Responding to Disruptive Behavior At Oregon State University

While the University is a place where the free exchange of ideas and concepts allows for debate and disagreement, all classroom behavior and discourse should reflect the values of respect and civility. Disruptive behavior is defined as behavior that “interferes with university or university-sponsored activities, including but not limited to classroom related activities, study, teach, research, intellectual or creative endeavors, administration, service or the provision of communication, computing or emergency services.” Disruptive behavior by students occurs on a continuum of low-risk to high-risk behaviors.

Minimally Disruptive Behavior
In cases where the behavior is minimally disruptive, it is recommended that the staff or faculty member talk with the student immediately upon observing the behavior. The purpose of this discussion is to review the disruptive behavior and its impact on the learning environment. This discussion should include behavioral expectations: how the student can correct the behavior and probable consequences should the behavior persist. Examples of minimally disruptive behaviors in the classroom include being late to class, beepers and cell phones going off during class, and reading the newspaper. In a work environment, minimally disruptive behaviors may include ignoring the instructions of a university official, yelling, or blocking access to university resources.

Significant Disruptive Behavior
There are times when behavior is so disruptive that an immediate referral to The Office of Student Conduct and Mediation is appropriate. The term “classroom disruption” means behavior a reasonable person would view as interfering with the conduct of a class. Examples of increasing seriousness include:
- making distracting noises
- persistently speaking without being recognized
- repeatedly interrupting
- resorting to physical threats or personal insults.

When a very serious or threatening incident of disruptive behavior occurs in the classroom, academic building, or on the campus, Oregon State Police should be contacted immediately by calling 737-7000.

When to call for immediate assistance:
- Threats of physical assault
- Threat of violence or other unlawful behavior
- Intimidation or harassment of another person through words and/or actions
- Presentation of an overt or veiled threat
- Exhibition of extreme emotional and/or psychological behaviors that could result in them harming themselves or others.

Student Conduct
Dan Schwab, Coordinator
245 Snell Hall
Phone 541-737-3656

Oregon State Police
Department of Public Safety
200 Cascade Hall
Phone 541-737-3010
Campus Emergency Dial 737-7000