

Classroom Guidelines and Procedures for Dealing with Disruptive Behavior

While the great majority of students conduct themselves responsibly, occasionally a student's behavior may be disruptive. Disruptive behavior is any behavior that persistently or grossly interferes with the teaching or learning process or administrative activities at any Bucks County Community College site. Disruptive behaviors can include sleeping in class, using a cell phone, profanity, heckling, chronic tardiness, etc. Extreme forms of some of these behaviors may threaten the health and safety of students and staff. The following guidelines suggest ways to effectively prevent and deal with disruptive behaviors. No guidelines can be considered absolute since each situation tends to be unique. Discretion and latitude in how to handle a situation may be required.

Ideally, the first response of the faculty needs to be preventive or conciliatory.

Preventive Suggestions:

- Set limits from the beginning. Clearly state expectations for behavior in the course format and during a first class "ground rules" discussion. In addition to implementing academic standards, it is also the faculty domain to enforcing reasonable behavior standards in the classroom.
- Convey your interest and concern about each student's learning experience and the learning experiences of the entire class. Focus on the behavior rather than the student's personality.
- Know your students' names. Students are more likely to cause problems if they feel anonymous.
- Model the behavior you expect from your students.
- Don't take things personally. Remain calm and objective.

Level I: Conciliatory In-Class Interventions

- At the first sign of disruption, remind the entire class of the "ground rules," rather than singling out the individual student. Try to diffuse the situation rather than escalate the problem.
- Be specific about the behavior you would like discontinued. Use "I" statements, not "you" statements. Say "I would appreciate it if you would turn off your cell phone when you enter class" vs. "You are being rude and annoying when you leave your cell phone on." Focusing on the behavior rather than personality will help diffuse emotions.

- Look for possible ways to compromise and diffuse a situation. Say, “I would like you to participate in this exercise. If you object, you may leave the class, but you will still be responsible for the work” vs. “You must complete this in-class assignment or you aren’t welcome in my course.”

If the student is not compliant, assign the class a task and ask the offending student to step outside the classroom for a conversation.

Level II Interventions: Dealing Individually With the Student

- Deal with disruptive students individually, outside of the classroom. This affords both of you the privacy you need to deal effectively with the behavior problem.
- Do not argue with the student or answer questions or reply to accusations. Give the student the option of
 - returning to class with the behavior under control
 - seeing a Student Services Counselor or the Department Chair to express his/her grievance or concern
 - meeting with you during your office hour to discuss the situation.
- Do not attempt to physically touch, detain or stop a student from leaving or entering a classroom or office.

It is advisable to keep an open-door when dealing individually with students, or have a colleague, Counselor or Department Chair available when discussing emotional or controversial issues.

Level III Interventions: Involvement of Security

- If the student will not leave the classroom, or if s/he leaves the room but remains non-compliant, inform the student that you will call Security to help handle the situation.
- The instructor, or a student you designate, should go to a nearby office or use a cell phone to call Security if a student is deemed out of control. If teaching at a site where Security is not available and help is deemed necessary, contact the administrator on duty.
- In an extreme situation (eg. person threatening bodily harm) on the Newtown campus or at a site where Security is not available, our Security staff may be initially bypassed by first directly calling 911 on a cell phone (internal calls to 911 from a Newtown campus office telephone go directly to Security) and then following up with BCCC Security and Safety as soon as possible.

- Wait with the class for the arrival of security, the administrator on duty, or local law enforcement. Dismiss the class if that seems the more appropriate alternative.

In general, it is recommended that the Director or Assistant Director of Security at BCCC be the person to decide when to involve the local police department. A relationship of mutual trust has built up over the years, and this needs to be nurtured and maintained by calling local police only when a potential criminal matter is involved or advice is needed on some aspect of the law. Of course, the extreme situation is the exception to this guideline.

Security/Faculty/Staff Follow-up

- Following an incident where Security is involved, a Security officer will fill out a complaint report that documents the actions of those involved.
- This report will be delivered to the Dean of Student Affairs and the Director of Student life.
- If Security was not involved in an incident, but the faculty or staff member wishes to file a Code of Conduct complaint, Security should be called and an officer will meet with the complainant to complete a complaint form.
- Complaints must be filed in writing within seven days of the incident's occurrence.

Administrative Procedures

- The Director of Student Life will follow up by contacting the faculty member(s), student(s) and appropriate others that may have been involved.
- The Director of Student Life will discuss the incident with these individuals and may ask for an additional written complaint or report from these individuals.
- The Director of Student Life will determine if a violation occurred and which code of conduct (see attached) was violated.
- The individual(s) being charged will be notified in writing by the Director of Student Life.
- When a violation occurs, depending on the severity of the violation, the Director of Student Life has several options:
 - Further investigation of the incident
 - Warn the student that further misconduct could result in disciplinary action and discuss possible choices the student has such as a formal apology, counseling, withdrawing from the course
 - Refer the student to a campus or community resource
 - Impose sanctions such as disciplinary probation, restitution, monetary fines, temporary suspension, suspension, expulsion
 - Other Sanctions – See Code of Conduct II. F in the BCCC College Catalog
- The Director of Student Life will provide appropriate parties follow-up information guided by a students' right to confidentiality and the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA).

Any member of the college community may bring alleged violations of the Code of Conduct to the attention of the Director of Student Life.

The student has the right to due process procedures, described below in the Student Code of Conduct. The Student Code of Conduct, Violations and Procedures appear in the Bucks County Community College Catalog.

Phone numbers:

Security at Newtown	215-968-8395	x8395
Administration Office at Bristol	215-781-3939	
Administration Office at Upper County Campus	215-258-7750	
Counselors	215-968-8182	x8182
Director of Student Life	215-968-8255	x8255
Dean of Student Affairs	215-968-8105	x8105

Student Code of Conduct

Taken from the Bucks County Community College Catalog, 2003-04
pp. 158-159

Discipline

Any student who exhibits conduct not in keeping with the established standards of the College is subject to penalty with possible fine, probation, suspension, or expulsion from the College. It is the expectation of the faculty and administration of the College that students will grow in maturity and develop the ability to lead and govern themselves.

Code of Conduct

I. Violations

A. Major Infractions

A formal violation is a student action that is classified as a major disciplinary infraction. The penalties for a formal violation(s) could result in long-time suspension or permanent separation from the College. The following student action(s) shall constitute a formal violation:

1. Plagiarism or academic cheating.
2. Forgery or alteration of the College identification card or records.
3. Destruction of, damage to, malicious misuse of, or abuse of College property, or personal property on campus.
4. Assault upon another person or the threat there of while on campus.
5. Theft of College property or personal property on campus.
6. Lewd or indecent conduct on campus.
7. Possession, use, or sale of unauthorized narcotics or illegal substances on campus.
8. Unauthorized use, possession, or sale of firearms or other dangerous weapons on campus.
9. Drunk and/or disorderly conduct

on campus.

10. Possession of alcoholic beverages on campus property except where expressly authorized by the President.

11. Sexual Harassment

12. Violation of other College rules and regulations after publication, distribution, or posting thereof in such a manner to ensure fair notice to the student.

B. Minor Infractions

An informal violation is a student action that is classified as a minor disciplinary infraction. The following student action(s) shall constitute an informal violation.

1. Willful destruction of the passageway, or exit or entrance to the College campus, of a College building or facility, or any portion thereof.

2. Failure to provide proper identification of oneself when especially requested by a College official including security guards, faculty, and staff members.

3. Failure to respond to official correspondence and communication from the College.

4. Gambling on College property.

5. Smoking in unauthorized locations.

6. Disruptive behavior or conduct.

7. Misrepresentation of proper identification of oneself in the transaction of College business and dealings with College officials and representatives.

8. Unauthorized possession of animals on College premises.

II. Sanctions

If a student is found guilty of a major or minor violation(s) one or more of the following sanctions could be imposed.

A. **Expulsion:** permanent separation of the student from the College. Notification will appear on the student's transcript and the official disciplinary file in the Office of Student Life Programs. The individual will also be barred from College premises.

B. **Suspension:** separation of the student from the College for a specified period of time. Notification may appear on the student's transcript. Notification will appear in the official disciplinary file. The individual shall not participate in any College sponsored activity and may be barred from College premises.

C. **Temporary Suspension:** the College reserves the right to temporarily suspend any individual charged under the Code with any violation which is a serious threat to the physical well being of any individual(s) or property. In the event of such temporary suspension, a hearing must be held before the appropriate College official within seven school days of the date of the incident or discovery thereof.

D. **Monetary Fines:** not to exceed \$125. Notification will appear on the student's financial records and in the official disciplinary file.

E. **Restitution:** the student is required to make payment to the College or other persons, groups, or organizations for damages incurred as a result of commission of a Code violation.

F. **Other Sanctions:** to include Disciplinary Probation consisting of written letters of reprimand,

restrictions upon participation in College activities, requirement of formal apologies, and explanations, and assignments of research and/or work projects.

III. Procedures

1. Any member of the College community may charge any other member of the College community with a code violation.
2. Charges must be filed in writing within seven days to the appropriate College office. Academic-oriented charges (plagiarism, cheating, and other classroom offenses) are filed in the Office of the Dean of Academic Affairs. All other charges are filed with the Director for Student Life in the Office of Student Life Programs.
3. Upon the filing of a charge alleging a violation of the code, the individual will be given written notice of the charge by the College.
4. Written notice to the charged individual will be issued within one week following the filing of the charge.
5. A disciplinary hearing will be scheduled. The charged individual may choose to meet with the appropriate College official as outlined in Section III, Paragraph 2. In addition, those charged with a violation have the option of meeting with the appropriate College official and the Student Judiciary.
6. If the Student Judiciary is called into session it will file a written recommendation regarding findings and sanctions against the charged individual to the appropriate College official. The appropriate College official will review the recommendation of the Student Judiciary. He/she will inform the charged individual of the official College ruling in writing no later than seven days following the final disciplinary hearing.
7. Appeals to all rulings may be made within fourteen days of the final disciplinary hearing date to the Dean of Student Affairs. All appeals must be in writing. Any other appeals may be made within 14 days to the College President.

IV. Enforcement

1. The ultimate responsibility for enforcement of the Code of Conduct rests with the College President and Board of Trustees.
2. The College President may delegate enforcement of the Code to appropriate College administrative officials and staff members.
3. Chief responsibility for the enforcement of academic-oriented violations rests with the Dean of Academic Affairs.
4. Chief responsibility for the enforcement of non-academic oriented violations rests with the Director of Security and Safety.
5. Chief responsibility for implementation of the Code of Conduct and responsibility for official College disciplinary files rests with the Director for Student Life.
6. Day to day enforcement responsibility rests with all members of the College community including students, faculty, administrators, and staff members.
7. If a student recommendation is requested by the charged individual, the responsibilities for making such a recommendation regarding findings and sanctions rests with the Student Judiciary. The Student Judiciary makes its written recommendation to the appropriate College official

involved in the disciplinary hearing.

The Student Judiciary is appointed by the President of the College upon the recommendation of the Student Government and is not to exceed five in number. The Student Judiciary will be organized at the beginning of each fall semester. Involvement of the Student Justices regarding a disciplinary matter is the option of the individual charged with a violation of the Code.