DEALING WITH DISRUPTIVE AND DISTURBING STUDENT BEHAVIOR

Who should I call if one of my students is exhibiting disruptive or disturbing behavior?

*If you believe the student may present an immediate danger to him/herself or to anyone else, your first call should be to 911.* Once you are in a safe location and the police have been notified, you should contact either Justin Brown in the Office of Student Ethics and Anti-Harassment Programs or Carol McCord in the Office of the Dean of Students. Justin and Carol work together and with others to coordinate an administrative response to problematic student behavior, when such is warranted.

*If you do NOT believe the student presents an immediate danger,* you should simply contact Justin Brown in the Office of Student Ethics and Anti-Harassment Programs or Carol McCord in the Office of the Dean of Students at your earliest convenience. They will record the information you provide (which is shared only on a need to know basis), advise you on how to proceed, and/or direct you to other resources they believe might be beneficial.

Though the behavior is somewhat disturbing, shouldn’t I wait until it gets a little more serious before I get the Office of the Dean of Students involved?

It never hurts to share your worries with someone. Perhaps the behavior you have witnessed, while not particularly troubling on its own, is part of a larger pattern that may demand intervention at the administrative level, either immediately or in the future. And even if this is not the case, Justin and Carol are always happy to consult with a faculty member who has concerns about a student.

Are there other resources available?

Absolutely. For instance, staff members at Counseling and Psychological Services (CAPS) are regularly available to consult with instructors about student behavioral issues. And if you are worried about a student who has previously presented you with a memo from Disability Services for Students (DSS), you may want to speak with someone in that office. However, we still encourage you to contact either Justin Brown or Carol McCord when you have concerns about a student’s behavior or well-being. They can always direct you to additional campus resources.

Do you have any general suggestions for responding to disruptive student behavior?

From the “Guidelines for Dealing with Disruptive Students in Academic Settings” (http://www.indiana.edu/~ufc/docs/policies/DisruptiveStudents.pdf):

1. Remain calm and request compliance from the student in concrete terms (e.g., "please lower your voice" or "please sit in your chair").
2. Ask the student to speak with you to discuss the concerns both may have. Acknowledge the emotions of the student ("I understand you are upset"). Do not engage the student in a debate. It is recommended that an observer be present when this meeting occurs.
3. Try to reach an agreement that is mutually satisfying; that is, you still have control of the academic setting and the student is not disgraced in from of his/her peers.
4. If the student refuses to comply, indicate that you will enlist the aid of others to stop the behavior and that the behavior is subject to disciplinary proceedings of the university.
5. If the student continues to refuse to comply, leave the academic setting to call for assistance or ask someone else in the vicinity to enlist the help of others. Be specific regarding whom you want called/contacted.
6. If a student is violent or threatening, remove yourself and instruct others to remove themselves from the situation and summon campus police as quickly as possible.

Resource List

Office of the Dean of Students (Contact: Carol McCord, Associate Dean of Students)
Phone: (812) 855-8187
E-mail: camccord@indiana.edu or iubdos@indiana.edu
Web site: http://studentaffairs.iub.edu/

Office of Student Ethics and Anti-Harassment Programs (Contact: Justin Brown, Assistant to the Dean of Students)
Phone: (812) 855-5419 or (812) 855-4463
E-mail: justbrow@indiana.edu or ethics@indiana.edu
Web site: http://studentaffairs.iub.edu/ethics/

Indiana University Police Department
Phone: 911 or (812) 855-4111
Web site: http://www.indiana.edu/~iupd/

Counseling and Psychological Services
Phone: (812) 855-5711
Web site: http://healthcenter.indiana.edu/departments/caps.html

Disability Services for Students
Phone: (812) 855-7578
E-mail: iubdss@indiana.edu
Web site: http://www2.dsa.indiana.edu/dss/

Office of the Vice President and General Counsel
Phone: (812) 855-9739

Office of the Vice Provost for Faculty and Academic Affairs
Phone: (812) 855-2809
E-mail: vpfaa@indiana.edu
Web site: http://www.indiana.edu/~vpfaa/

Office of the Vice Provost for Undergraduate Education
Phone: (812) 855-8783
E-mail: vpue@indiana.edu
Web site: http://www.indiana.edu/~vpue/