Classroom Disruption Protocols
A Resource for Faculty

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Inclusive Classrooms

• Where the contributions and perspectives of students, regardless of social differences, are respected and valued.
• Where faculty are prepared and able to respond to incidents that negatively affect the learning environment, such as inappropriate classroom behaviors or minor and major disruptions that distract from the course.
Minor Disruptions

Some examples:
• Sleeping in class
• Chronic lateness
• Mobile phone use
• Interruption of instructor/peers

A few appropriate faculty responses:
• Speak with student privately
• Remind student of expectations
• Zoom lock classroom/control chat
Major Disruptions

Some examples:
- Progressive/chronic disruptions
- Erratic/irrational behavior
- Physical threat, verbal assault

Impact on students:
- silence
- fear/intimidation
- heightened emotion

A few appropriate faculty responses:
- Speak directly to student
- Ask student to leave
- Dismiss class
- Zoom—mute/stop video/remove
- Report

emotional trauma
physical harm
unwelcome
feel unsafe
Social Identities and Subject Matter

- Faculty of all ranks and across social differences are increasingly challenged by classroom disruptions.
- **Visible social identities**, such as race, ethnicity, gender and gender expression, and physical disabilities affect the classroom experience.
- Those who teach “**hot button**” subject matters such as race and ethnicity, gender and sexuality, religion and politics lend themselves to emotional disagreement among classroom participants.
In sum…

Classroom Disruption Protocols are guidelines that:

• Acknowledge that the classroom experience **differs by social identities**

• Offer quick assessment of misconduct by categorizing “minor” vs. “major”

• Help instructors to **strategize** how to manage disruptive and threatening behavior and **recognize the varying comfort levels** in doing so

• Provide **appropriate faculty responses** to minor and major disruptions

• **Point instructors to appropriate others** should they need advice, information, and/or support before, during, or following an incident

• Facilitate an instructor’s ability to **manage situations and feel supported in the process**
For guidance on the management of inappropriate classroom behavior and steps to follow when you need assistance, please see: Classroom Disruption Protocols: Guidelines for Faculty and Academic Units at http://equity.psu.edu/sfm/classroom-disruption-protocols.

For guidance on Zoom tools: Visit Teaching and Learning with Technology, https://tlt.psu.edu/

For direct classroom support: Consider Tech Tutors and Tech Teaching Assistants, https://techtutors.psu.edu/

For guidance on the navigation of workplace concerns, which can sometimes include the classroom, contact Senior Faculty Mentors Keith Gilyard, Departments of English and African American Studies and Jennifer Hamer, Department of African American Studies at seniorfacultymtr@psu.edu.

To continue the conversation, contact me, Jennifer Hamer, at jenniferhamer@psu.edu.