Eating, Sleeping, Belching and other things you don’t need in the classroom
“I’ve been teaching 26 years and this is the first time I’ve ever dealt with anything like this!”
Incivility is on the Rise

- U.S. News & World Report survey of adult Americans:
  - 90% see incivility as a serious social problem
  - 78% think incivility is worse than it was a decade ago
Disruptive Classroom Behavior is Conduct that Significantly:

- Interferes with teaching and learning
- Detracts from the educational process
- Often annoys both the professor and classmates
In a national survey of Counseling Center directors, 85% of counselors reported seeing an increase in students with severe psychological problems over the last five years.

Typically, students who are being disruptive or acting out in a bizarre way are doing so for a variety of reasons not related to a psychological disability.
Disruptive behaviors range on a continuum from less severe . . .

- Inappropriate comments
- Monopolizing conversation
- “Know it all” attitude
- Snoozing in class
- Coming late / leaving early
- Cell phone use
- Making loud, distracting noises
to more severe behavior

- Verbal abuse, intimidation
- Shouting, profanity
- Threats, stalking
- Physical aggression
- Throwing objects
- Refusing to leave
Disruptive or Dishonest Neomillennial Students

- Consumer mentality
  - “I want it NOW!”
  - “I pay your salary.”

- High technology – low touch; limited social skills

- Levels of stress, anxiety, parental pressure are increasing

- Protected from consequences

- A degree means more than an education

- Cheating is like speeding - no big deal, everybody does it, won’t get caught
Non-traditional students are typically a great asset to any class. However, there can be exceptions…

- Personal, financial, family stress may underlie classroom disruptions
- Under prepared and frustrated
- Bringing children to class
- Expert on everything – disrespectful of other students or inexperienced instructor
- Lack of time may coincide w/ plagiarism
Basic classroom management techniques can effectively prevent and curtail most disruptive behavior and decrease cheating.
Be Proactive!

Include academic and behavioral expectations on course syllabus

Behavioral Expectations

- Turn off cell phone
- Punctuality; attendance; participation
- No side conversations
- No sleeping, eating
- No reading unrelated materials or using lap top
- Guidelines for civil discussion
Maintaining Classroom Decorum

- Remind students to take turns talking
- Make eye contact with students talking, stand by them, pause until everyone quiets down
- Ask for everyone’s undivided attention
- “Let’s focus on the topic - personal conversations are distracting.”
Recognize upset student’s feelings and move on.

“It’s fine to disagree. What do other’s think?”

Learn names. Call on students.

Vary teaching methods.
Disruptive students often don’t realize they’re bothering others. Most respond well to a firm, but friendly conversation after class.
Early Intervention

- Define disruptive behavior
- Explain how it is affecting the learning environment
- Describe the behaviors that must stop
- Articulate future consequences if behaviors continue
- Keep detailed documentation
Chronic Situations

- Give student warning to cease behavior
- Give student choice of leaving class for the remainder of the period or ceasing behavior
- Meet with student before student is allowed to return
- Move student to a different course section
- Refer to campus disciplinary officer
Frequency of Campus Violence

~4200 colleges enrolling 16 million students

With the exception of Virginia Tech, the total # of homicides on campus/yr has fluctuated between 9 and 24 the past decade. — School of Ed, U of VA 2007

Homicide rate on campus = .28 deaths per 100,000 people compared to 5.5 deaths per 100,000 people nationally — FBI and U. S. Dept. of Ed.
The following cluster of behavior warrants consultation, documentation, and referral.

- Violent, angry writings
- Little eye contact
- Socially isolated, rejected, bullied, teased
- Depressed, suicidal
- Sulking, delusional, obsessive
- Substance abuse history
- Unable to handle losses & failure
- Harbors grudges
- Disclosure of violent plans to peers
Odd behavior alone is not a crime or grounds for discipline.

“Even though school shooters share some of the same characteristics, most of the people who share them don’t become violent like this.” - Patrick Nolan. University of Illinois, Medical School Department of Psychiatry

“There is no accurate or useful profile of the school shooter.”
– U.S. Secret Service

- The best predictor of future violence is a history of violence.

Intervene, don’t ignore odd behavior or threats of violence.

Avoid profiling or stereotyping; factually document your observations.
Intervention

- You may feel intrusive, but many students respond favorably to knowing that others noticed their despondency and cared enough to say something.
- “Lately, I’ve noticed you seem quiet and sad. You have trouble keeping your eyes open in class.”
- I’m concerned and want to make sure you’re doing okay.”
- Assist in problem solving & offer referrals
Serious Incidents / Safety Concerns

- Instruct student to leave class
- Dismiss class, if necessary
- Contact Security, police, disciplinary officer, County Mental Health
- Harassment Restraining Orders
The Student Conduct Code is a Technical Standard that all Students must Fulfill

- If a student with a psychological disability cannot conform, the student is not otherwise qualified.

- ADA permits discipline even if misconduct is directly related to a psychological disorder if all students are held to the same standard.

- Discipline can be more effective than counseling in quickly stopping a disruptive behavior.
Seek consultation. Counselors can . . .

- Provide helpful suggestions for understanding and responding to challenging student situations
- Provide you with support and affirmation
- Help you “detach” and focus on teaching
- Advise you on how to suggest counseling to a student
Counselors cannot work magic.
Academic Misconduct
“Cheating 101: Paper Mills and You”

Tips for Detecting Plagiarism
Coastal Carolina University

www.coastal.edu/library/presentations/papermil.html
Sample Academic Misconduct Notice on Course Syllabus:

As members of the University community, students assume the responsibility to fulfill their academic commitments in a fair, honest and appropriate manner. This responsibility includes avoiding such inappropriate activities as plagiarism, cheating or collusion. Also prohibited is the disruption or obstruction of classroom and/or college activities. Students found responsible for these activities may face both academic sanctions (such as lowering a grade, failing the course, etc.) and disciplinary sanctions (such as probation, suspension or expulsion).

It is the intent of Minnesota State to encourage a sense of integrity on the part of students in fulfilling their academic requirements. To give students a better understanding of behaviors that may constitute academic dishonesty, the following definitions are provided.

Forms of academic misconduct include, but are by no means limited to:
- Plagiarism – submitting another individual’s work or ideas as your own, including but not limited to, homework assignments, term papers, research reports, lab reports, group projects, tests, or class presentations. Paraphrasing without proper citation is also plagiarism.
- Submitting another individual’s work as your own with minor alterations.
- Submitting another individual’s work without appropriate use of quotations, footnotes or references.
- Submitting the same work for credit for more than one course without written permission from all instructors involved.
- Submitting or presenting falsified research.
- Copying from another individual during any type of examination.
- Receiving answer to an exam from another student during an examination or communication of answers to an exam with other students; this includes allowing other students to copy off one’s exam during a test.
- Tampering with an examination after it has been corrected.
- Using any material not permitted by the instructor on examination.
- Requesting, acquiring, possession or providing another person with an examination or portion of an examination without consent of the instructor.
- Changing, attempting to change or falsify academic records, including attendance records or sign-in sheets.
- Aiding another student in the performance of any of the above acts.
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