

## WHAT IS DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR?

Disruptive and inappropriate behaviors are actions that interfere with the instructional, administrative or service functions of the College. Assessing disruptive behavior can be a highly subjective process. For example, some behavior patterns, such as students talking in class, can be experienced as disruptive in some situations or simply irritating and frustrating in others.

Each CSM faculty or staff member has her or his own level of tolerance and special strategies for handling disruptive situations. It is important to remember that the occurrence of disruptive behavior is rare and should not be confused with a student's right to express differing opinions, a right that is fundamental to a free and open academic community.

It is a good practice for you to clearly define behavioral expectations in the syllabus and discuss this with students during the first class meeting. It may also be helpful to attend one of the disruptive behavior workshops which are offered throughout the year.

There may be times when you are uncertain if a particular behavior is disruptive. Rather than not acting, hoping that the situation will go away, or waiting to see if the situation worsens, consult with your Division Dean, Vice President of Student Services and Psychological Services. These individuals have considerable experience with students' behavior and can help assess the situation and suggest options congruent with your way of working with students. Your colleagues have reported that such coaching has frequently helped

achieve a resolution that avoids formal disciplinary action.

Fortunately, disruptive situations are almost always resolved by your use of personal strategies and/or dialogue with the student. When the usual strategies you have employed have been ineffective and you have assessed the behavior as disruptive, the following guidelines may be helpful.

## RESPONDING TO TYPES OF DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR

There are many kinds of disruptive behavior. Some behaviors are inappropriate; others are prohibited by College policy; and still others are clearly prohibited by the California Penal Code and are punishable by criminal sanctions. For a complete and detailed description of the Student Code of Conduct, refer to the Student Handbook section of the College Catalog.

### DISRUPTIVE OR INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOR

When the behavior of a student is identified as disruptive or inappropriate, you are expected to take all the following steps:

1. Inform the student that the behavior is disruptive, inappropriate and unacceptable.
2. Attempt to elicit the cooperation of the student to resolve the situation.

3. Warn the student that if the behavior continues a likely consequence is disciplinary action by the College.

If such dialogue with the student proves to be ineffective and you feel you have exhausted all the methods you normally employ to resolve such situations, College policy allows for the following response:

1. A faculty or staff member may remove a student who is in violation of the guidelines for student conduct for the duration of the class period or activity during which the violation took place and, if necessary, for the day following. If the student refuses to comply with your instructions to leave, call Public Safety, (650) 574-6415. If you choose to exercise this option, you must immediately report this action to your Division Dean and Psychological Services.
2. In all cases of disruptive behavior involving removal from class you must provide written documentation of the behavior, the initial warning and any subsequent inappropriate or disruptive behavior. This documentation must be forwarded to your Division Dean and Psychological Services. Dean will inform the Vice President of Student Services.

Your Division Dean and/or the Vice President of Student Services will then work with you to determine the next steps in response to the situation.

It is important to note that a student cannot be prohibited from attending a class for more than two sessions without further formal College disciplinary action. In all cases involving potential College disciplinary action, students must be afforded

procedural due process. The essential elements of due process are: notice, the opportunity to be heard, and the right to defend oneself in the context of a hearing.

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#### COLLEGE POLICY VIOLATIONS AND ILLEGAL BEHAVIOR

For disruptive behavior which is in violation of the College Code of Conduct and also illegal, please call CSM Security (650) 738-7000 and/or dial 911 for an immediate response. Examples of these kinds of behaviors include: use of prohibited drugs or alcohol on College property, willful damage to College property, threats, assaults, theft and possession of fire arms.

When you are dealing with students who do not exhibit disruptive behaviors, but you are concerned about the student's wellbeing, please refer to the brochure "Helping Students in Need", and/or contact Psychological Services.

### CSM CONTACT PERSONS

#### STUDENT SERVICES:

Kim Lopez x 6118  
Vice President, Student Services  
Makiko Ueda x 6125  
Personal Counseling & Wellness Services

#### Public Safety

Main Office 650-738-7000

The prefix for all phone numbers listed above is 574, and the area code is (650).



## ADDRESSING DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR OF STUDENTS ON CAMPUS

Guidelines for Faculty and Staff

College of San Mateo