

A SURVEY ON
ACADEMIC
Incivility
AT INDIANA UNIVERSITY

Preliminary Report
Center for Survey Research
June 14, 2000

If we can invite ourselves and our colleagues, our students, staff and administration to participate fully in this community of learning, learning to acknowledge and value all the different ways of contributing to it, then civility and common good will surely follow.

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Civility: An Uncommon Good, Keynote Presentation
at the Campus Forum on Academic Incivility
October 12, 1998

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Summary of Survey Processes

The Indiana University Center for Survey Research (CSR) in Bloomington conducted the Survey on Academic Incivility at Indiana University for the Offices of the Dean of Students and the Dean of Faculties at IU-Bloomington. The purpose of the survey was to obtain information about experiences of academic incivility at Indiana University. We asked about the extent and types of incivility respondents have experienced at IUB, their responses to incivility, and perceptions about who engages in incivility.

The questionnaire was reviewed by faculty groups and was pretested in February and March, 2000 with faculty and graduate instructors at the Bloomington campus. As a result of the pretests, a number of additions and improvements were made to the questionnaire.

The names and addresses of faculty and associate instructors in the study were provided by the Office of the Dean of Faculties. All faculty with IUB appointments during Fall 1999 were included. The graduate instructors included in the survey were those listed in the Fall 1999 Schedule of Classes.

On March 23-24, letters were mailed to inform participants that the survey would be arriving shortly and encouraging them to participate. The 7-page questionnaires were mailed April 7-13. Reminder postcards were mailed April 25-26. A second questionnaire was sent to all non-responding participants on May 12.

The following table displays the disposition of every case as of June 9. The final report will include additional questionnaires we receive up until the cut-off date for that report.

Dispositions	Group	
	Faculty	Graduate Instructors
Total	1,981	756
Completed	1,009	440
Refusals	21	1
Not Applicable	151	4
Bad Address	21	8
Not Returned	779	303

The data were entered into the computer using a scanner. The responses for all questionnaires were verified by a staff member of CSR to ensure accuracy in the scanning process. The text responses were directly entered into a computer file.

Kevin D. Vryan is the Project Manager for the Survey on Academic Incivility. Jennifer Inghram is the Field Director—Mail Section and, as such, was responsible for survey mailing procedures. John Kennedy is the CSR Director and Nancy Bannister is the CSR Associate Director. Further information regarding this study is available by contacting John Kennedy at the Center for Survey Research, 1022 East Third Street, Bloomington, IN 47405 (812) 855-2573.

Defining Classroom Incivility								
	always		under some conditions		never		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Do you consider students chewing gum in class as incivility?	71	5.0%	631	44.4%	720	50.6%	1422	100.0%
Do you consider students eating in class as incivility?	256	18.0%	887	62.5%	276	19.5%	1419	100.0%
Do you consider students acting bored or apathetic as incivility?	344	24.4%	795	56.4%	271	19.2%	1410	100.0%
Do you consider students' disapproving groans as incivility?	575	41.0%	699	49.9%	127	9.1%	1401	100.0%
Do you consider students' sarcastic remarks or gestures as incivility?	865	61.2%	484	34.2%	65	4.6%	1414	100.0%
Do you consider students sleeping in class as incivility?	698	49.2%	534	37.6%	188	13.2%	1420	100.0%
Do you consider students not paying attention in class as incivility?	925	65.0%	400	28.1%	97	6.8%	1422	100.0%
Do you consider students not taking notes during class as incivility?	38	2.7%	525	37.0%	857	60.4%	1420	100.0%

	always		under some conditions		never		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Do you consider students' conversation distracting other students as incivility?	1047	73.6%	360	25.3%	16	1.1%	1423	100.0%
Do you consider students' conversations distracting you as incivility?	1042	73.6%	339	24.0%	34	2.4%	1415	100.0%
Do you consider students' reluctance to answer direct questions as incivility?	88	6.3%	817	58.1%	502	35.7%	1407	100.0%
Do you consider students using a computer during class for purposes not related to the class as incivility?	943	68.7%	330	24.0%	100	7.3%	1373	100.0%
Do you consider students' cell phone or pager disruptions during class as incivility?	1000	71.2%	343	24.4%	62	4.4%	1405	100.0%
Do you consider students arriving late for class as incivility?	315	22.2%	937	65.9%	170	12.0%	1422	100.0%
Do you consider students leaving class early as incivility?	325	22.8%	969	68.0%	131	9.2%	1425	100.0%

	always		under some conditions		never		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Do you consider students cutting class as incivility?	233	16.4%	622	43.9%	562	39.7%	1417	100.0%
Do you consider students being unprepared for class as incivility?	240	17.0%	706	49.9%	469	33.1%	1415	100.0%
Do you consider students creating tension by dominating discussion as incivility?	152	10.7%	1029	72.8%	233	16.5%	1414	100.0%
Do you consider students' cheating on exams or quizzes as incivility?	1200	85.5%	65	4.6%	138	9.8%	1403	100.0%
Do you consider students demanding make-up exams, extensions, grade changes, or special favors as incivility?	458	32.3%	818	57.7%	142	10.0%	1418	100.0%
Do you consider students taunting or belittling other students as incivility?	1326	93.6%	71	5.0%	20	1.4%	1417	100.0%
Do you consider students challenging your knowledge or credibility in class as incivility?	310	22.0%	881	62.4%	220	15.6%	1411	100.0%

	always		under some conditions		never		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Do you consider students' harassing comments concerning race, ethnicity, or gender, and directed at you in the classroom as incivility?	1363	95.7%	42	2.9%	19	1.3%	1424	100.0%
Do you consider students' other harassing comments directed at you in the classroom as incivility?	1262	88.8%	136	9.6%	23	1.6%	1421	100.0%
Do you consider students' hostile verbal attacks or challenges directed at you in the classroom as incivility?	1270	89.6%	122	8.6%	26	1.8%	1418	100.0%
Do you consider students' vulgarity directed at you in the classroom as incivility?	1332	93.9%	69	4.9%	18	1.3%	1419	100.0%
Do you consider students' inappropriate emails to you as incivility?	1041	73.9%	342	24.3%	25	1.8%	1408	100.0%

	always		under some conditions		never		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
Do you consider students' harassing comments or behavior directed at you outside the classroom as incivility?	1264	89.3%	128	9.0%	24	1.7%	1416	100.0%
Do you consider students' threats of physical harm against you as incivility?	1389	98.1%	9	.6%	18	1.3%	1416	100.0%
Do you consider students' other behaviors as incivility?	81	68.6%	26	22.0%	11	9.3%	118	100.0%

Frequency of Experiences with Incivility										
	often		sometimes		rarely		never		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
How often did you experience students chewing gum in class?	202	15.1%	525	39.3%	441	33.0%	169	12.6%	1337	100.0%
How often did you experience students eating in class?	149	10.8%	534	38.6%	502	36.3%	197	14.3%	1382	100.0%
How often did you experience students acting bored or apathetic?	197	14.3%	746	54.1%	372	27.0%	65	4.7%	1380	100.0%
How often did you experience students' disapproving groans?	38	2.8%	313	22.8%	619	45.1%	402	29.3%	1372	100.0%
How often did you experience students' sarcastic remarks or gestures?	29	2.1%	225	16.2%	591	42.5%	546	39.3%	1391	100.0%

	often		sometimes		rarely		never		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
How often did you experience students sleeping in class?	79	5.7%	414	29.7%	603	43.2%	299	21.4%	1395	100.0%
How often did you experience students not paying attention in class?	96	6.9%	504	36.2%	575	41.3%	216	15.5%	1391	100.0%
How often did you experience students not taking notes during class?	245	18.0%	658	48.5%	348	25.6%	107	7.9%	1358	100.0%
How often did you experience students' conversation distracting other students?	135	9.7%	609	43.7%	553	39.7%	97	7.0%	1394	100.0%
How often did you experience students' conversations distracting you?	97	7.0%	493	35.6%	593	42.9%	200	14.5%	1383	100.0%

	often		sometimes		rarely		never		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
How often did you experience students' reluctance to answer direct questions?	84	6.1%	380	27.7%	608	44.3%	300	21.9%	1372	100.0%
How often did you experience students using a computer in class for purposes not related to the class?	42	3.1%	68	5.0%	145	10.7%	1106	81.3%	1361	100.0%
How often did you experience students' cell phone or pager disruptions during class?	3	.2%	43	3.1%	271	19.5%	1070	77.1%	1387	100.0%
How often did you experience students arriving late for class?	430	30.8%	684	49.0%	267	19.1%	16	1.1%	1397	100.0%
How often did you experience students leaving early?	140	10.0%	527	37.8%	591	42.4%	136	9.8%	1394	100.0%

	often		sometimes		rarely		never		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
How often did you experience students cutting class?	395	28.7%	656	47.6%	288	20.9%	39	2.8%	1378	100.0%
How often did you experience students being unprepared for class?	385	27.9%	770	55.7%	206	14.9%	21	1.5%	1382	100.0%
How often did you experience students creating tension by dominating discussion?	27	2.0%	395	28.7%	640	46.4%	316	22.9%	1378	100.0%
How often did you experience students cheating on exams or quizzes?	10	.7%	120	8.8%	524	38.4%	711	52.1%	1365	100.0%
How often did you experience students demanding make-up exams, extensions, grade changes or special favors?	131	9.5%	448	32.3%	561	40.5%	245	17.7%	1385	100.0%

	often		sometimes		rarely		never		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
How often did you experience students taunting or belittling other students?	1	.1%	64	4.6%	385	27.7%	940	67.6%	1390	100.0%
How often did you experience students challenging your knowledge or credibility in class?	11	.8%	126	9.1%	550	39.5%	705	50.6%	1392	100.0%
How often did you experience students' harassing comments concerning race, ethnicity, or gender, and directed at you in the classroom?	0	.0%	7	.5%	96	6.9%	1296	92.6%	1399	100.0%
How often did you experience students' other harassing comments directed at you in the classroom?	0	.0%	30	2.1%	194	13.9%	1172	84.0%	1396	100.0%

	often		sometimes		rarely		never		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
How often did you experience students' hostile verbal attacks or challenges directed at you in the classroom?	1	.1%	45	3.2%	210	15.0%	1140	81.7%	1396	100.0%
How often did you experience students' vulgarity directed at you in the classroom?	0	.0%	3	.2%	97	7.0%	1293	92.8%	1393	100.0%
How often did you experience students' inappropriate emails to you?	15	1.1%	89	6.4%	320	23.0%	970	69.6%	1394	100.0%
How often did you experience students' harassing comments or behavior directed at you outside the classroom?	6	.4%	20	1.4%	127	9.1%	1237	89.0%	1390	100.0%

	often		sometimes		rarely		never		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
How often did you experience students' threats of physical harm against you?	2	.1%	2	.1%	30	2.2%	1356	97.6%	1390	100.0%
How often did you experience other uncivil student behaviors?	21	13.4%	38	24.2%	28	17.8%	70	44.6%	157	100.0%

Responding to Classroom Incivility						
	yes		no		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
I responded to incidents of incivility by ignoring the problem or deciding not to take action.	370	56.4%	286	43.6%	656	100.0%
I responded to incidents of incivility by addressing the students involved or the entire class during class time.	538	76.9%	162	23.1%	700	100.0%
I responded to incidents of incivility by speaking with the students involved outside of class time.	534	77.4%	156	22.6%	690	100.0%
I responded to incidents of incivility by changing course requirements, grading criteria, and/or deadlines.	181	27.7%	472	72.3%	653	100.0%
I responded to incidents of incivility by making tests or assignments easier or by dropping a requirement to pacify disruptive students.	58	8.9%	593	91.1%	651	100.0%
I responded to incidents of incivility by making class more fun or entertaining.	289	44.8%	356	55.2%	645	100.0%
I responded to incidents of incivility by seeking advice from colleagues or other departmental or university resources.	445	65.8%	231	34.2%	676	100.0%
I responded to incidents of incivility by reporting a student's behavior to the department, university officials, or police.	115	17.6%	539	82.4%	654	100.0%
I responded to incidents of incivility with other responses.	50	52.6%	45	47.4%	95	100.0%

Effectiveness of Responses to Classroom Incivility										
	very		somewhat		not very		not at all		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
How effective was ignoring the problem or deciding not to take action?	45	10.4%	158	36.7%	152	35.3%	76	17.6%	431	100.0%
How effective was addressing the students involved or entire class during class time?	213	38.0%	286	51.1%	45	8.0%	16	2.9%	560	100.0%
How effective was speaking with the students involved outside of class time?	285	52.1%	211	38.6%	36	6.6%	15	2.7%	547	100.0%
How effective was changing course requirements, grading criteria, and/or deadlines?	62	26.2%	107	45.1%	42	17.7%	26	11.0%	237	100.0%

	very		somewhat		not very		not at all		Total	
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%
How effective was making tests or assignments easier or dropping a requirement to pacify disruptive students?	26	19.1%	44	32.4%	30	22.1%	36	26.5%	136	100.0%
How effective was making class more fun or entertaining?	78	24.7%	188	59.5%	35	11.1%	15	4.7%	316	100.0%
How effective was seeking advice from colleagues or other departmental or university resources?	128	28.8%	246	55.3%	51	11.5%	20	4.5%	445	100.0%
How effective was reporting a student's behavior to the department, university officials, or police?	52	30.4%	54	31.6%	27	15.8%	38	22.2%	171	100.0%
How effective was the other response?	25	51.0%	17	34.7%	3	6.1%	4	8.2%	49	100.0%

<i>Based on your overall experiences, would you say that male or female students are more likely to engage in classroom incivility?</i>		
	Count	%
males are much more likely	230	16.0
males are a little more likely	325	22.6
about equal	626	43.6
females are a little more likely	54	3.8
females are much more likely	18	1.3
don't know	183	12.7
Total	1436	100.0

<i>Based on your overall experiences, would you say that undergraduate or graduate students are more likely to engage in classroom incivility?</i>		
	Count	%
undergraduates are much more likely	784	54.6
undergraduates are a little more likely	219	15.3
about equal	116	8.1
grad students are a little more likely	26	1.8
grad students are much more likely	18	1.3
don't know	272	19.0
Total	1435	100.0

<i>Based on your overall experiences, would you say that classroom incivility is more likely to occur in small or large classes?</i>		
	Count	%
much more likely in small classes	37	2.6
a little more likely in small classes	27	1.9
about equal	135	9.4
a little more likely in large classes	309	21.5
much more likely in large classes	608	42.3
don't know	320	22.3
Total	1436	100.0

<i>Based on your overall experiences, would you say that classroom incivility is more likely to occur in required or optional classes?</i>		
	Count	%
much more likely in required classes	424	29.5
a little more likely in required classes	308	21.5
about equal	111	7.7
a little more likely in optional classes	87	6.1
much more likely in optional classes	40	2.8
don't know	465	32.4
Total	1435	100.0

<i>Based on your perceptions, would you say that male or female instructors are more likely to be targets of incivility?</i>		
	Count	%
males are much more likely	0	
males are a little more likely	5	.3
about equal	175	12.2
females are a little more likely	364	25.4
females are much more likely	369	25.7
don't know	521	36.3
Total	1434	100.0

<i>Based on your perceptions, would you say that AIs or faculty are more likely to be targets of incivility?</i>		
	Count	%
AIs are much more likely	463	32.2
AIs are a little more likely	410	28.5
about equal	117	8.1
faculty are a little more likely	29	2.0
faculty are much more likely	6	.4
don't know	413	28.7
Total	1438	100.0

<i>Based on your perceptions, would you say that younger or older instructors are more likely to be targets of incivility?</i>		
	Count	%
younger instructors are much more likely	329	23.0
younger instructors are a little more likely	368	25.7
about equal	211	14.7
older instructors are a little more likely	37	2.6
older instructors are a little more likely	8	.6
don't know	480	33.5
Total	1433	100.0

<i>Based on your perceptions, would you say that demanding or easy courses are more likely to have incivility?</i>		
	Count	%
demanding courses are much more likely	166	11.6
demanding courses are a little more likely	179	12.5
about equal	257	17.9
easy courses are a little more likely	138	9.6
easy courses are much more likely	93	6.5
don't know	600	41.9
Total	1433	100.0

<i>Do you think that you might contribute to classroom incivility in any way?</i>		
	Count	%
no	662	51.6
yes	622	48.4
Total	1284	100.0

<i>How much formal training have you received, during graduate school or while an instructor, in dealing with classroom incivility or disruptions by students?</i>		
	Count	%
a lot of training	44	3.1
some training	238	16.7
very little training	384	27.0
no training	756	53.2
Total	1422	100.0

<i>In the past two years, how much discussion with your colleagues or others have you had about ways to deal with classroom incivility?</i>		
	Count	%
a lot of discussion	144	10.1
some discussion	612	43.0
very little discussion	434	30.5
no discussion	234	16.4
Total	1424	100.0

<i>If a workshop were offered to help you learn ways to address classroom incivility, do you think you would attend?</i>		
	Count	%
definitely attend	135	9.6
probably attend	450	32.0
probably not attend	475	33.7
definitely not attend	156	11.1
don't know	192	13.6
Total	1408	100.0

<i>Class level - first class</i>		
	Count	%
undergraduate	1142	85.2
graduate	198	14.8
Total	1340	100.0

<i>Class size - first class</i>		
	Count	%
fewer than 25	603	45.4
25-49	377	28.4
50-99	189	14.2
100-149	79	5.9
150-249	32	2.4
250 or more	49	3.7
Total	1329	100.0

<i>Class level - second class</i>		
	Count	%
undergraduate	542	65.9
graduate	280	34.1
Total	822	100.0

<i>Class size - second class</i>		
	Count	%
fewer that 25	474	57.5
25-49	229	27.8
50-99	84	10.2
100-149	16	1.9
150-249	11	1.3
250 or more	11	1.3
Total	825	100.0

Description of Respondents (Demographics)

Gender		
	Count	%
male	810	57.9
female	588	42.1
Total	1398	100.0

Classification		
	Count	%
full-time faculty	768	53.9
adjunct faculty	53	3.7
visiting faculty	72	5.1
part-time faculty	57	4.0
associate instructor (AI)	438	30.8
other	36	2.5
Total	1424	100.0

Race/Ethnicity *		
	Count	% of total sample
White or Caucasian	1268	87.5%
Asian or Pacific Islander	61	4.2%
Black or African American	46	3.2%
Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin	46	3.2%
American Indian or Alaska Native	6	.4%
other race	32	2.2%

* Respondents were allowed to select multiple race and ethnicity categories.

Attachment – Sample Questionnaire