



# Classroom Management

**Ellie Fenton**

Department of Modern Languages and Linguistics

**Danny Baker**

Department Statistics

# Presentation Outline

- Introductions/Ice breaker
- Different aspects of classroom management
- Sensitive Topics
- **Pie and Coffee Break!**
- Handling difficult situations



What are necessary components of effective classroom management?



# How Do You Define Classroom Management?

- Is it proactive or reactive?
- When does classroom management begin?



# **Sensitive Topics**

**Who:** 20-25 students

**What:** First-year writing course

This course discusses controversial topics, introducing intentionally 'hot button' issues

**Why:** Students need to be able to recognize/argue more than one perspective of an issue

Students should find 'common ground' with opponents on complex issues

**The Scenario:** Students read an essay by a prominent female author about how women in the U.S. are culturally 'labeled' and, conversely, about how men do not receive the same labels. Tina Thwarter is waiting for you to begin class: "I'm not going to read this trash," she says. "My dad says I don't have to because I'm not [in staged whisper] a feminist. I'm here to learn important things."

**Who:** 100+ students

**What:** Large lecture STEM course

'Evolution vs. Creationsim Debate' is today's topic

**Why:** You anticipate some to be uncomfortable/upset because this type of discussion can challenge personal beliefs

You anticipate others to ignore parts of the discussion they don't support

**The Scenario:** Most of the class understands that your job as instructor is to teach them something new, and they will remember your lesson about testable information and move on (personal beliefs in check). A few Thwarters, however, decide that their beliefs are being trampled and their faith challenged. They stand up during your lecture and quote Bible verses explaining how you're wrong. Many students agree with them, but they stay seated and silent. Other students disagree, but also remain seated. No one is sure what to say or do.

# Sensitive Topics

- Have you taught sensitive topics in your classes?
- How did you handle them?
- What advice could you give to others?

# Handling Sensitive Topics

- **Plan ahead:**
  - Set the tone early
  - Include explanation in syllabus
  - Have specific objective for discussion
- **Facilitate discussion; don't dominate it**
- **Discuss with other TAs/professors:**
  - Ideas
  - Methods
  - Experiences
- **Remind students to be respectful**



break

# Handling Specific Situations

**The Talkative**  
(Know-it-all Nancy)

**The Chatters**  
(Chatty Cathy & Conversational Carl)

# Handling Specific Situations

- **Monopolize discussions**

- Set expectations for class participation
- Think-pair-share
- Include class participation as part of students' grade
- Use turn-taking strategies
- Provide students with enough time to come up with an answer

- **Are disruptive or off-topic**

- Quizzes at the beginning of class
- Points for staying in class the whole time
- Give them a reason to stay
- Talk to the student

**The Disrespecters**  
(You can't teach!)

# Handling Specific Situations

- **Come to class unprepared**
  - Give short, periodic quizzes
  - Assign questions to be completed by class time
  - Have students responsible for presenting specific topics in class
- **Sleep/don't pay attention /cell phones/etc.**
  - Try using small groups
  - break up the lecture with activities
  - Make students take notes
  - Move around the classroom
  - Have students change their seats
  - Discuss this issue with the student after class

# **The Bullies**

(Bill the Cop & the Busy Bees)

# Handling Specific Situations

- **Dispute their grades**

- Preventative Strategies
  - Have a detailed grading rubric and refer back to it
  - Have a clear policy on grade reviews
  - Provide feedback when grading
  - Move through the first page on all exams before going onto the second
- 24-hour rule
- Emphasize fairness and that grades are “earned” not “given”

- **Have trouble working together on projects (group dynamics)**

- Use team-building exercises
- Peer assessment
- Provide some class time for group work
- Request interim reports
- Change up group members throughout the semester
- Thoughtfully create groups

**Scholarships, athletes, fellows & more**

# Handling Specific Situations

- **Scholarships, athletes, fellows & more**
  - Request travel documents/rosters/itineraries in advance
  - Consistency with make-up policies (syllabus)
  - Encourage use of office hours/campus resources
  - Don't feel guilty/responsible for students' grades

# Academic Dishonesty

# Handling Specific Situations

- **Cheating**

- Communicate policies on cheating
  - syllabus
- Structure writing assignments to prevent copying
- Emphasize fairness and that grades are “earned” on an individual basis
- Randomize seating

- **Plagiarism**

- Know and follow the institutions procedures
- Settle the matter informally/formally
- Use TurnIt in
- Change up group members throughout the semester

# Professional Boundaries

# Handling Specific Situations

- **Behaviors inappropriate to the Teacher-Learner relationship**
  - Know the university instructor-student relationship policies
  - Treat all learners equally regardless of age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, disability, or sexual orientation
  - Address uncomfortable situations immediately
  - Leave office door open during 1-on-1 meetings
- **Avoid**
  - loss of personal civility including shouting, personal attacks or insults, displays of temper (such as throwing objects);
  - discrimination of any form including in teaching and assessment based upon age, gender, race, ethnicity, national origin, religion, disability, or sexual orientation;
  - requests for others to perform inappropriate personal errands unrelated to the educational situation at hand
  - grading/evaluation on factors unrelated to performance, effort, or level of achievement

# Professors & Other TAs

# Handling Specific Situations

- **Professors**

- Get a list of expected TA responsibilities
- Follow up discussions via email
- Hold monthly meetings

- **Other TAs**

- Use team-building exercises
- Thoughtfully create grading rubrics
- Address conflicts immediately

# Summary

- **Classroom management encompasses many aspects**
  - Providing clear expectations
  - Effective communication
  - Class instruction and materials
  - Time management
  - Developing strategies for handling difficult situations
- **Preventative Strategies!**
  - Preparation is the key (proactive)
- **Reactive Classroom Strategies**
  - Think, don't react
  - Redirect – tell the students what they should be doing
  - Make sure interventions are timely



Over your head? Ask for help!



Questions?









