

## Sample Policies Addressing Classroom Conduct

Setting policies addressing classroom conduct, explaining them in your syllabus, and reviewing the policies with your students on the first day of class are key to establishing expectations for civility. Be sure to check with your institution about any required language you may need to include.

### Setting Policies in Your Syllabus

- Include a section in your syllabus that addresses expectations for classroom civility. When developing your expectations, take time to recall situations that have disrupted your classroom or your colleagues' classrooms and write expectations designed to address those situations.
- Areas to address include, but are not limited to, academic honesty, classroom disruptions, attendance, class participation, tardiness, food in class, laptop use, participation in discussions, and showing respect for other students.
- Here are some examples of classroom behavior expectations:
  - Classroom attendance is a necessary part of this course; therefore, (include specific requirements and any impact on grades).
  - You are expected to do your own work. Cheating, plagiarism, and any other form of academic dishonesty will not be tolerated and will result in (include consequences).
  - Meaningful and constructive dialogue is encouraged in this class and requires a willingness to listen, tolerance for different points of view, and mutual respect from all participants. All course members will be expected to show respect for individual differences and viewpoints at all times.
  - The use of electronic devices can be disruptive to those around you. As a result, the use of such devices should be limited to class-related tasks.
- Set only those rules and penalties you are willing and able to enforce.
- Define and distribute policies at the start of the term.
- Align your policies with university and department policies.
- Include a statement regarding what your students can expect from you. An example follows:
  - What you can expect from me: I will be prepared and on time for class; I will not leave early; I will respect you and your opinions.

### Sample Syllabus Language

**General Statement:** This syllabus contains the policies and expectations that have been established for this course. These policies and expectations are intended to create a productive learning atmosphere for all students. Please bring any concerns you may have to my attention.

## **Example 1**

To create and preserve a classroom atmosphere that optimizes teaching and learning, all students share the responsibility of creating a positive learning environment. Students are expected to conduct themselves in a manner that does not disrupt teaching or learning, and they are expected to follow these standards:

- You are expected to be on time. I intend to begin class promptly at the designated time, and you should be in your seat and ready to begin class at this time. Class ends at the designated time. Please refrain from packing up your belongings early. It is disruptive to me and to others around you.
- Classroom participation is a part of your grade in this course. You must attend class prepared to fully participate. Questions and comments must be relevant to the topic at hand.
- Classroom discussion should be civilized and respectful to everyone and relevant to the topic we are discussing. Classroom discussion is meant to allow us to hear a variety of viewpoints. This can only happen if we respect each other and our differences.
- Any discussion from class that continues online should adhere to these same rules and expectations.
- Cell phones must be turned off during class, unless you have informed me ahead of time that you are expecting an emergency message.

## **Example 2**

It is important that students are respectful toward their instructor, teaching assistant, and fellow classmates, and that their behaviors do not interfere with nor disrupt class activities. Therefore, students are expected to adhere to the following rules in this class:

- Because random arrivals and exits are disrespectful and distracting, please plan to arrive to class on time and to stay for the entire class period. If circumstances dictate that you must be late or you know that you will need to leave early, please take a seat close to the door so you do not distract others during class time.
- All cell phones and other electronic devices must be turned off and hidden from view during class time.
- Talking and other disruptive behaviors are not permitted while lecture is taking place. Please pay attention, and do not hesitate to ask me any questions.