



What is Disruptive Behavior?

A student is considered disruptive when he or she engages in behaviors that interfere in a significant way with normal teaching or administrative duties. Disruptive behavior comes in many forms and this guide serves as a quick reference for intervention. If you are unsure about what to do, or uncomfortable dealing with problematic behavior, please contact the [Southeastern Threat Assessment & Response Team or START](#) (985.549.2213) for advice. START meets regularly to discuss and plan appropriate responses to potential student psychological/mental health and behavioral issues.

Examples of Disruptive Behavior

- Refusal to comply with faculty or staff direction
- Loud and/or erratic behavior
- Behavior that distracts the class
- Persistent and unreasonable demands for attention
- Actions that intimidate others
- Overt inattentiveness
- Threats of physical assault
- Romantic or obsessive behavior
- Comments that are offensive in nature (racist, homophobic, etc.)

Identify level of Concern:

Level of Concern	Action Steps
<p>Low: The first level, which is the least serious encompasses any situation that can be handled informally between you and the student, leading to a prompt resolution (i.e., disrespectful tone, inappropriate language, inappropriate use of electronics, etc.).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In most cases, it's best not to address the behavior in front of the class. Ask the student to stay after class and complete the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Respectfully ask the student to end the behavior; • Clearly state the observable behavior, why that behavior is not appropriate; and • Define how the student should conduct themselves in the future. • Provide student with support resources if appropriate. • Submit a LINK report to the Office of Student Advocacy and Accountability
<p>Moderate: The second level involves an ongoing problem, or a more serious incident in the classroom (i.e., challenge to authority, verbal confrontation, persistent refusal to adhere to classroom policies, etc.).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Let the student know they must stop the behavior or leave class immediately. It can be difficult to know what to say in this situation. Be clear, direct and respectful. • If the student refuses to stop the behavior and refuses to leave, you might say "It is in the best interest of the class for you to leave. If you do not do so immediately, I will need to contact campus security." <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you are not comfortable calling security, you should dismiss class and report the incident to campus security, your department chair, and the Office of Student Advocacy and Accountability. • If you ask the student to leave class, they must meet with you as soon as possible in order to return to class. • During the scheduled meeting, help the student create a success plan with agreed upon expectations for future classroom behavior. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If you're concerned about your own safety, don't meet with the student alone. Consult with your department chair, a representative from the Office of Student Advocacy and Accountability or University Police to determine the best way to address your safety concerns. • After meeting with the student, follow up via email outlining the behavior, the rules that were violated, and the success plan created. This is a written warning. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The written warning should also include notice that subsequent violations of the classroom rules will result in referral to the Office of Student Advocacy and Accountability for processing under university Student Code of Conduct. • Submit an Incident Report and request it be held For Record Purposes Only (FRPO)
<p>Heightened: The third, and most serious, level is reached when there is immediate danger of some kind (i.e., threats of violence), or persistent disruptive behavior despite prior intervention (i.e., violating an established behavioral agreement).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If there is an immediate dangerous/threatening situation, call UPD at 985-549-2222. • Submit a START or LINK report. Provide any available documentation of the disruptive behavior(s) and a detailed written statement to the Office of Student Advocacy and Accountability via START or LINK reporting Forms



Dealing with a Disruptive Student

Disruptive behavior should not be ignored.

Remain calm. Remind yourself that it is not about you; it is about the situation. Tell the individual that such behavior is inappropriate and there are consequences for failing to improve the disruptive behavior. Many disruptive situations involve anger. Recognize that the period of peak anger usually lasts 20-30 seconds. Although this may seem like an eternity in the throes of the situation, often it is best to “wait it out” before progressing.

IMPORTANT: Disruptive behaviors may be exhibited when a student is in distress

Indicators:

Academic Distress:

- Extreme disorganization or erratic performance
- Written or artistic expression of unusual violence, morbidity, social isolation, despair, or confusion; essays or papers that focus on suicide or death
- Patterns of perfectionism: e.g., can't accept themselves if they don't get an A+
- Overblown or disproportionate response to grades or other evaluations

Behavioral/Emotional Distress:

- Angry or hostile outbursts, yelling, or aggressive comments
- Repeated absences from class, section, or lab
- More withdrawn or more animated than usual
- Expressions of hopelessness or worthlessness; crying or tearfulness
- Excessively demanding or dependent behavior

Physical Distress:

- Deterioration in physical appearance or personal hygiene
- Excessive fatigue, exhaustion; falling asleep in class repeatedly
- Visible changes in weight; statements about change in appetite or sleep
- Noticeable cuts, bruises, or burns
- Frequent or chronic illness
- Disorganized speech, rapid or slurred speech, confusion

The Dos:

- **DO** listen through the anger. Use active listening.
- **DO** acknowledge the feelings of the individual.
- **DO** allow the person to vent and tell you what is upsetting him or her. Use silence to allow the person to talk it out.
- **DO** set limits. Explain clearly and directly what behaviors are acceptable. “I care about what you are saying, but I need you to lower your voice before we continue to talk.”
- **DO** be firm, steady, consistent, and honest.
- **DO** focus on what you can do to help resolve the situation.
- **DO** make personal referrals. Give a name of an individual, when possible, and call ahead to brief the person.
- **DO** report the behavior to the police and/or LINK.

The DON'Ts

- **DON'T** interrupt, particularly during the first 20-30 seconds of peak anger.
- **DON'T** minimize the situation.
- **DON'T** get into an argument or shouting match.
- **DON'T** blame, ridicule, or use sarcasm.
- **DON'T** touch.
- **DON'T** ignore warning signs that the person's emotions are escalating.
- **DON'T** ignore your limitations

Take Immediate Action if the Student:

University Police Department (985) 549-2222 -or- 2222 from a campus phone line.

- Threatens to injure, harm, kill or risk the safety of self or others
- Acts in a frightening or threatening manner
- Refuses to leave the classroom after being asked to leave
- Reports or initiates a threat or bomb scare

Consult for Advice if the Student:

University Counseling Center (UCC) – Mental Health

Phone: 985-549-3894

- Appears to be out of touch with reality
- Reports suicidal thoughts or actions, depression, hopelessness, anxiety, or difficulty dealing with grief

Title IX Coordinator & University Police

Phone: 985-549-5888 & 985-549-3835

- Reports having been a victim of a stalking
- Reports sexual assault or relationship violence
- Indicates experiencing hate crimes, bias, or discrimination
- Reports any Title IX concerns

Student Accessibility Services – Accommodations

Phone: 985-549-2247

- Is having academic difficulty due to physical, psychological, or learning disability
- Indicates a need for disability accommodations

Office of Student Advocacy and Accountability – LINK, START, Conduct

Phone: 985-549-2213

- Acts significantly out of character
- Acts in a way that causes alarm
- Displays unhealthy or dangerous patterns of behavior
- Reports having been a victim of hazing or other crime
- Exhibits behavior that substantially impairs, interferes, or obstructs orderly processes and functions of the university
- Exhibits behavior that deliberately interferes with instruction or office procedures
- Exhibits behavior that is lewd or offensive
- Exhibits behavior that breaches the peace
- Reports financial difficulty due to hardships

Office of Dean of Student (DOS)

Phone: 985-549-3792

- Reports difficulty due to a recent hospitalization
- Needs assistance transitioning back to the university after an emergency
- Reports financial difficulty due to hardships