

The Student Success Curriculum

Topic 12: Professional Conduct & Classroom Dynamics

Professional conduct is one of the primary factors that impacts classroom dynamics and ensures an enjoyable education experience. When a class of students behaves according to accepted principles and shows compassion and caring for each other, a safe and productive classroom environment is fostered, and students develop the skills they need to work in the real world. This topic looks briefly at professional conduct, and the ways students can directly impact the class for positive results. While this section occurs last in the *Student Success Guide*, it is useful information to include in new student orientation.

Teaching Strategies:

Lecture

Brainstorming

Large Group Discussion

Self-Evaluation

Time Frames

The implementation time for this material is approximately one hour. This material works nicely as part of new student orientation.

Instructor Preparation

- ✓ Read Topic 12: Professional Conduct and Classroom Dynamics.
- ✓ Complete Worksheet 12-1 so that you understand how it is used and the types of questions it asks.
- ✓ Review the PowerPoint slides side-by-side with the lecture outline.
- ✓ Add or delete slides in the PowerPoint lecture so that the lecture better matches your school's policies and procedures.
- ✓ Review the Spirit Assassin activity and determine if it will be useful for your group of students.

Resources

Locate and read any of the following resources to support an understanding of the topic.

- ✓ *Applying Psychology in the Classroom*. David Fulton Publishing.
- ✓ *Positive Classroom Management: A Step-by-Step Guide to Helping Students Succeed* by Robert DiGiulio. Corwin Press.

Supplies & Equipment

- ✓ *Student Success Guides* (one per student)
- ✓ Whiteboard and markers, or chalkboard and chalk
- ✓ Are We Progressing? handouts (if appropriate)
- ✓ LCD/DLP projector, laptop, and PowerPoint presentation, or printed overheads and an overhead projector.

Learning Objectives

After reading Topic 12: Professional Conduct and Classroom Dynamics and completing the worksheets associated with this topic, each student will:

- ✓ Define professional conduct and describe his or her personal view of what constitutes professional conduct.
- ✓ Understand the school dress code.
- ✓ List two behaviors that might be labeled as a classroom disturbance.
- ✓ Outline appropriate professional interactions with peers while on and off campus.
- ✓ Outline appropriate professional interactions with instructors.
- ✓ Explain the schools grievance procedure.
- ✓ Compare and contrast an I-Statement to a You-Statement.
- ✓ Provide the legal definition of sexual harassment.
- ✓ List three behaviors that could be labeled sexual harassment.

- ✓ Discuss an informal and formal complaint procedures for filing harassment claims.
- ✓ Provide two examples of behavior that negatively impacts the classroom dynamic and education environment.
- ✓ List the steps in the professional conflict resolution model described in the *Student Success Guide*.

Lecture Outlines

This lecture outline is meant to be used in combination with the *Student Success Guide*, and the PowerPoint slides included with this teaching kit. The information in this lecture follows the information presented in the *Student Success Guide* with page numbers of the associated materials provided to the right of the heading in parentheses. Instructors are encouraged to add or delete slides and information as they deem appropriate to meet the particular needs of their student groups. The PowerPoint slides can be shown with an LCD projector, or printed onto transparencies for overheads.

Slide 1: Title Slide (p. 132)

Introduce the topic and direct students to page 132 in their *Student Success Guide*. Ask students to complete the Professional Conduct and Classroom Dynamics Assessment (Worksheet 12-1) and then hold a brief, general discussion about how students define the term *professional conduct*. Write some of the students' key ideas on the board.

Slide 2: Professional Conduct Defined (p. 132, 134)

Define professional conduct as it relates to your school. Usually professional conduct includes appropriate dress, personal hygiene, honor and integrity, respect for others, and communication skills. Instructors may need to add or delete slides from this lecture to best cover professional conduct as it relates to their policies and practices.

Tip!

It's important for instructors to set clear guidelines for conduct and then take action when boundaries are crossed. If an instructor tells the students that people dressed inappropriately will be sent home, anyone dressed inappropriately must be sent home. The instructor must uphold these boundaries without backing down. Otherwise massage classrooms can be pure chaos. Administrative staff must clearly define the school's code of conduct and the repercussions for breaching the code and then support instructors who take action.

Slide 3: Professional Dress (p. 134)

Describe the dress code for your school and explain why clothing that does not draw attention to the body is suggested for massage therapists.

Slide 4: Classroom Disturbances (p. 135)

Disturbances in the classroom make it difficult for everyone to focus on important educational material and learn new skills. Inappropriate cell phone use, side conversations, insensitivity to others and lateness are some of the behaviors that disrupt the classroom environment. Discuss each of these types of disturbances and share the schools rules and regulations on these topics.

Slide 5: Prohibited Activities

This slide discusses activities that are commonly prohibited by educational institutions. The instructor is advised to delete this slide should it not reflect the school's policies.

Slide 6: Academic Integrity (p. 136)

Define academic integrity and list the actions that constitute a breach of academic integrity. Share the school's policies on cheating and plagiarism.

Slide 7: Professional Interaction with Peers (p. 137)

Outline appropriate professional interactions with peers and share the school's policies on inappropriate behaviors towards a fellow classmate.

Slide 8: Professional Interaction with Instructors (p. 137)

Outline appropriate professional interactions with instructors and share the school's policies on inappropriate behavior toward an instructor.

Slide 9: Grievance Procedure

Most schools put in place a grievance procedure for students to follow should they want to complain about a fellow classmate or instructor. Share your school's grievance procedure.

Tip!

The How are We Progressing? activity is useful for ensuring that students identify classroom dynamic problems and help to find solutions. It also helps students to talk about and be aware of the roles they often accept in class interactions, and change some of the roles.

Slide 10: I-Statements Versus You-Statements (p. 137)

Compare and contrast I-statements with You-statements and explain why I-statements lead to better communication, especially during conflicts with other classmates or instructors.

Slide 11: Classroom Dynamics (p. 138)

Define classroom dynamics and compare and contrast a positive education experience with a negative education experience. Note that every person in a class is responsible for promoting a positive classroom experience for all students.

Slide 12: Sexually Inappropriate Behavior (p. 138-141)

Discuss some of the ways that students inadvertently send confusing messages to other students. In these cases there is no sexual intent but one student assumes there is sexual intent because the other student is not paying attention to some personal behaviors. These behaviors include sloppy draping, a lack of general modesty, poor body mechanics that cause a student to make inappropriate body contact with the student acting as the client, poor listening, poor attitudes, and body comments. Discuss the behaviors that lead to suspicion and discomfort in a massage classroom.

Slide 13: Sexual Harassment (p. 142)

Define sexual harassment and explain the types of behaviors that constitute a hostile environment and quid pro quo.

Slide 14: Examples of Conduct that Can be Considered Harassing (p. 143)

Review the types of behaviors that are considered harassing and may result in a complaint of sexual harassment.

Slide 15: Suggested Informal Complaint Procedure (p. 144)

Discuss the informal procedure for stopping sexual harassment behavior. The alleged harasser must be told to stop the behavior and then continue the behavior for the behavior to be considered harassment. If the alleged harasser is not told to stop the behavior, that person can claim that he or she had no idea the behavior was offensive and there are no grounds for the school or authorities to take disciplinary action. If the claimant has followed the informal

procedure and the behavior does not stop immediately, the alleged victim should file a formal complaint.

Slide 16: Suggested Formal Complaint Procedure (p. 144)

Discuss the formal complaint procedure for sexual harassment used by the school. Ensure that students know the proper information to include on both a verbal and written formal complaint. Point out to students the place on school grounds where information is posted about the sexual harassment policy and contact details for the U.S. Department of Education Office for Civil Rights, the U.S. Civil Rights Division of the Department of Justice, and the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission.

Slide 17: Gossip (p. 145)

Gossip is a far more widespread problem than sexual harassment on college campuses. Discuss gossip and its negative ramifications for the classroom. Point out ways that people can form healthy working relationships with fellow classmates.

Slide 18: Negativity and Poor Attitudes (p. 146)

Discuss the impact of negativity and poor attitudes on classroom dynamics, and ways that students can address negativity with fellow classmates.

Slide 19: Conflict (p. 147)

Define conflict and give examples from your teaching experiences of conflicts that occurred at the school. Point out that the way a person handles conflict illustrates his or her professionalism, self-awareness, and integrity (or lack thereof).

Slide 20: The Ways People Deal with Conflict (p. 147)

Discuss some of the ways people deal with conflict and the benefits or drawbacks to each of these strategies.

Slide 21: Conflict Resolution (p. 147-148)

Talk through the steps of conflict resolution and emphasize the use of I-statements instead of You-statements during exchanges between conflicting people. Describe the school policy and procedure for addressing conflicts between students or between students and faculty.

Slide 22: You Create Your Classroom Experience (p. 149)

Everyone contributes to a positive or negative classroom experience. Discuss some of the behaviors that lead to a positive, bonded group of students.

Slide 23: Manage Your Behavior and Attitudes (p. 150–151)

It's important for students to regularly check their behaviors and attitudes and ask themselves how they contribute to the classroom environment. Oftentimes students have no idea that their behavior has a negative impact on the rest of the class.

Slide 24: Process the Lecture

Return to the board where students first brainstormed their idea of professional conduct. Ask students to add to the list and describe some of the behavioral areas they had not thought about before. Type up the list as a class code of conduct and post it in the classroom.

Activity: Spirit Assassin

Introduction: Spirit assassins are phrases or comments that cause people to feel fearful of sharing their ideas or that dampen a person's enthusiasm or creativity. Sometimes a group of people will have one or two spirit assassins who are able to decrease a group's productivity simply through negativity and pessimism. The goal of this activity is to identify spirit assassin behaviors, comments, and phrases, and to raise awareness of spirit assassin behavior in the classroom. This activity works well for new groups. If it is used with established groups it is difficult for students to maintain a focus on spirit assassin behavior. Instead they want to call out the person in the group who most often demonstrates spirit assassin behavior. It's important to keep students focused on the behavior and not the person.

Direction:

1. Direct the students to sit in a semi-circle around a board. Ask students to think about a time they were enthusiastic about a project or accomplishment and someone made a comment that killed their positive feelings. Provide an example from your own life to help students recall an appropriate event.
2. Ask students to brainstorm phrases, comments, or behaviors that are spirit assassins. For example, the phrases, "that's a dumb idea," "that will never work," or "I think we can find a more sensible solution," are all lethal. Rolling the eyes at another person's comment, or sighing and shaking the head negatively are physical forms of spirit assassin behavior. Write all of the phrases, comments or behaviors that students can identify on the board.
3. Open up the general discussion by asking the following questions:
 - a. What effect might spirit assassins have in a classroom?
 - b. How might this exercise help you to be a positive participant in this class?
 - c. How can this awareness help our class function as a supportive team?
 - d. What is the difference between a legitimate concern and a spirit assassin?
 - e. How can a legitimate concern or a question be stated or asked in such a way that it doesn't sound like a spirit killer?
 - f. Conclude the discussion by asking students to remain aware of spirit assassins and to strive to eliminate spirit assassins from the classroom.

Activity: Are We Progressing?

Introduction: Students often get caught in patterns of interaction. For example, the most talkative student is always sharing and the quiet student rarely shares. Students also feel frustration with group dynamics but have no way to express it. This activity helps students express frustrations in a positive way. It also helps them see that they can impact the why the class feels and interacts. If this activity is used at all, it must be used consistently, and the results tabulated, tracked, and discussed. The students need to believe that change can happen and that progress can be made, so this activity requires a commitment from the instructor.

Directions:

1. Use this activity after each class discussion, one time a week, or at regular intervals. It must be used at least one time a month to be effective.
2. Explain that most groups of people that work together for any length of time fall into regular patterns of relating. These patterns often go unquestioned even when they cause stress for certain team members. Each person is responsible for how a team relates and for their own behaviors. This activity helps us identify areas for personal growth and identify areas for team growth.
3. Pass out one copy of the handout to each student. Students do not place their names on the handouts. Each student will place an X on one of the numbers on each continuum. Direct students to place their X directly on top of the number to avoid confusion.
4. When the students have completed the handout, ask each student to share with the group the item that the group does right and the item that the group could improve.
5. Process the team progress with these questions:
 - a. How is our group progressing?
 - b. What is improving?
 - c. What is stagnant?
 - d. What is declining?
 - e. Ask each student:
 - vi. What can our team do to make one of your scores increase?
 - vii. What can you do on a personal level to make one of your scores increase?
 - viii. Collect the handouts and calculate the averages on each continuum.

- ix. Enter the averages into a chart that is posted in the classroom. Each time the class conducts the activity, add the new averages to the chart so that the class can see if they are improving, stagnant, or declining, and which areas need work.

Handout: Are We Progressing?

Directions: Place an X on each continuum to represent your opinion. One represents the lowest score and ten represents the highest score.

I feel heard:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

I feel valued:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

My opinions count:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

My contributions are appreciated:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

I feel safe sharing my ideas:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

I feel like I belong on the team:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	---	----

Describe one thing the team does right:

Describe one thing the team could improve:

Test-Taking and Exams Milestones Checklist

Name: _____

Date: _____

0 = The student does not have this skill.

1 = The student sometimes demonstrates this skill.

2 = The student almost always demonstrates this skill.

0	1	2	
			Checks personal behavior and attitudes and adjusts behavior and attitudes as needed to maintain a positive presence in the classroom.
			Is sensitive to classroom dynamics and seeks to make positive contributions to the education environment.
			Dresses in a manner appropriate for a massage professional.
			Takes responsibly for learning and demonstrates academic integrity in the completion of homework assignments and exams.
			Treats fellow classmates with respect and compassion. Handles disagreements with peers in a calm and professional manner.
			Treats instructors with respect and attention. Handles disagreements with instructors in a calm and professional manner.
			Uses I-statements when expressing feelings and ideas.