UB Student Guide

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Behavioral Expectations in the Learning Space



All students at the University at Buffalo have the right to a learning environment free from behaviors that disrupt the learning process.

Students are expected to abide by the behavioral expectations outlined by an instructor for a learning space. Behavioral expectations set by an instructor are considered a reasonable request from a university official; students who fail to abide by set expectations may be in violation of the Student Code of Conduct.

The university recognizes that instructors are responsible for effective management of classroom and learning environments to promote conditions that will enhance student learning. Accordingly, instructors should set reasonable rules for classroom behavior and must articulate these rules, in writing, in materials provided to the students at the start of the semester. Fortunately, student obstructions or disruptions in UB classrooms are rare and seldom lead to student conduct action. The term “classroom disruption” means behavior that a reasonable person would view as substantially or repeatedly interfering with the conduct of a class. Examples could include persistently speaking without being recognized, continuing with conversations distracting the class or, in extreme cases, resorting to physical threats or personal insults.

Guidelines for Addressing Learning Space Disruption

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1. Advise: If a student is disruptive, the instructor may ask the student to stop and warn them that continuing such disruptive behavior can result in academic or student conduct action. *A private conversation with the student is often effective and preferable as an initial step as many students may be unaware that their behavior is disruptive.*

2. Remove: Should the disruptive behavior continue, the instructor is authorized to ask the student to leave the classroom or learning space.

- *A conversation with the student in follow up to their departure from class is recommended; the instructor may remind the student that continued disruption may have academic or student conduct consequences.*
- If a student refuses to leave the area after being instructed to do so, the instructor should inform the student that this refusal may be a violation of the Student Code of Conduct and may result in a Student Conduct referral through the University Police.

3. Report: If, in the instructor's best judgment, the behavior creates a safety risk or makes it impossible to continue class or function, the instructor should contact University Police to assist in removal of the student and/or make a Student Conduct referral. The Student Conduct process is initiated by a report to the University Police. A student may be dismissed from the course for the remainder of the semester only through Student Conduct and due process proceedings.

Reporting to University Police

The Student Conduct process is guided by the Student Code of Conduct and is initiated by a report to the University Police. When reporting non-emergency, classroom or learning space disruption, instructors may consult with University Police at 716-645-2227. Emergencies must be reported to 716-645-2222. A report of classroom or learning space disruption rarely creates any criminal record; most reports are referred to Student Conduct. Once a University Police report is a made, an instructor may consult with Student Conduct at 716-645-6154.

Suggested Behavioral Expectations

To prevent distracting or disruptive behavior, instructors should clarify behavioral expectations for class in the syllabus. Classroom behavioral expectations may include, but are not limited to:

- Attending classes and paying attention. Students should not ask an instructor in class to go over material they missed by skipping a class or not concentrating.
- Not coming to class late or leaving early. If a student must enter a class late, they should do so quietly and should not disrupt the class by walking between the class and the instructor. Students should not leave class unless it is an absolute necessity.
- Not talking with other classmates while the instructor or another student is speaking. If a student has a question or comment, they should indicate so to the instructor and wait for the instructor to respond.

- Showing respect and concern for others by not monopolizing class discussion. Students must allow others time to give their input and ask questions. Students should not stray from the topic of class discussion.
- Not making noise that is distracting to others. Electronic devices should be silenced.

Instructors are encouraged to create standards related to food or beverages and include them in the syllabus. Instructors should be advised that academic accommodations coordinated through Accessibility Resources may impact how or when a student participates with, enters, or exits a learning space.