

situation and academic options and work with their instructors to discuss potential accommodations. University procedures are in place for such situations and should be followed. In all instances, students have a responsibility to communicate with their instructors to ensure they are continuing to meet course expectations and requirements. Faculty, staff and students are encouraged to utilize the ISU Veterans Center and review information at veterans.iastate.edu.

Amended and approved by the Faculty Senate on 4/17/18; the Senior Vice President and Provost on 4/19/2018; and the ISU President on 4/22/2018.

10.4.3.4 Court Appearances

Instructors shall excuse absences due to officially mandated court appearances including jury duty.

Approved by the Faculty Senate on 5/7/13, the Senior Vice President and Provost on 5/20/13, and the ISU President on 5/28/13.

10.5 Policy for Addressing Disruptive Conduct in the Learning Environment

For student learning to be most effective, learning environments must remain civil, safe, collaborative, and free from conduct that unreasonably disrupts, impedes, obstructs, or interferes with the educational process. The university recognizes the importance of open inquiry, freedom of expression, and viewpoint diversity within its Learning Environments, and all members of the university—including faculty, staff, students, and administrators—should feel free to express their viewpoints without fear of reprisal ([FH 7.1](#)); however, students have an obligation to engage in the educational process in a civil manner that does not unreasonably disrupt the educational experiences of their fellow students or the instructor's course objectives.

Conduct that unreasonably disrupts the ability of instructors to teach or students to learn can be prohibited as disruptions of university activities in violation of this policy. Instructors have the right and responsibility to ensure that a safe and functional learning environment is maintained. Importantly, instructors have the authority and discretion to address disruptive conduct. Students who engage in disruptive conduct may be subject to disciplinary action, including possible removal from a course(s) and/or referral for sanctioning under the Student Disciplinary Regulations.

10.5.1 Definitions

For purposes of this policy, the following definitions apply:

10.5.1.1 Learning Environment

A learning environment is a collaborative and safe space in which the exchange of information and knowledge occurs. A learning environment may include, but is not limited to, any gathering of instructor(s) and student(s) for the purposes of teaching and learning, particularly as authorized by Iowa State University or any of its units.

Learning environments may include, but are not limited to, physical classrooms, online and virtual learning spaces, laboratories, clinical settings, course-related field trips/work, performances, studios, internship sites, testing centers, conferences, and offices / office hours.

10.5.1.2 Instructor

The classification of “instructor” includes all persons authorized by Iowa State University or any of its units to conduct the instruction of students enrolled in the university’s courses, programs, or activities. Instructors in all learning environments hold the right and responsibility to oversee the conduct in their environment and to ensure that a safe and functioning learning environment is maintained.

10.5.1.3 Disruptive Conduct

At the discretion of the instructor, disruptive conduct includes a single serious incident or persistent conduct that unreasonably interrupts, impedes, obstructs, and/or interferes with the educational process. Disruptive conduct may be physical and/or expressive in nature and may occur in person or in a virtual setting. Examples of disruptive conduct may include, but are not limited to, the following:

- Speaking without being recognized, interrupting, or talking over others;
- Arrival to class late or leaving early without instructor permission;
- The use of technology, such as cell phones, computers, or other devices, without instructor permission, particularly in uses unrelated to course content;
- Creation of loud or distracting noises either carelessly or with intent to disrupt;
- Eating, sleeping, or carrying out other personal activities in class that are unrelated to course content without instructor permission;
- Non-protected malicious or harassing or bullying speech or actions directed at instructors or students, such as personal insults, *ad hominem* attacks, name-calling, other abusive or ridiculing comments, or threats;
- Gratuitous use of cursing/expletives or other speech that is not relevant to class discussion;
- Inappropriate physical contact or threats of inappropriate physical contact directed at instructors or students;
- Refusal to comply with instructor’s request for appropriate conduct.

The expression of unpopular or controversial opinions or the expression of disagreement with the instructor or other students during times when the instructor permits discussion and when delivered in a manner conducive to learning is not in itself disruptive conduct and is not prohibited. Rules regarding disruption shall be consistently and equitably applied.

10.5.2 Procedures for Addressing Disruptive Conduct in the Learning Environment

Iowa State University adheres to a graduated approach in responding to and addressing disruptive conduct in our learning environments. Instructors, department chairs, deans, and relevant administrators identified in the Resources section of this policy, work collaboratively to identify the appropriate level of intervention necessary to address the specific disruptive conduct at issue.

For important guidelines and procedures on the application of this policy, see the online Procedures and Guidelines document that has been designed to assist all members of the university community in understanding, adhering to, and administering this policy.

10.5.3 Rights and Responsibilities

The rights and responsibilities of relevant campus community members in the context of the instructor's role for addressing disruptive conduct in the learning environment are summarized below as they pertain to the application of this policy.

10.5.3.1 Instructors

Instructors have the right and the responsibility to manage disruptive conduct within their learning environments, including establishing and communicating expectations, redirection, follow-up, documentation of incidents, and contacting appropriate resources following or in the course of an incident. Instructors can obtain information and assistance from a number of campus resources (*see* [FH 10.5.4](#), Campus Resources to help support decisions regarding potential violations of this policy and a student's return to or removal from a course(s) following an incident.)

The following is an example of a graduated approach for addressing classroom disruptions that an Instructor may follow depending on the particular situation: (1) direct a student engaging in disruptive conduct to cease the conduct, (2) direct a student engaging in disruptive conduct to leave the learning environment during a particular session or for a defined length of time in appropriate cases, (3) adjourn the class or activity, or (4) summon the university police in serious or emergency situations. The Resources identified in this policy and the Procedures and Guidelines have been developed to assist instructors in understanding the appropriate response(s) to incidents of disruption. Instructors will complete appropriate documentation, summarizing such incidents, and report such incidents to their department chair. Instructors will consult with their department chair regarding any student removals from courses.

In addition to the instructor's own observation of disruptive conduct, the instructor should evaluate reports of disruptive conduct brought to their attention by other instructional staff, teaching assistants, and students.

10.5.3.2 Students

Nothing in this policy shall be construed so as to limit or abridge students' constitutional freedoms and legal rights. In the enforcement of this policy, instructors may not infringe

upon students' rights as members of the university community, in addition to those constitutional and statutory rights and privileges protected by state and federal law, including their rights to express themselves through academic work within the guidelines of the university rules and regulations or the guidelines set by instructors for the learning environment. Students have the responsibility to familiarize themselves with and follow the expectations set by instructors for the learning environment. They further have the responsibility not to deny these rights to other members of the university community. ([See ISU Student Disciplinary Regulations \[Code of Conduct\]](#)).

10.5.3.3 Department Chairs

Department chairs receive information from instructors regarding disruptive incidents in the learning environment, as appropriate. They will be informed of and involved in consultations, decision-making, and appeals regarding student removals from the classroom.

10.5.3.4 Academic Advisors

Academic advisors, including major professors for graduate students, may receive information from instructors when incidents of disruption occur. They may be contacted for consultation regarding their knowledge of individual student circumstances, or to assist the student in conversations with instructors or departmental representatives.

10.5.4 Campus Resources

The following offices are available to assist and provide guidance to all members of the university community regarding this policy. Refer to <https://www.provost.iastate.edu/faculty-and-staff-resources/faculty-handbook/addressing-disruptive-conduct> for the best practices and additional information regarding "Procedures and Guidance for Addressing Disruptive Conduct". Additional resources for managing disruptive classroom conduct may be found at the Center for Excellence in Learning and Teaching website: <http://www.celt.iastate.edu/teaching/effective-teaching-practices/classroom-behavior/>.

10.5.4.1 Dean of Students Office

The Dean of Students Office (DSO) is a principal resource to discuss and consult on all matters of learning environment disruption. (<https://www.policy.iastate.edu/policy/SDR>). DSO can be copied on email communication and summaries sent to the student(s) to document the incident with this office (copy dso@iastate.edu).

10.5.4.2 ISU Police Department (ISU PD)

For emergencies, call 911. For non-emergency issues the ISU-PD 24-hour line—515-294-4428—is preferred over calling 911.

10.5.4.3 Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO)

The Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO) is responsible for outreach, investigations, and follow-up regarding potential violations of the university's Title IX, anti-discrimination, anti-harassment, anti-retaliation, and sexual misconduct prevention related policies (eooffice@iastate.edu). Instructors are reminded of their reporting obligations as university [Responsible Employees](#).

10.5.4.4 Student Accessibility Services

The Office of Student Accessibility Services (SAS) (accessibility@iastate.edu) determines eligibility for reasonable accommodations for students with disabilities.

Approved by the Faculty Senate on 4/23/19; by the Senior Vice President and Provost on 4/30/19; and the ISU President on 4/30/19.

10.6 Course Information

Section 10.6 was approved by the Faculty Senate on 11/12/1996.

Instructors shall provide information regarding course content, objectives, and procedures to students during the first week of each course. The information shall include a course syllabus or schedule of proposed topics, readings, and course materials or other description of the course content. The evaluation procedures to be used, as well as expectations for attendance and assignments, shall also be included.

10.6.1 Explicit Materials

For sound pedagogical reasons, a faculty member may decide to use course materials that include explicit visual representations of human sexual acts. The faculty member has an obligation to inform students at the beginning of the course about the nature of that material. If a student chooses not to view the presentation(s) and the faculty member determines that alternative assignment(s) are not feasible, the student shall be permitted to drop the course without penalty (as an administrative drop) within seven calendar days of receiving the announcement of the presentation.

10.6.2 Distant Sites

Faculty should notify students at the beginning of the course that the class will be recorded or transmitted to distant sites. Faculty whose classes involve interaction through electronic means should notify their students if comments or submissions are private between instructor and student, available to other students in the class, or available to others outside the class.

10.6.3 Library Reserve

Books and other materials that are required reading may be placed on reserve in the Parks Library for use by students in specified classes.