
Threatening or Alarming Behavior

Sometimes behavior is more than just thoughtless or rude. Signs of threatening/alarming behavior include:

- Saying or doing inappropriate things to test boundaries and/or to get a reaction.
- Using derogatory or profane language in an angry manner.
- Communicating in a hostile, aggressive, or violent manner.
- Escalating behavior (e.g., louder voice, faster speech, pacing).
- Making threats such as “If I don’t pass this course, someone will pay,” “I better graduate or else.”
- Speaking incoherently with unconnected thoughts, garbled speech.

When You or Others Feel Threatened

- If you believe there is an imminent threat of physical harm or the classroom environment is compromised, dial 911. Identify your location, describe the behavior, and request assistance.
- Inform your department chair that it was necessary to contact University Police.
- Notify the Millersville Threat Assessment Team at 717-872-3717.

Important Contacts:

University Police
717-872-3911 (Emergency)
717-872-3433 (Non-emergency)

Office of the Vice-President for Student Affairs
717-872-3594

MU Threat Assessment Team (TAT@MU)
717-872-3717

Counseling Center
717-872-3122

Student Health Services
717-872-3250

Office for Judicial Affairs
717-872-5841

The Student Code of Conduct may be viewed in the Millersville University Student Handbook at:

[http://www.millersville.edu/
judicialaffairs/files/
studentcodeofconduct.pdf](http://www.millersville.edu/judicialaffairs/files/studentcodeofconduct.pdf)

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Millersville University is an Equal Opportunity/Affirmative Action institution. Coordinators: Services for Students with Disabilities—Dr. Sherlynn Bessick, Director, Office of Learning Services, Lyle Hall, 717-872-3178; Title VI and Title IX— Mr. Hiram G. Martinez, Assistant to the President for Social Equity and Diversity, Delaware House, 717-872-3787; ADA Coordinator—Mr. Louis DeSol, Associate Vice President for Human Resources, Dilworth Building, 717-872-3017.

A Member of the Pennsylvania State System of Higher Education.

4316-1211

Addressing Disruptive Student Behavior

A Guide for Millersville University Faculty
Compiled and Distributed by TAT@MU

Millersville University
SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY

Addressing Disruptive Student Behavior

A Guide for Millersville University Faculty

Faculty, do you have students who do the following in your classes?

- *Arrive late or leave early?*
- *Text their friends or talk on their cell phones?*
- *Eat or drink?*
- *Talk with their classmates?*
- *Interrupt discussions or make inappropriate remarks?*
- *Refuse to follow class rules or your instructions?*

Disruptive behavior in the classroom interferes with teaching and learning. Some faculty may be reluctant to confront such behavior because they do not know how to respond, worry about inflaming a difficult situation, or fear a lack of support from the University. However, disruptive behavior should not be tolerated and may worsen if ignored.

Your Rights as a Faculty Member

You have the right to direct students to cease disruptive classroom behavior immediately. If it becomes necessary, you can also direct students to leave your classroom for the rest of the class period. If they fail to comply with your directive to cease their disruptive behavior or to leave the classroom, you should promptly report their failure to do to the Student Affairs Office.

If the student persists in behaving in a disruptively manner and ignores your directive to cease their behavior or to leave the classroom, you may call University Police and ask them to intervene and remove the student in the least disruptive manner possible from your classroom.

Preventive Measures Faculty Can Take

- Include specific expectations for student behavior (e.g., no cell phones, no tardiness, etc.) during your class introduction and in your syllabus.
 - Confer with your department chair and colleagues on ways they prevent or respond to disruptive behavior.
 - Model the behavior you expect of your students.
 - Respond to disruptive behavior when it occurs. Ignoring it WILL NOT make it disappear.
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Suggestions for Responding to Disruptive Behavior

- Immediately ask the student to stop the behavior. After class, speak privately with the student about his/her conduct.

When you speak privately with the student...

- Be specific about the behavior that is disruptive.
- Explain the effect the behavior has on the classroom environment.
- Address how you feel about their behavior (e.g., communicate your frustration).
- Allow the student to respond.
- Restate your expectations for the student's future behavior in class.

If the Disruptive Behavior Continues

- Some disruptive behavior simply reflects bad manners and a lack of consideration for others. If such conduct persists, inform the student that you will report it to the Student Affairs Office and the case will be treated as a violation of the University's Student Code of Conduct. Behaving in disruptive ways in a class and failing to comply with your directives are violations of University policy and will result in disciplinary action.
 - In other cases, disruptive behavior can be a result of psychological problems or other medical conditions. If you suspect the behavior with which you are dealing could be caused by such difficulties, you should contact the Counseling Center for advice on how to respond.
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