

## Addressing Midlevel Interruptions

Midlevel interruptions include behaviors such as sleeping during class, excessive absences, being unprepared, packing up books and materials before class is over, and holding side conversations with other students.

You can limit these behaviors by taking proactive approaches:

- Anticipate that problems such as these often happen in the back of the room. Combat this tendency by asking students to sit in the front of the room and leave any empty desks in the back. Davis (2009) recommends that instructors “mention that research shows that students who sit in the front of the classroom earn higher grades” and ask students to change their seats every so often (p. 49).
- Consider moving yourself to the back row periodically and lecturing from there (S. D. Brookfield, personal interview, 2015).

When midlevel interruptions do take place, appropriately address them before they build to major disruptions. A useful technique that can be used is “Distract the Distractor.” Act as if the student is engaged in the lesson by asking her a direct question that you are quite confident she can answer. Because your goal is not to embarrass the student, if you are not sure she will be able to answer a question, simply ask the student to read the next question or a passage from the reading. This will draw the student into the instruction and reduce attention on the negative behaviors. Always avoid using sarcasm when addressing misbehaviors.