

Classroom Management Tips for Faculty

The college administration supports faculty in their effort to maintain a classroom environment conducive to learning. The following are a few tips that may assist you in your effort to maintain appropriate classroom discipline. If you have questions about classroom management, discipline or college policies, please talk to your supervisor, dean of academic affairs or dean of student services.

1. Have a clear, concise syllabus.
 - The online syllabus template can be found at the following web address:
http://www.palmbeachstate.edu/documents/academic_services/sylformat.dot
 - Have reasonable classroom policies/procedures that clearly and logically are established to maintain a suitable standard of quality.
 - List not only policies but the consequences also (refer to the College Catalog and Student Handbook for the latest policies), i.e.
 - attendance – is up to the instructor. Your policy should be clearly stated in your syllabus. Some examples of specific consequences may include: how many late arrivals/leave early equal an absence, will you WX a student, etc.
 - academic dishonesty – Do you give a zero for the assignment or an ‘F’ for the course.
 - missed tests/assignments – What is your make-up policy.
 - Be as specific with your policies and consequences as you possibly can, since students will try new ways of circumventing them.
 - Include your expectations for an environment conducive to learning (see the *Classroom Etiquette Guidelines* handout).
 - If you deviate from the syllabus make sure all students know and understand the change and that the change does not adversely impact them.
2. Mutual respect is important.
 - Treat students the way you want to be treated.
 - Try not to take bad behavior personally – you’re likely not the only one who has had problems with a particular student.
 - Be careful of condescending tones in your voice (even if it’s the most stupid question you have ever heard).
 - If you have to speak to a student about his/her behavior, always try to do it in private. Do not engage students in front of others whenever possible. Likewise, do not allow students to engage you in front of others. Always encourage students to speak to you after class or in your office.
 - Give students constructive feedback about your expectations.
3. Be consistent.
 - Be equitable in dealing with students. This does not always mean “equal.” Individual circumstances require individual solutions.
 - If you (or the campus) have policies, enforce them across the board.

- Don't single out students for discipline.
 - Don't let bad behavior persist. It's better to deal with bad behavior early in the term than to try to crack down on it later in the term.
 - If you have two or more students encouraging each other's bad behavior, separate them. One way to accomplish this is to talk to the group after class and ask (tell) them to sit separately at the next class meeting.
 - Special needs students do not have special license to be disruptive. Except for the specific accommodation(s) outlined by the Disability Support Services Office, students with disabilities are expected to adhere to all policies and procedures of the College and your syllabus.
4. Be aware of the diversity in your classroom.
- Different students have different learning styles and academic abilities.
 - Students don't always hear it the first time you say it. Repetition is positive.
 - Humor in the classroom can be great but can easily be taken the wrong way and offend students. Caution is recommended when using humor to make points.
 - We find the best teachers have personal or political points of view that are not discernable by students. Faculty who teach objectively and from a balanced viewpoint are typically highly respected by their students.
5. You are in control of your classroom. Taking appropriate action to maintain a positive learning environment will not adversely impact your employment at the college.
- Be a positive role model.
 - Set positive but realistic expectations for your students. They should clearly understand your academic and classroom management requirements.
 - Be firm, but empathetic (Students accept not getting their way if they feel you listen and care about them as individuals).
 - Inform your supervisor when you think you will need to take disciplinary action against a student. The student will probably go to him/her anyway. Informing your supervisor can help speed the process so he/she does not have to come back to you to get the details.
 - Follow the *Recommendations for Faculty Regarding Classroom Discipline* document. Take appropriate action and you will have the administrative support you need to maintain an environment conducive to learning.