

FAYETTEVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR IN THE CLASSROOM

Authority:	Issued by the Chancellor. Changes or exceptions to administrative policies issued by the Chancellor may only be made by the Chancellor.
Category:	Academic Affairs
Applies to:	●Administrators ●Faculty ●Staff ●Students
History:	Approved – November 17, 2008 First Issued – December 9, 2008
Related Policies:	<i>The Code</i> of the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina Fayetteville State University’s <i>Code of Student Conduct</i> .
Contact for Info:	Provost and Vice Chancellor for Academic Affairs (910) 672-1469 Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs (910) 672-1211 Dean of Students (910) 672-1201

I. PURPOSE

Section 608 of The Code of the Board of Governors of the University of North Carolina (the “UNC Code”) explicitly states that “all students shall be responsible for conducting themselves in a manner that helps to enhance an environment of learning in which the rights, dignity, worth and freedom of each member of the academic community are reported.” The UNC Code further provides that “it shall be the duty of the chancellor to exercise full authority in the regulation of student affairs and student conduct and discipline.”

Disruptive classroom behavior is also a violation of Fayetteville State University’s *Code of Student Conduct* (Section III.B.5.e.) which defines disorderly conduct to include acting in a manner so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it materially or substantially interferes with normal classroom procedures.

This policy is intended as initial response before enforcing Section III.B.5.e. of the university’s *Code of Student Conduct* (“Code”) as it relates to classroom conduct and to enforce the right of all students to receive instruction without interference by disruptive behavior from other students. This policy should be used as a first resort before referring conduct to the Dean of Students for a violation under *Code*.

This policy is not intended to address behavior that poses an imminent threat or danger to the student or others. Such behavior should be immediately reported to the Campus Police and the Vice Chancellor of Student Affairs.

II. DEFINITIONS

- A. Classroom – Any setting, such as regular classrooms, laboratories, sites of field experiences or internships, or other settings, in which instruction is provided by an FSU faculty member.
- B. Faculty Member – Any individual authorized by Fayetteville State University to provide instruction in a course in which students have the opportunity to earn academic credit.
- C. Disruptive Behavior – As used in this policy, any student behavior that interferes with instruction and learning. Examples include, though are not limited to, the following:
 - 1. Failure to respect the rights of other students to express their viewpoints by behaviors such as repeatedly interrupting others while they speak, using profanity and/or disrespectful names or labels for others, ridiculing others for their viewpoints, and other similar behaviors;
 - 2. Excessive talking to other students while the faculty member or other students are presenting information or expressing their viewpoints;
 - 3. Use of cell phones and other electronic devices in violation of the class syllabus;
 - 4. Overt inattentiveness (sleeping, reading newspapers);
 - 5. Eating in class (except as permitted by the faculty member);
 - 6. Threats or statements that jeopardize the safety of the student and others;
 - 7. Failure to follow reasonable requests of faculty members; and/or
 - 8. Entering class late or leaving class early on a regular basis.

Faculty members have the right to clarify specific forms of disruptive behavior beyond those cited above.

III. LIMITATIONS

This policy does not apply to situations in which faculty members believe that a student's behavior **poses a threat to the student's own safety or the safety of others**. In such cases, faculty members shall report the potentially dangerous behavior to the Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs who will determine the appropriate response to the

information provided. If there is an immediate threat or danger of bodily harm, the faculty shall report that behavior to the Campus Police immediately.

IV. RESPONSIBILITIES OF FACULTY MEMBERS

A. Instructional Setting

Faculty members are responsible for maintaining an instructional setting in which the rights of all students are respected. To establish such a setting, faculty members are responsible for:

1. Behaving in ways that exhibit professionalism and civility;
2. Providing in the course syllabus clear statements of expectations for student behavior; and
3. Using instructional strategies that encourage students' active engagement in the learning process.

B. Application of Policy

Faculty members are responsible for applying this policy in a reasonable manner (as defined by what most faculty members in similar circumstances would consider reasonable). Faculty may not use the policy to limit the rights of students to express points of view different from that of the faculty member or other students.

Faculty members should seek guidance in handling cases of classroom misconduct from the Dean of Students and/or Legal Counsel. Current case law in higher education has been fairly consistent in setting higher standards of due process in conduct cases involving students than in academic cases.

C. Reporting an Incident of Disruptive Behavior

Each incident of disruptive behavior should be reported to the Dean of Students. Faculty members shall report such incidents on the university's *Report of Disruptive Classroom Incident* form which is included as a part of this policy.

V. RIGHTS AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF STUDENTS

A. Knowledge of and Adherence to this Policy

Students are responsible for knowing and adhering to the provisions of this policy. Claims of ignorance of the policy will not excuse unacceptable behavior.

B. Complying with Requests from Faculty Members

Students are required to comply with requests aimed at reducing disruptive behavior, such as requests to move to another seat, to put away cell phones and other devices, and to leave the classroom. Students must recognize that failure to comply with a faculty member's request constitutes an additional occurrence of disruptive behavior. A student's belief that a faculty member is applying this policy unfairly is **not** a basis for refusing to comply with that faculty member's directive.

C. Right of Appeal

There shall be no right of appeal for actions listed under Section VI. Severe sanctions (such as permanent removal from a class) cannot be imposed without the student being formally charged in accordance with the Code. Students charged with a violation of the *Code* must be advised of their rights as well as offered the opportunity for a hearing.

VI. RESPONSES TO DISRUPTIVE CLASSROOM BEHAVIOR

When a faculty member determines that a student is engaging in disruptive behavior, the faculty member may take the following actions.

A. Direct Student to Cease Disruptive Behavior

A faculty member may ask a student to cease talking, use of cell phone or other device, or other behaviors that are disrupting class. Faculty members should strive to make requests in a respectful manner and tone.

B. Direct Student to Change Seating Locations

The faculty member may request a student to change his or her seating location to minimize disruptive behavior

C. Require Student to Have an Individual Meeting with the Faculty Member

The faculty member may meet with the student to discuss the disruptive behavior and warn him or her of the consequences of its continuation.

D. Direct Student to Leave Class for the Remainder of the Class Period

A directive to leave class for the remainder of the class period should be made only after the faculty member has had an individual conference with the student to warn the student of the consequences of continued disruptive behavior.

An exception to the requirement that a conference be initially held shall be when a student's behavior is threatening or abusive to others or is a potential threat to the safety of the student and/or others. If a student, who exhibits such behavior, refuses to leave class as directed by the faculty member, the faculty member may contact FSU's Police Department to request that the student be removed from the class.

E. Dismiss Class for the Period

A faculty member may dismiss class if he or she concludes that the disruptive behavior is so severe as to make instruction impossible. A faculty member is required to inform his or her immediate supervisor when a class is dismissed for this reason.

F. Deduct Points from a Student's Grade

A faculty member may deduct points from the final grade of students who continue to disrupt class despite repeated warnings by the faculty member. The student's grade shall not be reduced by more than one letter grade for disruptive behavior. The faculty member may deduct points from a student's grade only if the faculty member has had at least one individual conference with the student.

G. Filing a Complaint with the Dean of Students

If a faculty member is considering more severe sanctions against a student who is engaging in disruptive classroom behavior, the faculty member shall consult with the Dean of Students regarding filing a complaint against the student under the *Code*. Severe sanctions (such as permanent removal from a class) cannot be imposed without a formal charge for disorderly conduct or some other *Code* violation. A student who has been charged with a violation of the *Code* must be advised of his/her rights as well as offered the opportunity for a hearing.

FAYETTEVILLE STATE UNIVERSITY

Report of Disruptive Classroom Incident

In accordance with the university's policy on *Disruptive Behavior in the Classroom*, the following incident is reported:

Student's Name _____

Course _____ Meeting Days and Time _____

Faculty Member's Name _____ Phone # _____

Description of Incident (use an additional page if necessary) _____

Describe the instructions that were given to the student? _____

Was the student asked to leave the class? Yes ____ No ____

If yes, will he/she be allowed back into class? Yes ____ No ____

Has the Department Chair been informed? Yes ____ No ____

Will you file a complaint with the Dean of Students? Yes ____ No ____

Do you think it is necessary to remove the student from the class permanently? Yes ____ No ____

Faculty Member's Signature

Date

***Please deliver to the Dean of Students, 209 Collins Bldg.,
within two (2) business days of the date of the incident.***