Managing Classroom Disruptions
What is Classroom Disruption and How Common is it?

“Any action that interferes with a harmonious and cooperative learning environment”
(Feldmann, 2001)

Classroom disruption is more common than uncommon, occurring in 60 percent of courses tracked. (Boice, 1996)
How bad can it get?

Annoyances

Classroom Terrorism

Intimidation

Violence

(Feldmann, 2001)
Types of Issues

Academic  Behavioral
Managerial  Emotional

(McKeachie’s, 2014)
Why you Should Address Disruptions

1. Chronic disruptions hamper learning

2. Students lose trust in faculty’s ability to handle the classroom

2. Faculty spend the majority of their time teaching, demoralized teaching = burnout

4. Responding right away can curb future disruptions

(Boice, 1996; Davis, 2001; Feldmann, 2001)
“Teachers were the most crucial initiators of CI... and, their most telling provocations occurred during the first few days of courses.

Conversely, professors who most consistently displayed immediacies and positive motivators were least involved in incidents of CI, their own on their students’.

(Boice, 1996)
Instructor Behavior Correlated with Classroom Disruption

1. Cold, distant uncaring, aka. lack of immediacies
2. Lack of Enthusiasm
3. Fast paced lectures
4. Lack of preparation

(Boice ,1996; Davis, 2001; Feldmann, 2001)
Instructor Behavior Correlated with Classroom Disruption

1. Surprise quizzes
2. Unfair/inconsistent grading
3. Starts late/ends early
4. Condescending/unhelpful

(Boice, 1996; Davis, 2001; Feldmann, 2001)
Pre-emptive Strategies to Address Disruptions

1. Be explicit in your behavioral standards/include on syllabus

1. Work with students to define behavioral standards

1. Reinforce behavioral policies, better to start firm and ease up later

(Davis, 2001)
Pre-emptive Strategies to Address Disruptions

1. Give students permission to reinforce behavioral standards

1. Anticipate problems towards the back of the classroom, if possible, request students sit up front

1. Invoke the NYU Bulletin on Community Standards if students misbehave pg. 7

(Davis, 2001)
Qualities of Immediacy

1. Arriving early / chatting with students before class

1. Practicing content delivery to activate the whole room

1. Moderate lecture pacing and pauses, check on student note taking and attention/comprehension

1. Direct eye contact, forward leans, open body postures, smiling and direct eye contact

1. Displaying patience and engagement with students in after class or office hour meetings

(Boice, 1996)
Turn Classroom Disruptions into an Opportunity

1. When students challenge your arguments

1. Students seem restless/inattentive

4. Students are talking loudly amongst each other

4. Students display signs of emotional distress
Dealing with Emotional Problems

Mental health issues are increasing on campuses, international students are particularly vulnerable

1. Notice- signs of distress include: change in hygiene, missing class, failure to turn in assignments, lack of engagement

(Gooblar, 2018)
Dealing with Emotional Problems

2. Reach out to them to show concern for how they are doing

3. Refer them to help, have phone #’s for Health and Wellness/ 24 Help Hotline on hand

Counseling: Room 605, #2059 5353
Wellness Exchange Hotline: +86 21 2059 9999

(Gooblar, 2018)
Sources


