



# Student Civility

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# Civility Defined

"Connected with citizenship, a community of citizens collectively; ordinary courtesy or politeness; decent respect, consideration; an act or expression of politeness; decency."

Oxford English Dictionary (2<sup>nd</sup> edition)



# Significance of Civility

“Civil discourse encourages the respectful exchange of ideas. This type of interaction becomes a model for discussion in and outside of the classroom and provides a manner of intellectual safety in which to deliberate. When open, thoughtful discussion is structured into the curriculum, students can observe the process of building understanding.”

Rookstool, 2007, *Fostering Civility on Campus*

# Shift in Academic Expectations

## Pre-College Standards

- ☀ Attendance by Law
- ☀ Mandated orientation
- ☀ Teacher responsibility for learning
- ☀ Standardized institutional codes of behavior
- ☀ Grading with consideration to behavior

## College Standards

- ☀ Attendance by Choice
- ☀ Consumer orientation
- ☀ Personal responsibility for learning
- ☀ Course-by-course codes of behavior
- ☀ Grading based on performance only



# Students Rights

Students have the right to...

- expect a safe and engaging learning environment,
- inspect their academic records,
- request a change to inaccurate records,
- consent to disclosures of personally identifiable information,
- file grievances in matters related to conduct and/or academic decisions.



# Students' Responsibilities

Students are responsible to...

- become engaged in the learning environment,
- play an active role in their own learning,
- honor the College's standards for academic integrity,
- sustain a level of civility that promotes learning in and outside of the classroom,
- provide truthful and accurate information in all college documents.



# Challenging Classroom Behavior

- Non-verbal interruptions
- Speaking & responding
- Listening & ignoring
- Interactions with students & faculty
- Technology in the classroom
- Behavior beyond the classroom

# Challenge 1: Non-Verbal Interruption

## Examples

- ☀ Late Arrival
- ☀ Early Departure
- ☀ Gesturing responses
- ☀ Food & Drink
- ☀ Seating/Posturing
- ☀ Silence or Shyness
- ☀ Refuses to participate

## Interventions

- ☀ Eliminate anonymity
- ☀ Clearly identify classroom expectations
- ☀ Respond quickly to concerns
- ☀ Outline consequences and do it!!!

# Challenge 2: Speaking & Responding

## Examples

- ✱ Outbursts
- ✱ Rambling
- ✱ Confrontational responses
- ✱ Dominating dialogue
- ✱ Side-bar conversations

## Interventions

- ✱ Clearly delineated ground rules in syllabus
- ✱ Build appropriate class participation into grading system
- ✱ Sustain vigilance around re-directing dialogue as needed
- ✱ Eject student

# Challenge 3: Listening & Ignoring

## Examples

- ☀ Refuses to participate
- ☀ Preoccupied with matters unrelated to class
- ☀ Interjects unrelated comments into conversation
- ☀ Class-time as naptime
- ☀ Indifference

## Intervention

- ☀ Address student outside of class
- ☀ One-on-one review expectations
- ☀ Consider the behavior a symptom of other issues
- ☀ Intervene if it is academic support
- ☀ Refer student for support



# Challenge 4: Interactions with Faculty & Students

## Examples

- ☀ Rude and/or hostile
- ☀ Heckling & sneering
- ☀ Emotionally effusive
- ☀ Invading personal space
- ☀ Threatening

## Interventions

- ☀ Immediately terminate conversation
- ☀ Eject student from class
- ☀ Refer student to VP of Student Services

# Challenge 5: Technology

## Example

- ☀ Texting
- ☀ Cell phone use (in & out)
- ☀ Inappropriate computer use
- ☀ Recording devices
- ☀ Technology as a mechanism for cheating

## Intervention

- ☀ Clear guidelines for the use of technology in the syllabus
- ☀ Failing grades
- ☀ Eject from class
- ☀ Refer to appropriate VP



# Challenge 6: Behavior beyond the Classroom

## Examples

- ☀ Confrontation or threats over grades
- ☀ Harassing phone calls
- ☀ Students feel threatened by other students

## Intervention

- ☀ Contact campus security
- ☀ Initiate steps in the student code of conduct policy

# Impact on Learning

- Encourages similar behavior from others
- Undermines faculty's authority
- Eliminates opportunities for students to learn from each other
- Discourages other students from becoming engaged
- Infringes on the rights of others to learn
- Disrupts learning from occurring

# Faculty Rights

Faculty have the right to...

- ☀ expect students to exert the required effort or accept the consequences,
- ☀ garner respect and courtesy from students,
- ☀ anticipate that colleagues are upholding similar standards,
- ☀ have confidence that administrators will intervene when requested.



# Faculty Responsibilities

Faculty have responsibility to...

- uphold the same standards of effort that are expected from students,
- show respect and courtesy to students,
- uphold standards of behavior for colleagues' benefit,
- request administrative intervention when necessary.

# Best Practices

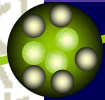
- Coordinate efforts & communications
- Develop codes of conduct that clearly describe institutional expectations
- Clearly delineated (and rapid) responses
- Accountability for behavior supported by progressive discipline
- Comprehensive support systems for students



# Standards for Civility

## Next Steps at Cecil

- Embed in student orientation
- Strengthen discussions of ethics in current curricula
- Establish policies to promote civility
- Adopt formal statements on civility & ethics
- Promote standards for classroom & campus civility in college literature



THANK YOU

QUESTIONS