



Center for Teaching Excellence Hampton University Teaching Matters

October 2007

Volume 2, Number 3

In This Issue

- ◆ Classroom Management: Part I

Grants Related Links

- ◆ The Center for Minority Special Education (CMSE)
- ◆ The Foundation Center
- ◆ School Grants

Other Useful Links

- ◆ Collaboration for the Advancement of College Teaching and Learning
- ◆ Associated New American Colleges (ANAC)
- ◆ Quality Education for Minorities (QEM)

In the Next Issue

- ◆ Classroom Management II

Classroom Management: Part I

Lillie Calloway
Zina McGee

The rudiments of classroom management vary. In this regard, management refers to issues of supervision, facilitating and, in some instances, academic discipline. While not all student behaviors require intervention, some are serious and may entail formal disciplinary action. However, current research continues to indicate that most classroom experiences are not problematic. Faculty members should stay abreast of current policies regarding student and faculty interactions as well as the role of your teaching assistants, if applicable. You may wish to revisit and reflect upon the importance of these policies on the *first day of class*, which may contribute to a semester free of classroom management problems. Setting the *ground rules* at the beginning can be particularly helpful. Below you will find additional suggestions for maintaining a positive classroom environment.

Know your philosophy regarding education and tell your students what it is. This can be an enlightening experience for them to realize that you consider your career to be deeper in meaning beyond merely collecting a paycheck. Directly communicate to students that you care about their success, both in and out of the classroom.

Announce your boundaries for communication. Whether by email or talking after class, let students know what you will and will not accept. Tell them that you want to have communications outside of class but you need a certain amount of time for replies and need courtesy in communication. Additionally, let them know that you want to be equitable in sharing your office hours with other students, so they might be asked to come to office hours with concrete questions or concerns.

Reserve the first few classes of the semester for connection building activities. Recent studies on student retention suggest that students are most likely to cite lack of connection as the primary reason they drop out of college. By establishing a connection with peers, students will be more likely to contact each other outside of class for support, ask each other for missed notes, feel safer to offer answers aloud during discussions, and ask for advice regarding other academic and personal concerns.

Be confident in your instruction and interaction with students. This is essential to create the proper environment. Announce guidelines concerning

acceptable and unacceptable classroom behavior. Clearly state the consequences for disruptions, including University policies.

Utilize all of your strengths and demonstrate preparation. Students are well aware of the unprepared professor. This can cause a loss of respect, which will often lead to disruptive behavior. If you are aware of what needs improving, devise goals and then seek assistance/training for further development.

Develop strategies to meet all students' needs and to determine their learning styles. Consider overall class personality. The strength of learning communities is that students get to know one another and feel more comfortable, both in and out of the classroom.

Spend time with students out of class. One-on-one sessions can make students and professors more comfortable with one another, allowing each to discuss classroom behaviors.

Earn students' respect. Being prepared, fair, honest, and having a passion for the material and teaching are respected by students. Do not enable latecomers, begin and end class on time. Make prolonged eye-contact and/or walk toward any disruptive students. Tell the students you consider them adults, and therefore expect them to behave as adults.

Respect the students. It is important to display many of the same behaviors that we expect of our students (i.e., arriving to class on time, no cell phone usage in class, maintaining professionalism, etc.). Also, it is important not to disparage students, and their grades should not be discussed openly during class. They should have ample opportunity to discuss their progress and ways to improve in their classes, particularly during office hours.

Online Resources

Creating Engaging Learning Environments

http://www.algonquincollege.com/lts/profres/learn/manage_class.htm

Classroom Management and Monitoring Student Conduct

<http://www.adprima.com/managing.htm>

Classroom Management

<http://www.terra.edu/support/vctl/facultyenrich/classroomgmt.asp>

Managing a University Classroom

<http://gradschool.wsu.edu/current-students/teaching-resources/>

Managing Difficult Moments in the Classroom

<http://www.stanford.edu/group/polisci/psgsa/difficultmoments.pdf>