

FOLLOW UP RESOURCES

- Speak with the student in private as soon as possible after the incident
- Listen and acknowledge
- Be specific about the disruptive behavior
- Consult with colleagues or department chair for insight into addressing situations
- Behavioral contract with student
- Referral to Student Ombuds for help with conflict management, mediation or problem-solving skills

- Make a referral about the student to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity
- Discuss the matter with your department chair

**Call The Behavior Concerns Advice Line
(BCAL) 512-232-5050**

- Report the incident to CCRT if the behavior could be considered bias-related
- Make a referral about the student to Student Conduct and Academic Integrity
- Call the Behavior Concerns Advice Line

GENERAL TIPS (applies to all levels)

- Recognize your authority to address the situation
- Remain calm and respond in a calm manner
- Reiterate classroom and/or discussion ground rules
- Be consistent with addressing ground rules to all students regardless of viewpoint
- Address unknown or uninvited individuals or groups who come to the classroom
- Address inappropriate comments, attacks, or other disruptive behavior while it is occurring
- Recognize the difference between “difficult dialogue, passionate debate” and behavior intended to disrupt the classroom ground rules
- Ask disruptive individuals to leave the classroom
- Document the issue

RESOURCES (applies to all levels)

- Counseling and Mental Health Center
- Student Conduct and Academic Integrity
- UTPD
- Student Emergency Services
- BCAL - Behavior Concerns Advice Line
- University Ombuds



RESPONDING TO

Disruptive or Threatening
Behavior in
the Classroom



The University of Texas at Austin
Office of the Dean of Students
Division of Student Affairs

LEVELS OF DISRUPTION

Involves non-threatening, low-level disruptive behavior that can be resolved informally with the student.

Involves seriously disruptive behavior including behavior that continues or escalates after being addressed by the instructor. Student exhibits clear distress and while threats are made or present, the threat is not realistic or plausible. There is no reason to believe the threatener is likely to follow through with the threat, however, the conflict is escalating.

Involves behavior or language that is threatening and violent. The student is clearly disturbed and has a detached view of reality. The student is at risk for harming self or others.

BEHAVIOR INCLUDES

- Arriving late or leaving class early in a manner that disrupts teaching
- Responding inappropriately to discussion or topics covered
- Not following directions
- interruptions, speaking over instructor and/or other students
- Emotional stress around particular topics; behavior subsides when stressor removed or topic changed
- Apparent mood shifts: Depressed, manic, inappropriate actions
- Debate and contentious arguments
- Non-verbal signs of stress: agitated, tense, uncomfortable, clenching teeth or fists, arms crossed tightly across body, shaking of head e.t.c.

- Continuation of disruptive behavior even after being addressed by the instructor
- Refuses to comply with instructor's directives
- Responds in an inappropriate or disturbing manner (in person, email, phone call) post classroom incident
- Shouting over instructor or other students
- Bullying or intimidating behavior
- Unusual, erratic or bizarre acting
- May be destructive, harmful or threatening to others
- Veiled threats
- Exhibits lack of trust for authority, "us" versus "them" statements
- Unable to regulate emotions, cognition, behavior
- Poor self-care

- Credible verbal or physical threats; specific and concrete
- Performs acts of violence
- Behavior prevents the class from continuing
- Belligerent towards instructor's directives; perceived as overly rude or intimidating
- Unknown or uninvited (individual or group) and refuses to leave or interferes with the instructor's ability to teach
- Student follows-up with threatening or disturbing email or phone call
- Psychotic breaks, hostile or aggressive
- Suicidal or exhibits self-injurious behavior
- Display of a weapon

IMMEDIATE RESPONSE

- Address the behavior
- Reiterate classroom ground rules
- Evaluate for disability or medical referral
- Notice when differences in opinion become polarizing

- Address the behavior with the disruptive student
- Reiterate classroom ground rules
- Evaluate for disability or medical referral
- Take a short break to diffuse the situation
- Request that the disruptive student leave the classroom

CALL 911 - UTPD