understand and address, not judge or make it personal
- Consult with a peer, chair, dean, Randy Ferguson, Dave Enters, Anne Spahr, or Sarah Holtan beforehand

-See handout titled, "Outline for Difficult Conversations"

What about a student with a disability?

- A disability is NOT a reason to hold someone to a different standard; no "free passes"
- If a student discloses a disability, inform him/her to connect with the LRC. You may also contact the LRC with questions.
- Ask about the behavior:
 - A problem in the past or elsewhere?
 - Are you connected with campus resources to assist in helping you to change your behavior?
- Strategize with student ways to align behavior with expectations

What about FERPA and students' rights?

- FERPA is a federal law that governs students' educational records. You should not feel concerned about sharing info regarding a possible threat or concern with other **campus officials**, as long as there is a "legitimate educational interest" in the info. You can always ask: "Why do you want to know?" when in doubt.
- Students' rights in the conduct system are outlined in the Code of Student Conduct.
- Students' grievances policies are outlined in the Student Handbook.

Thank you... any questions?

Note: Much of the information provided in this presentation was adapted from Laura Bennett and Cyndi Vasquez-Barrios' presentation at the ASCA 25th Annual Conference in February 2013, with their explicit permission.