

**Q. When should I call the police?**

**A.** "You should call the campus police or 911 whenever you believe there is any threat of violence or other unlawful behavior-including a student's refusal to leave a class after being told to do so. Any threat of violence should be taken seriously. Err on the side of caution and notify the police as soon as you can."

**Q. How should I respond when a classroom disruption occurs?**

**A.** "Faculty members have broad authority to manage the classroom environment. One court compared teachers to judges, since both teachers and judges focus on relevant issues, set reasonable time limits, assess the quality of ideas and expression, and make sure participants are heard in an orderly manner."

"While their ultimate goals may be different, judges and teachers need to exercise authority with compassion and self-restraint. It's best to correct innocent mistakes and minor first offenses gently."

"Also, if you believe inappropriate behavior is occurring, consider a general word of caution, rather than warning or embarrassing a particular student (e.g., a good approach is to say 'we have too many private conversations going on at the moment; let's all focus on the same topic')."

"If the behavior in question is irritating, but not disruptive, try speaking with the student after class. Most students are unaware of distracting habits or mannerisms, and have no intent to be offensive or disruptive."

"There may be rare circumstances when it is necessary to speak to a student during class about his or her behavior. Correct the student in a courteous manner, indicating that further discussion can occur after class."

"Overall, key factors in responding to apparent disruptive or uncivil behavior are clarity in expectations; courtesy and fairness in responses (making sure students have an opportunity to discuss the incident with you in a timely manner); and progressive discipline, in which students (in less serious cases) are given an opportunity to learn from the consequences of their misbehavior, and to remain in the class."

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**Q. What should I do in the face of persistent disruption?**

**A.** "Current university policy states that a student who persists in disrupting a class may be directed by the faculty member to leave the classroom for the remainder of the class period and can refer the student to the Office of Student Conduct for conduct action. The student should be told the reason(s) for such action, and be given an opportunity to discuss the matter with the faculty member as soon as practicable. Prompt consultation should also be undertaken with the department chair and the director of the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution."

**Q. How should disruptive behavior in the classroom be defined?**

**A.** "We define 'classroom disruption' as behavior a reasonable person would view as being likely to substantially or repeatedly interfere with the conduct of a class. Examples include repeated, unauthorized use of cell phones in the classroom; persistent speaking without being recognized; or making physical threats."

***If you have any questions, please contact the Office of Student Conduct and Conflict Resolution University Park, GC 311 305-348-3939 3050348-6477 (fax) [www.fiu.edu/~sccr](http://www.fiu.edu/~sccr)***