

Center for Faculty Development presents

FRIDAY FOCUS ON . . .



**TEACHING**

Friday, September 7, 2007

Each Friday, you will receive a “tried and true” teaching tip for use in your classroom.

This Friday Focus and the next are dedicated to handling general **incivility in the classroom**. Incivility can encompass such disruptions as consistent tardiness, talking, doing other work in class, talking/texting on cell phones, listening to music, and the like. This week’s focus is on prevention; next week, we will address handling specific disruptive behaviors. As always, I welcome your comments and ideas.

Sara Davis, Director, CFD

## Preventive measures to minimize classroom disruptions

1. Include in your syllabus your expectations for students in class. (Amada, 1999)  
For example, what should be done about cell phones and ipods upon entering class? Is there a policy for tardiness? Are your policies presented in a constructive rather than punitive way? We often expect students to know how to behave in classroom settings, but what happens if certain behaviors you believe to be inappropriate are allowed or ignored in other classrooms?
2. Be completely ready to begin at the time class starts. This lets students know that the entire class time is for class and that your subject is important—you aren’t going to waste the time for which they (or their parents) are paying, so they shouldn’t either. Okay, this is a tip from last week, but it fits here; this action emphasizes our commitment to what we are teaching and models professional behavior and adult roles in the classroom for our students.
3. Remind students just why what they learned was important, why you covered the content. Is it important to this class, to later classes, to understanding content for today’s lesson, to their later life? How? Sometimes students need a reminder that what we cover in class isn’t busywork or trivial content. This, too, is a tip from last week, but emphasizes the significance of the work you assign.
4. Be consistent in applying your expectations to students.
5. Richardson (2000) believes that interactive instructional strategies such as collaborative learning rather than pure lecture encourages engagement and interest and discourages disruption.

**Stay tuned . . . next week Friday Focus will discuss handling unwanted classroom behaviors.**

Amada, G. 1999. *Coping with misconduct in the college classroom: A practical model*. Asheville, NC: College Administration Publications, Inc.

Richardson, S.M. 2000. Civility: What went wrong? *Advocate: For NEA Members in Higher Education*, March, 5-8.

Good teaching,

*Sara*