

## **STUDENT DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR: GUIDELINES FOR UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA FACULTY AND STAFF**

As every UA faculty and staff member is aware, disruptive behavior by students occurs on a continuum of low-risk to high-risk behaviors. As defined by the University of Arizona Student Code of Conduct, disruptive behavior “interferes with university or university-sponsored activities, including but not limited to classroom related activities, studying, teaching, research, intellectual or creative endeavors, administration, service or the provision of communication, computing or emergency services.”

The level of risk to individual community members determines the course of action taken. The Dean of Students Office (621-7059) supports faculty and staff by providing consultation regarding student behavioral issues. This consultation may lead to referral to counseling services, the initiation of a Student Code of Conduct investigation or police intervention. In some cases, the referral may include one or more of the following options:

1. Consultation
2. Mediation
3. Interim suspension from the University
4. Temporary suspension from the classroom
5. Reassignment of the student to another class
6. Withdrawal of the student from the class
7. University suspension or expulsion
8. Counseling referral and intervention
9. Restricted access to university property

### **Explicit or Implicit Threats**

When the student indicates an explicit or implicit threat to members of the university community and/or their families, the Dean of Students Office urges that the threat be immediately communicated to the police after removing oneself directly from the situation. An explicit or implicit threat could sound something like the following:

- "I am going to kill Professor Doe"
- "Mr. Doe should be careful when he sees me around campus"

An implicit threat may also include behaviors that make one feel uncomfortable, like invading another's personal space or using techniques of behavioral intimidation, such as yelling and using aggressive arm movements.

In addition to reporting these types of incidents to police, one should also report the incident to the Dean of Students Office to initiate a Student Code of Conduct investigation. The investigation is initiated once a written complaint is received. Complaint forms can be downloaded from <http://w3.arizona.edu/~dos> under "Student Policies and Codes." Due to the confidential nature of the report, complaints should be mailed to the Dean of Students Office, Old Main Room 203, Tucson, Arizona, 85721, or hand delivered. (Please do not send the complaint via electronic mail.)

### **Minimally Disruptive Behavior**

In cases where police action is not appropriate and the behavior is minimally disruptive, the Dean of Students Office suggests that the staff or faculty member talk with the student immediately upon

observing any behavior that is disruptive. 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.

### Classroom Disruption

The purpose of the discussion between the faculty member and the student is to review the disruptive behavior and its impact on the learning environment. This discussion should include behavioral expectations, how to correct the behavior, and future consequences should the behavior persist. The student should receive a written summary of that meeting and a copy should be forwarded to the Dean of Students Office. The written summary should include:

1. A description of the disruptive behavior
2. An expectation of appropriate classroom behavior
3. A statement indicating that if further incidents of the disruptive behavior continue, a referral to the Dean of Students Office will follow.

### Workplace Disruption

In the case of workplace disruptions, the staff member should address the disruptive behavior. If the behavior continues, a Student Code of Conduct complaint should be immediately forwarded to the Dean of Students Office.

In cases where a student may exhibit distress due to a psychological disorder, the staff or faculty member is encouraged to consult with Counseling and Psychological Services (C.A.P.S., 621-3334).

### **Significant Disruptive Behavior**

There are times when behavior is so disruptive that an immediate referral to the Dean of Students Office is appropriate, such as continuous interruptions during a single time period. In such cases, the staff or faculty member should immediately contact the Dean of Students Office and submit a written complaint summarizing the incident.

Please take the time to review the Student Code of Conduct and disciplinary procedures on line at <http://w3.arizona.edu/~dos> under "Student Policies and Codes." Share this information with colleagues in your department and please immediately report to police any threats that place individual community members or their families at risk.

We hope these guidelines help you understand and address disruptive behavior by students. However, especially in light of last month's tragic events, we understand that this may be a difficult judgment to make. Please consider the Dean of Students Office a resource. We encourage you to call 621-7060 and consult with one of our Deans if you are unsure about a student or a situation.

