

## HANDLING DISRUPTIVE STUDENTS

### Q&A

(When panel members offered more than one answer to a question, the responses are separated by color or italics.)

Q 1: What do you suggest if you hear someone in the hallway on a cell phone (or pay phone) that is using loud and/or vulgar language? They may be interrupting a class or offices or just people in general that happen to be sharing the hallway.

**An instructor whose class is being disrupted may 1) approach the student and ask him/her to lower his/her voice, or 2) contact Public Safety and let them approach the student**

*-If they are disrupting instruction in a classroom clearly they could be asked to cease. For general disruption not disrupting instruction I suspect whatever is in the Student Code of Conduct will rule. Advise the person of the disruption his/her behavior activity is causing. Request them to stop. If it persists, contact Public Safety.*

Q 2: RE: Children on campus: What should you do about children brought to the classroom by a parent/guardian? What if they leave the child/children in the hallway or snack room without an adult? What if the parent/guardian is present but yelling or punishing the child?

**This is addressed in the Student Handbook, page 50:**

**Children are welcome to visit the campus, but for their safety they must be supervised by adults at all times. MCC does not assume responsibility for the safety of children left unattended, and unattended children may be reported to Child Protective Services. Children in classrooms are disruptive to the educational process. Out of consideration for the teaching and learning process, students, staff and visitors are not permitted to have children accompany them into college classrooms and/or laboratories whether the children are disruptive or not. The only exceptions are pre-arranged tours, field trips, or college-coordinated programs for children.**

*-If child appears abandoned or being abused it may verge on the possibility of 'a child in need of protection.' Maybe an FIA (social services) issue? Perhaps the appropriate answer is with their regulations?*

Q 3: What would you suggest about faculty who choose to have students stick around following a final exam to wait for grades, especially when you know that one or more of these students might fail the course based upon this grade? (this failure could eliminate them from the program they are in) Is this practice really safe for that faculty member or others working in the area? (The stress of waiting days may be more stressful for the student but they wouldn't be in a group of students that are already stressed.) (I would suggest the faculty use Blackboard so the student has quick access once the instructor inputs the grades but there may be a better solution.)

**It is the prerogative of the instructor. It might be an idea to discuss this at a division meeting if there is concern for the safety of the faculty or others in the area.**

*-If there was a specifically identified individual who had demonstrated previous unsafe or dangerous behaviors, likely an individual approach (in consultation with Campus Safety and perhaps Counseling) would be appropriate with that individual. Hopefully however teachers would not have to be afraid of telling students directly they were unsuccessful.*

Q 4: How would you suggest we handle the expression of sexual thoughts and emotions towards other students or faculty - either expressed in email correspondence or stated directly?

**If you are the instructor you should let the student know if this offends you and constitutes inappropriate behavior. If the student continues, process an Incident Report for a violation of the Student Code of Conduct.**

*-Tell the student that for a teacher it would be unethical to enter into a dual relationship with a student. Suggest avoid such communication using e mail however; better face-to-face (possibly involve witness (or Counselor or Public Safety when or if appropriate). For student-to-student, suggest that they convey such thoughts in a setting outside the classroom.*

Q 5: Do you have sample statements that we might include in syllabi that addresses (prohibit) disruptive behaviors? Would you recommend that the divisions or disciplines adopt standard policies to include?

**The definition of Disruptive Behavior varies. Decide the behaviors that you deem offensive or inappropriate, whether it is the use of cell phones, sleeping, swearing, constant interruptions, tardies, threats or gum-chewing (this is a joke), and include these in your syllabus. The students are then aware of your expectations and will usually behave accordingly, or know that they may face Code of Conduct violations.**

**We would encourage faculty to share policy statements that work. Divisions or disciplines may want to consider adopting common policy statements.**

Q 6: What is the appropriate course of action when you know that a student has drugs in his/her possession?

**Drug possession is an act of prohibited conduct. Notify Public Safety to remove the student from the class and initiate charges upon verification.**

**-Consult with Campus Public Safety, and advise Assoc. Dean, before acting**

*Contact Public Safety, let them determine the probable cause issues, involved with each incident.*

Q 7: What policies are violated, what procedures should I follow if students use obscene language in the classroom?

**You define obscene language for your classroom. Inform the student. If such language use continues, file a Code of Conduct report.**

**-Student Code of Conduct and class rules.**

*Follow procedures for handling disruptive student behaviors.*

Q 8: What can I do if I suspect a student of cheating on a test, but they deny? What is the policy for using the Testing Center?

**You can allow them to retake the test (or a slightly different version) or you can fail them for the test. Even if they deny the charge, your decision is the prevailing decision. You may want to give 3 or 4 versions of a test each time, with the questions in different rotation, etc.**

**The Testing Center administers tests for most distance learning courses and make-up tests for on-campus classes.**

**MCC has Academic Integrity policy (Student Handbook, pg 43-44)**

Q 9: Are instructors obliged under law to report to proper authorities attempts to harm another? Some professionals are required to do so (and/or notify potential victim).

**I don't know. Please provide information if you are aware of laws governing.**

Q 10: Is it "disruptive" if a student is sleeping or wearing earphones and listening to music/radio in class? How would you suggest we handle those situations?

**You make this judgement. Many instructors find this behavior inappropriate. List it in your syllabus as disruptive behavior and after warning the student that this behavior is not allowed, file a Code of Conduct report for subsequent incidents.**

**-Your class, your context, your call. However better be able to defend it. Likely better just to have it (no sleeping, earphones, etc.) as a class rule in syllabus therefore no need to get into a definition of disruption.**

Q 11: What information is considered "confidential" or "privileged"? How should this information be handled if a student shares information about themselves or another student?

**FERPA protects the privacy of student educational records. Other information, such as medical treatments, campus security reports, financial records, etc. may also be confidential.**

**Stop a student who reveals information publicly (in the classroom) about another student to prevent liability on his/her part.**

Q 12: When is it appropriate to ask a student to leave the classroom? What if they refuse to leave?

**When a student has been warned of inappropriate behavior, but continues, you may ask the student to leave the classroom. If they refuse to leave, or continue to argue with you, call Public Safety.**

*-When they disrupt the class or refuse to follow class rules. If they refuse, call Campus Public Safety and file a complaint under Student Code of Conduct.*

*Contact Public Safety upon their refusal.*

Q 13: How often should we expect to see Public Safety Officers patrolling halls?

Public Safety Officers randomly patrol the halls and the entire campus as well.

Q 14: Do you have suggestions to stop a student (admitted ADHD) from talking and disrupting every class?

**ADHD is not permission to disrupt a class. Weigh whether the disruption exceeds what you would accept from others in the class. Discuss the situation with Learning Center staff and ask for their suggestions. You are not expected to overlook infractions because of a disability.**

*-Consult with Learning Center. No reasonable accommodation permits class disruption. Students with disabilities are only entitled to reasonable accommodations.*

Q 15: What should I have done when I learned a student worker with a prison record was reported to be selling drugs?

**Contact Public Safety with the information you have. They will take it from there.**

*Contact Public Safety, let them determine the probable cause issues, based on additional information (ex. interview of witness and suspect).*

Q 16: What happens when an instructor checks counseling for a student on the attendance form? Should the instructor add some detail or contact the counseling office to describe the situation?

**Checking 'Counseling' on the Attendance Form triggers a letter to the student informing them of the referral for counseling services. CASD is also informed and the counselor usually contacts the instructor before meeting with the student. If you have not heard from a counselor in a week or two, it may be a good idea to call the counseling department for follow-up.**

*- Counselors call those students. The form should be revised to verify that the Instructor has consulted with the student and also should have a space asking the Counselor to call. However detail should not be put on the form itself as it passes through too many hands.*

We have several programs that require students to interact with the public (i.e. Dental Lab, Clinicals in Hospitals). Several questions were raised for those situations:

Q 17: Who should I contact if there is an incident that occurs in an off-campus setting?

**Depending on the severity of the incident, you may need to call the police or security if present. If the lab or clinic is close to Mott, Public Safety officers will come to the site. If the incident is disruptive but not threatening, notify the Registrar.**

Q 18: How should I handle situations where students use inappropriate language (swearing)? What is appropriate response if instructor observes/overhears? What if it is reported by another student or employee at the site but is denied by the student?

**Explain to the student that you do not allow swearing in the clinic or classroom. If the behavior persists after a warning, file a Code of Conduct report (even if the student denies it)**

Q 19: How should I handle a student who has alcohol on their breath or I suspect/appears to be under the influence of some substance and is scheduled to work with patients or the general public?

**Consumption or possession of alcoholic beverages is prohibited on college premises or at college sponsored activities on or off campus. Ask a student 'under the influence of' who is scheduled to have contact with the public to leave the premises. You can ask Public Safety to support you if the student denies the charge or refuses to leave.**