**Navigating Disruptive Behavior in the Classroom**

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| C Common Situations | Possible Levers | Things to Consider |
| Student resistance |  |  |
| * Students unhappy/angry with course content material * Students not turning in work * Students expecting instructor to excuse absences or extend deadlines without discussion * Students expressing expectations that seem unreasonable * Students disagreeing with instructor in a way that seems combative or disrespectful | * Syllabus * Developing class rules in collaboration with students * Setting expectations for communications outside of class time (including how you approach office hours, email, telephone communications) | * Your most important tool for setting expectations is the syllabus * Your second most important tool is your communication about your expectations with the class- don’t just expect students to read the syllabus and know what you mean around your expectations, particularly around difficult material and communications * Consider principles of Universal Design, but resist the assumption that behavioral expectations are * HUMOR |
| Conflicts in the classroom |  |  |
| * Students engaging in discussion that becomes heated beyond what instructor expected * Students yelling * Students leaving class, using profanity, or other behaviors that disrupt lecture or planned class activities * Student to student conflict | * De-escalation techniques * Avoid sarcasm and publicly embarrassing students * Importance of clear expectations for engagement with content * Anticipate what will be hard * Model being uncomfortable (and vulnerable) * Be willing, when possible, to stop, take a break, and return to the conversation later | * Check yourself BEFORE conflict occurs: * What are the learning outcomes for discussing difficult topics? * How would you react if you were discussing these issues in front of your peers? * How would you want to be treated if you had a differing viewpoint than others in the room? |
| Mental Health Concerns |  |  |
| * Student’s exhibits behavior changes that are concerning (becomes withdrawn, stops attending class, other behavioral changes * Student leaves class unexpectedly and does not communicate with instructor | -Exercise compassion  -When providing feedback, describe the behavior you are noticing, state why it is a problem, and tell them that you want them to stop (not in front of other students)  -Let them know you are concerned, that you care about their well-being, and make referrals to resources | * Approach situations with compassion and care * Assume you don’t know the whole story * With relatively rare exceptions, students cannot be forced into treatment or removed from their learning environment, so they will likely need to have a strategy that reflects this * When conflict has occurred or difficult interactions have happened, take care of yourself, get centered, and start fresh |
| Red Flags |  |  |
| * Student makes statements of thoughts of harming themselves or others * Student threatens you | * Ask them how they are doing and express your concern, as much as you are comfortable * Make referrals * If student acknowledges suicidal ideation, make referral to campus resources and file a CARE Report * If you have imminent concern for anyone’s safety, contact AUPD at x3636 | * If you have concerns for your safety or the student’s safety but the situation is not imminently emergent, consult with a resource such as the Dean of Students, AVP of Campus Life, Counseling Center, AU Police Department, or Risk Management |
| Self-Reflection and Self-Care |  |  |
| * Develop your own self-care skills * Cultivate your own metacognitive awareness, including: * Your comfort with conflict * Your cultural identity development and awareness of YOUR cultural frame as the course instructor * Your ‘buttons’ * What you do when you feel activated or threatened | * Seeking opportunities for increasing self-awareness * Regular reviews of your progress (what went well, what didn’t) * Critical thinking/review of experiences (what went well, what didn’t) | * Your well-being is your responsibility (fill your own cup first) * You are a powerful role model for your students * Practice compassion |