

# **Managing Disruptive & Disturbing Behaviors in the Classroom**

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# Training Goals

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1. Understand policies and resources.
2. Discover what behaviors are concerning.
3. Learn strategies to manage disruptive and disturbing behaviors in the classroom.
4. Understand how to use and share available resources.
5. Learn how to ensure the safety of students and employees by preemptively preventing harm (to self and others.)

# Learning Objectives

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1. Build awareness of related college policies, processes, and resources
2. Reference and understand various types of disruptive or disturbing behaviors
3. Explain how to build response strategies concerning disruptive or disturbing behaviors
4. Enhance skills related to disruptive behavior management in support of safe and inclusive learning.
5. Recognize distressed and suicidal students and solicit help and support:
6. Review how to handle emergency situations

# Course Outline

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- Clarifying Expectations:
  - Know applicable *Board Policies*
  - Know applicable *Student Code of Conduct*
  - Know your authority and boundaries
  - Set classroom expectations early
  - Classroom teachable moments should be developmentally appropriate
- Disruptive Behaviors
  - What are they?
  - Why does it happen?
  - What you may see?
- Response Strategies
  - By type of behavior
  - Additional behaviors
- Getting Help
- What would you do?

# Clarifying Expectations

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Helping to diffuse possible frustrations or uncertainty

# Expected Understanding

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- Practice behaviors that help to ensure safety for yourself and the campus community
- Be aware of professional boundaries and limitations (add a slide)
- Acknowledge your level of comfort and skill related to conflict, emotions, and addressing concerns
- Empower students to use available resources and encourage them to seek help when needed
- Teachable moments – assign developmentally appropriate tasks
- Be familiar with:
  - Department of Public Safety (DPS) operations
  - Student Code of Conduct
  - Available Campus Resources and Board Policies

# Student Code of Conduct

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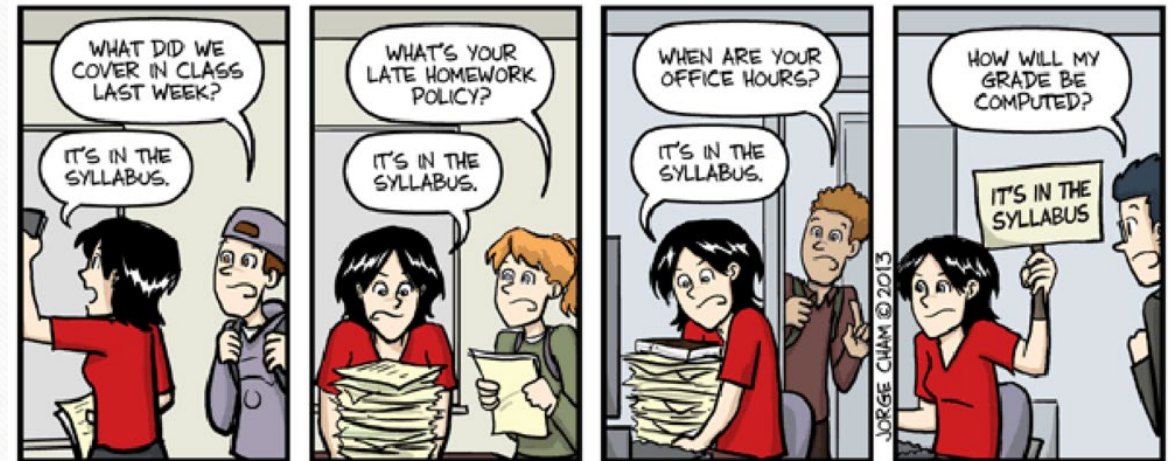
- The Student Code of Conduct and General Rules and Guidelines:
  - Ensure the protection of student rights and the health and safety of the College community, as well as to aid in the efficient operation of College programs, activities, and services
  - Apply from the time of admission and continue as long as the student remains enrolled at the College
  - Are applicable to a student's conduct even if the student withdraws from school while a disciplinary matter is pending
- All students are responsible to be familiar with, and abide by the code
- The college has established procedures for addressing reports of alleged violations

View [Student General Rules and Guidelines and Code of Conduct](#) in its entirety

# First Day of Class:

## Provide information regarding available student resources

- Review course syllabus
- Highlight student code of conduct
- Emphasize classroom expectations
- Explain College Resources:
  - Center for Student Access Services
  - Counseling Services
  - Academic Success Coaches
  - Advising Services
- Emergency Preparedness and Safety



# IT'S IN THE SYLLABUS

This message brought to you by every instructor that ever lived.

[WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM](http://WWW.PHDCOMICS.COM)

*"Piled Higher and Deeper" by Jorge Cham*



# Proactively Address Disruptive Behavior

## within the first two weeks

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- Make expectations clear in your syllabus
- Discuss & develop “Ground Rules” with students
- When disruptive behavior occurs, respond immediately & consistently before a pattern develops
- Connect with your students by learning their names
- Model the appropriate behavior, such as giving timely feedback if you require due dates
- Use good-natured humor and avoid sarcasm
- Keep regular office hours & invite students to email you with concerns
- Reduce anonymity by letting students know some of your personal interests and learn about theirs
- Change classroom activities frequently and give 10 min. breaks every 50 minutes
- Seek ongoing feedback from students

# Disruptive Behaviors

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What are they?

Why does it happen?

How is it expressed?

# What is Disruptive Behavior?

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- *Disruptive Behavior* is broadly defined as repeated, continuous, behaviors that interfere with the instructor's teaching and the students' learning.
- *Incivility* includes behaviors that are disrespectful, impolite and rude.
- LCC defines disruptive behavior as the “disruption or obstruction of teaching, research, administration, disciplinary proceedings, other College activities, including its public service functions on or off campus, or of other authorized non-College activities when the conduct occurs on College property”  
<https://www.lcc.edu/academics/documents/pdf-policies/student-code-of-conduct.pdf>

# Various Reasons for Disruptive Behavior

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- College students often struggle with a variety of academic and personal concerns.
- In the last several years, colleges nationwide have seen a dramatic increase in the number of students with significant emotional and mental health challenges, especially during the pandemic since March 2020.

# Developmental & Situational Stressors

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- Adjusting to college expectations – first time in college
- Lack adequate reading, writing, and English skills
- Lack of good time management and study skills
- Living on own for the first time or homelessness
- Family and relationship issues
- Failure to make satisfactory academic progress
- Undiagnosed or unaccommodated disabilities
- Financial concerns
- Unemployment or working multiple jobs
- Lack of support system and/or coping skills

# How Disruptive Behaviors May Present in the Classroom

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- Poor attendance, arriving late, or excessive use of services
- Sudden outbursts
- Attention/memory difficulties
- Isolation/withdrawal from others
- Changes in mood, irritability, or apathy
- Abrupt/radical changes in behavior, including a dramatic decrease in academic functioning
- Sideline Conversations
- Alcohol or other drug use
- Lethargy or sleeping
- Laptop or phone use unrelated to class
- Marked change in personal hygiene or appearance
- Inappropriate crying or hostility
- Bizarre and/or suicidal statements or behavior
- Writing assignments that express concerns or are disturbing

# Additional disruptive and disturbing behaviors

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- Frequently coming and going from classroom
- Frequent interruption of faculty including non-relevant, off-topic questions
- Entitled or disrespectful talk to faculty or other students
- Frequent arguing with faculty and failure to comply with faculty requests
- Prolonged non-verbal passive-aggressive behavior toward faculty
- Bullying behavior focused on faculty or students
- Racist or otherwise fixated thoughts – expressed to press buttons
- Direct communicated threat to faculty or other students
- Showing up in strange clothing – military gear or in costumes or wearing a mask
- Physical assaults, throwing objects, slamming doors or storming out of classroom
- Self-injurious behavior such as cutting or burning self
- Psychotic, delusional, or rambling speech

Disruptive Behavior

# Response Strategies

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# Proactive Strategies

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- Listen to the student in a non-judgmental manner.
- Express concern for the student's wellbeing, but be aware of professional boundaries
- Identify the student's behavior or issue impacting their success
- Convey support and understanding.
- Consult with the counseling staff for guidance.
- Encourage the student to follow-up with a free and confidential counselor.
- Be Mindful of Privacy and FERPA Regulations
- Follow-up with student later to inquire how they are doing

**If situation escalates, immediately call LCC Department of Public Safety (DPS) 517-483-1800 or 911**

# Help to prevent Interruptions

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- Use class time constructively - make sure content addressed and learning activities are central to attaining the learning outcomes.
- Reserve some important points or classroom activities (quizzes, assessments, one-minute-papers, study guides, etc.) until the end of class to minimize packing up early.
- Refer to the “ground rules” you developed and reinforce, especially in the first few weeks.
- Set up a protocol for how/when students should ask questions or make comments (raise hands, write in the chat, etc.).
- Be sure to provide opportunities for all students to express their questions and thoughts in class and anonymously.

# Responding to Sideline Conversations

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- Maintain your composure and model professionalism when addressing offensive behavior. Don't embarrass students, but do address the behavior as soon as possible.
- Rather than warn a particular student, consider a general reminder to the whole class (e.g., "We have too many conversations at the moment: let's all focus on the same topic").
- Try a long, dramatic pause, then say something like "I really think everyone should pay attention to this because..." or "I am having difficulty concentrating while there is talking and your classmates might be as well."
- If virtual, make your expectations clear about how the chat feature will be used.

# Responding to Monopolizing Students

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- Say, “That’s an interesting point. Now let’s see what other people think.”
- Interject with a summary when students go off on a tangent.
- Prior to asking a question, tell the students that you’ll be looking for “X” number of hands before you select someone.
- Take advantage of the monopolizer’s pauses. Thank them and direct a question to someone else.
- From time to time, suggest that only students who have not spoken or answered a question raise their hand.
- Involve the monopolizer by giving them a task such as posting group responses in the chat, or on a flip chart.
- When assigning small group work, be specific about your intended discussion/work outcomes.

# Responding to Unengaged and Withdrawn Students

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- Let students know in advance that everyone will be expected to answer questions and participate in discussions.
- Give students options for ways to express their thoughts and ideas.
- Give students opportunities to communicate with you anonymously ( in the chat, or with a note at the end of class).
- Assign paired work and pair an introverted student with a moderately outgoing student rather than a dominant one.

# Responding to Other Difficult Behaviors

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- If a student is trying to criticize your lecture or trip you up, consider acknowledging that this is a joint learning experience and/or admit that you don't know the answer. Redirect the question to the group or individual who asked it.
- In order to stay on track, designate a "Parking Lot" for questions and comments and then address when there is time.
- If a student is hostile or griping, realize that the hostility may be masking as fear. Maintain your civility and consider the following:
  - Validate the point by building upon what has been said instead of disagreeing
  - Allow them to gracefully retreat from confrontation
  - Point out what can and can't be changed
  - Indicate that you'll discuss the issue with the student privately.

## Strategies for De-escalating & Defusing

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- Remove individual from common area
- Maintain safe distance from student
- Present a calm, supportive demeanor
- Listen
- Speak clearly and calmly
- Become more quiet if individual gets more loud
- Show respect and remain non-judgmental
- Develop rapport
- Express concern
- Validate feelings and reflect
- Avoid debating
- Acknowledge any threats of harm to self or others
- Focus on strengths and coping skills
- Generate supportive options
- Instill a sense of hope
- Seek help

**If situation continues to escalate, immediately call LCC Department of Public Safety (DPS) 517-483-1800 or 911**

# Responding to Emergencies

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- On the Downtown campus there is a 24/7 presence of LCC Police
  - Call **(517) 483-1800** or **911** from any college phone for LCC Dispatch
- On West Campus LCC Police are present generally from:
  - 7am-10pm M-F
  - With spot checks on the weekends
- On other campuses, you will need to **call 911 on a cell phone** for local police dispatch:
  - Mason Aviation
  - East Campus
  - Livingston Center Campus

*If local jurisdictional police are called, a report must also be made to LCC Police by calling the LCC Dispatch number above.*



Getting Help for the  
**Distressed and Suicidal**

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# Distress and Suicide Awareness

<https://suicidepreventionlifeline.org/how-we-can-all-prevent-suicide/>

## Students may talk about:

- wanting to die or to kill themselves
- feeling hopeless or having no reason to live
- feeling trapped or in unbearable pain
- being a burden to others
- seeking revenge or showing rage

*“Please Stay”* LCC Resource

<https://www.lcc.edu/community/please-stay.html>

## Students may:

- increase the use of alcohol or drugs
- act anxious or agitated; behave recklessly
- sleep too little or too much
- withdraw or isolate themselves
- exhibit extreme mood swings
- give personal items away
- threaten themselves or others
- exhibit severe distress or dysregulation of thought or behavior
- look for ways to kill themselves, like searching online or buying a gun

# Available Resources: LCC Counseling

<https://lcc.edu/services/counseling/>

Please Stay: <https://www.lcc.edu/community/please-stay.html>

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## Referring a student to counseling:

- Contact the **Center for Student Support**
  - Hours of operation:
    - Monday thru Thursday 8:00 am - 5:00 pm
    - Friday 8:00 am - 4:00 pm
  - Phone: (517) 483-1924
  - Email: [ca\\_frntc@star.lcc.edu](mailto:ca_frntc@star.lcc.edu)
- Appointments are currently offered via:
  - WebEx,
  - telephone, and
  - limited face-to-face appointments.



### Calls and emails:

- are typically returned within 24 business hours Monday through Friday.
- made Friday evening or over the weekend will be returned on the next business day.

# Counselors Care And Can Help Students

Counseling can help students cope with circumstances and stressors that affect their academic performance:

- Stress
- Personal loss
- Relationships
- Mental health concerns
- Substance abuse

- Free, short-term counseling is available to all currently-enrolled students.
- Counseling provides a chance to explore feelings and solve problems with the help of an objective, sensitive, concerned listener, who is professionally trained.
- LCC Counselors are Licensed by the state of Michigan  
<https://www.lcc.edu/services/counseling/>

# Counseling Referrals

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## **If you are concerned about a student:**

- Express care and concern for the student
- Give the student information about Counseling <https://www.lcc.edu/services/counseling/>
- Encourage them to call or email right then, so that a commitment is made to follow through
- If the situation feels urgent, call the Center for Support so that plans can be made to have a counselor respond

## **If you are unsure of how to approach the student:**

- Call the Center for Student Support for guidance
- Consult with a counselor
- Consider Filing a Behavior Intervention Team (BIT) report

# Available Resources: **Mental Health Emergencies**

<https://lcc.edu/services/counseling/>

Please Stay: <https://www.lcc.edu/community/please-stay.html>

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## Assisting a student with a mental health emergency:

- LCC Counselors may be available to help assess an emergency situation during regular hours of operation, call (517) 483-1924
- LCC Department of Public Safety (DPS) can assist students outside of regular hours of operation, 24 hours a day, on downtown and west campuses.
  - By phone at (517) 483-1800 or 911 from any campus phone
  - In-person in the Gannon Building, Room 2110.
- Off campus emergency services:
  - Call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room.
  - Contact **Community Mental Health 24 hours a day.**
  - By phone at (517) 346-8460; toll free at (800) 372-8460; or TTY at (517) 267-7623

# Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT)

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## National Best Practice

College shares relevant information internally and confidentially regarding a

“student of concern” through a central reporting process.

A risk assessment is performed by the team regarding reports.

# What is BIT?

## The best way to prevent potential violent behavior

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- A multi-disciplinary team that helps detect early indicators of potential disruptive conduct, self-harm, and violence to others.
  - Members – LCC Police, Counselors, Student Affairs (*members are trained and certified*)
- Established protocol is used to classify student risk and to agree on a plan of action.
  - Intervention strategies may include supportive services, mental health services, risk assessments, referrals to student compliance, legal, etc.
  - The team proactively monitors and assists students using available college or community resources and coordinates case management and follow-up.
- An effective risk assessment provides useful and actionable information about risks associated with a particular student or situation to maintain campus safety, and to assist individuals in managing any underlying sources of mental health concerns.



# When to file a BIT Report

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When you observe or are told about:

- Self-injurious behavior; suicidal ideation or talk of suicide; or suicidal action or attempt,
- Threats of safety to others, the campus or the community,
- Erratic behavior (*including online behavior*) that disrupts the College mission, learning environment, and/or operations,
- Disturbing things or threats to self or others stated verbally or posted on social media, in online forums, via messaging apps, via text, in student writings, or emails,
- Someone appearing troubled, depressed or exhibiting unreasonable behavior
- Severe distress or dysregulation of thought or behavior

# How to file a BIT or Conduct Report

*Consult with Student Compliance, as needed*

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Reporting links can be found here: <https://lcc.edu/consumer-information/student-compliance/>

- Write down information and facts as soon as the incident happens (while it is fresh in your mind.)
  - Time, place, and student name
  - Circumstance, people involved, actions you and others took, etc.

# When there is an Urgency or Emergency

*The priority is to ensure the safety of yourself and others*

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- Contact LCC Department of Public Safety, 517-483-1800 or 911, for immediate assistance, if there is:
    - A threat to harm self or others
    - Severe distress or dysregulation of thought or behavior
    - Someone under influence of drugs/alcohol
    - You are concerned for your safety and the safety of others

# What would you do?

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Scenarios will be shared by your course facilitators

# Resource Contact Information

## LCC Counselors

*(located in the Center for Student Support, StarZone, Gannon Building 2<sup>nd</sup> floor)*

<https://www.lcc.edu/services/counseling/>

Phone: 517-483-1924

Email: [lcc-counseling@lcc.edu](mailto:lcc-counseling@lcc.edu)

## Office of Student Compliance

*(located in Gannon Building, First floor)*

<https://www.lcc.edu/consumer-information/student-compliance/>

Phone: 517-483-1261

Email: [lcc-osc@lcc.edu](mailto:lcc-osc@lcc.edu)

## Center for Student Access

*(located in the Center for Student Support, StarZone, Gannon Building 2<sup>nd</sup> floor)*

<https://www.lcc.edu/services/access/>

Phone: 517-483-5323

Email: [lcc-accessibility@lcc.edu](mailto:lcc-accessibility@lcc.edu)

## LCC Department of Public Safety

*(located in Gannon Building, Room 2110 and at West Campus)*

<https://www.lcc.edu/campuslife/safety/>

Phone: 517-483-1800 or 911 from any campus phone

Email: [police\\_dispatch@star.lcc.edu](mailto:police_dispatch@star.lcc.edu)