



Addressing Challenging Behaviors in the Classroom



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Presentation Overview

- **Who are our students?**
- **Behavioral symptoms and/or causes**
- **Steps to address concerns in the classroom**
 - Disruptive Behavior
 - SCT vs. BIT
 - BIT Overview
 - Student Rights
 - Tolerance and mutual respect
 - Balancing rights of student and needs of University community
 - Due process
 - Suicidal Ideation
 - Counseling Services Overview
- **Helpful information**

Mental Health

Mental Health is

“A state of well-being in which the individual:

- Realizes his/her own abilities,
- Can cope with the normal stresses of life,
- Can work productively and fruitfully,
- And is able to make a contribution to his or her community.”

World Health Organization, (WHO) 2015

Primary Concerns of College Students Seeking Counseling

Primary Concerns	Percentage
Anxiety Disorders	25.7%
Depression	17%
Stress	6.8%
Relationship problem (specific)	6.3%
Family	4.0%

“There is logic behind the behaviors of students. The challenge is to understand its context”

- Anonymous

Challenging Behaviors are Context Related

They arise in response to environmental events

Classroom Environment:

- Noise
- Disruptions
- Temperature
- No instructional choices
- Transitions
- Working too hard/easy
- Virtual instruction
- Behavior expectations
- COVID precautions

Student Specific Impacts:

- Peer Concerns
- Anxiety
- Fatigue
- Teacher Interactions
- Finances
- Family related
- COVID
- Changes to Co-curricular Involvement
- Changes to Daily Life

Challenging Behaviors Serve a Function

What a student does is not necessarily related to the function of the behavior.

To get something:

- Attention
- Approval
- Reward
- Power
- Control

To escape or avoid something:

- Attending class
- Peers or adults
- Doing work
- Embarrassment
- Shame
- Lack of Confidence

Disruptive Behavior (in-person and online classes)

Disruptive Behavior

- Arriving late
- Talking on cell phones
- Eating or dinking
- Conducting side conversations
- Complaining
- Constantly disagreeing
- Student is not muted in remote setting

Intimidating or Aggressive Behavior

- Obscene gestures
- Hostile arguing
- Menacing physical posture
- Harassing or intimidating statements towards faculty member

Communicating Student Behavioral Concerns

What to do?

For an imminent threat:

- Call 911 (imminent threat)

OR

- Evaluate your concerns.

In most cases, faculty members would need to utilize their own classroom management style to handle situations right away that are not imminent threats.

Communicating Student Behavioral Concerns

What to do?

- Evaluate your concerns.

Classroom management concerns:

1. Ask the student to stop the behavior and to talk with the faculty member after class.
 - Discuss situation with student (privately after class or during office hours).
 - During this conversation, the faculty member should go over what can be done to improve behavior and how the student plans to prevent this behavior from happening again.
2. If disruption warrants, due to the seriousness or persistence, ask the student to leave the class. Let the student know the incident will be documented and referred to Judicial Affairs. If warranted, call the University Police (in-person classes) at 7-9300.

Communicating Student Behavioral Concerns Continued

What to do?

- Evaluate your concerns.

Classroom management concerns:

3. Notify your Department Chair.
4. Set up meeting with the student to discuss behavior that caused them to be dismissed from class. If you feel uncomfortable meeting with the student by yourself, set up a meeting with the Department Chair and the student.
5. Once you have met with the student to discuss objective behavior seen, you can either give the student a warning and let the student know if it happens again, you will file a discipline report with the Office of Judicial Affairs, or if you feel it is severe enough to warrant disciplinary action, you can inform the student that the incident is being referred to the Director of Judicial Affairs.
6. If it is referred to Judicial Affairs, the Director will keep the faculty member, Department Chair and Dean of the particular school updated throughout process.

Student Rights

- Any student accused of allegedly violating one of the charges in the Student Code of Conduct always has due process rights.
- The student has the right to know which charges of the Student Code of Conduct they allegedly violated as well as the date/time/location of incident.
- A student has an opportunity to give their side of the story and call in any witnesses on their behalf.
- A student may also request a formal hearing where the complainant (faculty member) would be expected to come so that the University Judicial Board can ask any necessary questions.
- Once the Director of Judicial Affairs or the University Judicial Board has made a decision, the student may request a review (appeal) to the Dean of Students if they disagree with the decision.

SCT vs. BIT

Student Care Team

- A multi-disciplinary leadership team established to foster essential information sharing and collaboration.
- Monitor, assess, intervene, consult and refer in order to remove barriers to student success and wellbeing.
- If you have a student you are concerned about, please complete a Care Report and a member of the team will contact you promptly. [Care Report](https://wcsu-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report/index.php/pid068860?): https://wcsu-advocate.symplicity.com/care_report/index.php/pid068860?

Behavioral Intervention Team

- A multi-disciplinary leadership team that provides a coordinated and rapid response to students whose actions may be early warning signs of disruptive or violent behavior to self and/or others.
- Team members will implement a response to provide assistance to the individual while mitigating risk in an effort to keep the WCSU community healthy and safe.
- [Behavioral Intervention Team \(BIT\) – Student Affairs \(wcsu.edu\)](https://www.wcsu.edu/student-affairs/behavioral-intervention-team-bit/): <https://www.wcsu.edu/student-affairs/behavioral-intervention-team-bit/>

BIT Overview

Behavioral Intervention Team - Mission

To provide a coordinated and rapid response to students whose actions may be early warning signs of disruptive or violent behavior to self and/or others. Team members will implement a response to provide assistance to the individual student while mitigating risk in an effort to keep the Western community healthy and safe.

While there are no precise predictors of danger, there are behaviors and risk factors that might indicate an acute emergency. These might include the following:

- past history of violent or aggressive behavior
- stalking
- evidence of significant impulsivity
- erratic behavior due to substance abuse
- psychosis
- bizarre and inappropriate affect
- fascination with guns or violence

How to Refer:

Faculty, staff, and students with concerns for student behavior are encouraged to provide a written and documented description of the concern and communicate this to a dean or a member of the BIT.

Steps to take when there is concern about suicidal ideation or plan

1. If student expresses suicidal ideation without a plan, give student Suicide and Crisis Lifeline, call/text - 988 and refer to the Counseling Services or Community Provider.
 - Referral list available online through Counseling Services:
<https://www.wcsu.edu/counseling/wp-content/uploads/sites/33/2022/03/Counseling-Services-Referral-List-2022.pdf>
 - Thriving Campus: <https://wcsu.thrivingcampus.com/>
2. If student states a plan, call 911.
3. It is helpful to let the Counseling Services know if you have to do any of the above in case the student is a current client or makes an appointment.

Counseling Services Overview

Psychotherapy

- Free, confidential individual and group counseling.
- Twelve sessions per academic year.
- Psychotropic medication is not available.

Eligibility

- Student must be matriculated in order to be eligible for services.

Scheduling

- Student can call or stop in to make an appointment.
- Urgent/crisis appointments (11am and 3pm daily).
- Virtual appointments available after in-person intake.

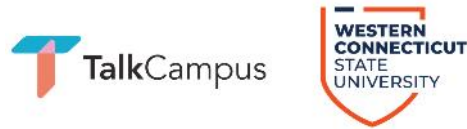
Hours of Operation

- Weekdays, 8:30am – 4:30pm; closed from 12:00pm – 1:00pm
- If a mental health crisis occurs during lunch or after hours, WCSU Police should be called.

Consultation

- Provide consultation to students, administration, faculty, staff, and parents related to mental health and wellness issues.

Wellness Platforms



- TalkCampus provides an online global mental health support network allowing students to access instant, 24/7 on-line support. To learn more go to [WCSU Talk Campus](#).



- You at WCSU - a responsive website that can be accessed on a desktop or mobile phone that will assist students to navigate life in general, as well as on campus.
- Nod at WCSU - an app that will assist students with building meaningful connections with others in real life.

Students in Distress Flowchart

Suggestions for a Positive Classroom Environment

Common Characteristics Associated with Various Conditions

Sample Behavioral Agreement

Questions

AccessAbility Services

White Hall, Room 005
Monday – Friday 8 – 4:00
203-837-8225

Counseling Services

Student Center, Room 222
Monday – Friday 8:30 – 12 & 1 – 4:30
203-837-8690

Dean of Students

Old Main, Room 306
Monday – Friday 8:30 – 4:30
203-837-9700

Office of Judicial Affairs

Student Center, Suite 220
Monday – Friday 8 – 4:00
203-837-8770