The Conduct Process

A guide for faculty

Office of Student Conduct
University of Maryland
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WELCOME

Dear Faculty Member:

Thank you so much for your participation in this very important process. This manual is intended to introduce you to the Student Conduct process at the University of Maryland. Included you will find information on the academic integrity process as well as non-academic misconduct. Underpinning this information are the basic tenets of the Office of Student Conduct: a commitment to fairness, honesty, and integrity. We hope that this faculty guide will assist you in managing student behavior in your classroom and on campus.

Should you have any questions, please contact the Office of Student Conduct at 301-314-8204 or studentconduct@umd.edu.

Sincerely,

Andrea Goodwin, Director
Office of Student Conduct
INTRODUCTION

OFFICE OF STUDENT CONDUCT (OSC)

We strive to resolve allegations of misconduct under the Code of Student Conduct and the Code of Academic Integrity as well as appellate cases in a manner consistent with our core values of fairness, honesty and integrity. Moreover, we acknowledge the importance of balancing the interests of the individual student and the community at large, as well as protecting the integrity of the institution and its values. As a component of our work, we seek to involve students in the judicial process – recognizing the significant responsibility they maintain in the protection of the university community. To foster future leaders and sound citizens, we promise to invest in their learning and character development.

Vision
The vision for the Office of Student Conduct is to promote not only individual ethical development through the enforcement of campus rules but to serve as a resource for ethics education and dispute resolution.

Mission
It is the mission of the Office of Student Conduct to resolve allegations of misconduct under the Code of Student Conduct and the Code of Academic Integrity in a manner consistent with our core values of fairness, honesty and integrity while promoting the university’s educational mission. Essential to this mission is to enhance the development of character, civility, citizenship, individual/community responsibility, and ethics. University students play a significant role in considering the behavior of their peers and are asked to assume positions of responsibility as members of the university’s student judiciary. The following tenets guide this mission:

- To regard each student as an individual, deserving individual attention, consideration, and respect.
- To consider the facts fully and carefully before resolving any case.
- To speak candidly and honestly with each student.
- To hold each student to a high standard of behavior, both to protect the campus community, and to promote student ethical development.
- To recognize the reality of human fallibility, as well as the stresses associated with collegiate life, and to demonstrate compassion and understanding.
To contribute to the educational mission of the University by designing policies, conducting programs, and offering instruction that contribute to the intellectual and ethical development of the entire student body.

**Values**

**Fairness:** We believe that fairness is paramount to the judicial process. Every person involved should expect to be treated with respect and compassion, given the opportunity to communicate their perspective, as well as be heard without prejudice. We employ a consistent process and we strive for a timely resolution.

**Honesty:** We believe honesty is critical to the resolution of community disputes, healthy relationships, personal growth, and moral development. While we acknowledge the reality of human fallibility, we believe that honest confrontation of choices is instrumental to the learning process.

**Integrity:** We believe that integrity is the foundation of our process. In other words, it is living up to what we believe. Therefore, we seek to foster a judicial system that embodies the values of fairness, honesty and integrity.

**Function**

The primary function of the Office of Student Conduct, as defined by the Board of Regents in the *Code of Student Conduct*, is to "direct the efforts of students and staff members in matters involving student discipline." Our responsibilities include:

- interviewing and advising parties involved in disciplinary proceedings;
- supervising, training, and advising all judicial panels and the Student Honor Council;
- reviewing the decisions of all judicial panels; informal resolution of cases not referred for hearings;
- maintenance of all student disciplinary records; developing, monitoring, and suggesting revisions in student conduct policies;
- collection and dissemination of research and analysis concerning student conduct; and
- assisting in the design and implementation of programming and activities designed to promote academic integrity and student ethical development.
ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURE OVERVIEW

The Office of Student Conduct is overseen by the Director of Student Conduct. The Director of Student Conduct oversees the University Student Judiciary (USJ), which is comprised of the Student Honor Council, the University Appellate Board, the Central Judicial Board, Resident Life Board, the Community Advocates, and the Education Team. In addition, there is an Assistant Director who administers the Student Honor Council, an Associate Director who administers the Central Judicial Board, and an Assistant Director who oversees character and ethics education. The Office of Student Conduct also has graduate staff members who assist in coordinating the components of the office.

The Office of Student Conduct is a significant resource for faculty members who serve on Honor Boards and all members of the University Student Judiciary. In addition to support services, the office staff has information from case scheduling to final decisions on past cases. The staff is available to discuss various interests and concerns of members on issues ranging from student intent to sanctioning.

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ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

INTRODUCTION

The University of Maryland is one of a small number of the nation’s leading colleges and universities with an honor code. The University takes academic dishonesty very seriously. If a student is found responsible for violating the Code of Academic Integrity, the penalties are severe. The Office of Student Conduct resolves approximately 400 cases of alleged Academic Dishonesty each year. It is important that all members of the University community become familiar with the Code of Academic Integrity to help promote a community of trust on our campus.

DEFINITIONS

1a. Cheating: Intentionally using or attempting to use unauthorized materials, information, or study aids in any academic exercise.

Examples of cheating are:
- copying another student’s answers during an exam
- intentionally using unauthorized materials including a cheat-sheet, unauthorized electronics including calculators and cell phones, etc.
- one student assists another student with homework or a project when the instructor prohibits outside assistance
- submitting substantial portions of the same academic work for credit or honors more than once, without authorization from every instructor to whom the work was ever submitted
- allowing others to conduct research and/or prepare work without prior authorization from the instructor--this could include commercial tutoring services or term paper companies.
1b. Fabrication:  *Intentional and unauthorized falsification or invention of any information or citation in any academic exercise.*

Examples of *fabrication* are:
- inventing statistics for a project or homework assignment
- inventing a source or attributing information to someone other than the source of that information
- inventing data based on a single experiment for other experiments that require further analysis
- submitting an exam for a re-grade after making changes on the exam

1c. Facilitation:  *Intentionally or knowingly helping or attempting to help another to violate any provision of this Code.*

Examples of *facilitation* are:
- permitting another student to look at one's exam paper or final project
- distributing/selling copies of stolen exams to other students
- allowing others to use one's papers or lab reports as their own
- providing others with the answers to an exam that one has already taken

1d. Plagiarism:  *Intentionally or knowingly representing the words or ideas of another as one’s own in any academic exercise.*

Examples of *plagiarism* are:
- “quoting” a source without appropriately citing it
- using the text of another student's paper/computer project/lab report as one's own
- submitting a project that contains someone else's ideas and claiming it as one's own
- incorrectly/inadequately citing or identifying direct quotations or paraphrased material
- borrowing facts or information that are not common knowledge among students in a given course without acknowledging the source

NOTE: The list which follows each type of academic dishonesty merely provides examples and is not exhaustive. Please refer to the definitions in the *Code of Academic Integrity*, call upon your own judgment, or consult with the Office of Student Conduct when determining whether or not an act might constitute academic dishonesty.
PREVENTING ACADEMIC DISHONESTY IN YOUR CLASSROOM

As a faculty member/instructor you can take precautions to reduce academic dishonesty in your classroom.

Syllabus
Include a statement in the syllabus noting the University policy on academic integrity and that suspected cases of academic dishonesty will be referred to the Office of Student Conduct. Discuss this with students the first day of class. For example:

The University of Maryland, College Park has a nationally recognized *Code of Academic Integrity*. This Code sets standards for academic integrity at Maryland for all undergraduate and graduate students. As a student you are responsible for upholding these standards for this course. It is very important for you to be aware of the consequences of cheating, fabrication, facilitation, and plagiarism. For more information on the *Code of Academic Integrity* or the Student Honor Council, please visit [http://www.shc.umd.edu](http://www.shc.umd.edu).

Honor Pledge
To further exhibit your commitment to academic integrity, remember to have your students sign the Honor Pledge on all examinations and assignments:

*"I pledge on my honor that I have not given or received any unauthorized assistance on this examination (assignment).”*

ASSIGNMENTS

- Switch assignments each class and semester.
- Require students to turn in two copies of each assignment. Return one copy and keep the other for your records.
- Let students know that they should not turn in the same paper in two courses.

EXAMS

- Switch exams each class and semester.
• Do not let students keep a copy of exams.
• Never give the original exam as a make-up.
• If you do return exams, keep a copy of each student’s exam on file. At times students have changed numbers or written answers on returned exams and requested a re-grade.
• Give clear instructions both in writing and orally as to what is allowed or not allowed during exams.
• If the class is very large, require students to show a student ID before taking exams.
• Have students space out their seats when possible. Make sure backpacks and other personal items (including cell phones) are placed under desk.
• Make time before exams for students to use the restroom, get a drink, etc.
• Use proctors to help monitor exams, particularly in classes larger than 40 students.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU SUSPECT ACADEMIC DISHONESTY ON ASSIGNMENTS

• Notify the Office of Student Conduct. A short complaint form is available on our web site at: http://www.studentconduct.umd.edu.
• Do not grade an assignment suspected of academic dishonesty. The outcome of the hearing process will either let you know how to grade the assignment (or you may have a peer grade the assignment) or a grade of “XF” will likely be given by the Honor Board for cases found responsible of violating the code.
• If the case occurs at the end of the semester and you need to post grades, use a “J” meaning judicial action pending or an “NG” (no grade) until the case has been resolved.

WHAT TO DO WHEN YOU SUSPECT ACADEMIC DISHONESTY ON EXAMS

If a student is using unauthorized notes or has unauthorized notes visible, confiscate them immediately. Make a note on the student’s exam when the material was taken.

• Notify the Office of Student Conduct. A short complaint form is available on our web site at: http://www.studentconduct.umd.edu.
• If students are talking or appear to be sharing information, make a statement to the class that no talking is allowed. Or, speak directly to the students. Move their seats.
• If a student is looking at another’s work, make a statement to the class that all work is individual. Or, speak to the student individually.
• Please do not prevent the student from completing the exam.

Note: It’s always good to try to get a second or third person to observe the behavior.

HOW TO MAKE A REFERRAL TO THE STUDENT HONOR COUNCIL
- Complete the short complaint form is available on our web site at: [http://www.studentconduct.umd.edu](http://www.studentconduct.umd.edu).
- Submit supporting documents to the Office of Student Conduct at 2118 Mitchell Building, College Park, MD 20742. When possible please include the course syllabus and any information provided to the class regarding academic integrity.
- For Advice or Assistance, contact the Office of Student Conduct at (301)314-8204.

Note: When referring a case, the Office of Student Conduct, a staff member or a Community Advocate will contact you to discuss specifics of the case. If the case goes to hearing, the Advocate will attend the hearing with you. The Honor Board may have questions only the faculty member can answer so it is important that you attend.

**REFERRAL AND CHARGES**

Once a copy of the complaint and the information accompanying the allegation is received, a preliminary review is conducted is a staff member in the Office of Student Conduct to determine if there is or is not reasonable cause to proceed with the case. A staff member in the Office of Student Conduct will examine the evidence gathered to determine what “type” of academic dishonesty may have occurred.

Each of the aforementioned definitions of academic dishonesty is a distinct and separate action. However, a student may be charged with more than one violation.

Additionally, students who commit acts of academic dishonesty may refer themselves by submitting a written report to the Chair of the Honor Council. If there was no suspicion by a University official or faculty member that academic dishonesty was committed, then the student will not be charged and a disciplinary file will not be made. The student and faculty member of the course will meet in a conference to discuss the incident. The student will be required to complete the noncredit academic integrity seminar and receive either a grade that is reduced by one grade, or to an “F” or a zero on the assignment, in the discretion of the faculty member involved.

**PROCEDURES & PROCESS**

**PRELIMINARY INTERVIEW**

If it is concluded that reasonable cause exists, the accused student is contacted and requested to schedule a "Preliminary Interview" with a staff member from the Office of Student Conduct.

A “Preliminary Interview” is designed to provide students with information about the academic integrity system, and to determine what course of action is necessary to resolve the accusation.
presented in the referral.

POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

Most often, the possible outcomes of a Preliminary Interview include:

- A student requests an Honor Review to determine responsibility and/or sanctions.
- A student acknowledges responsibility for committing a violation of the Code, accepting the standard “XF” sanction.

Note: In accordance with the Code of Academic Integrity, the standard penalty for an act of academic dishonesty is the grade of “XF” in the course. The grade is recorded on the academic transcript with the notation, “failure due to academic dishonesty.” Students receiving an “XF” may not represent the university in extracurricular activities or run for or hold office in any student organization. The “X” and notation may be removed after one year after completion of an academic integrity seminar and filing a petition with the Student Honor Council.

HONOR REVIEW

An Honor Review is the process leading to the resolution of an academic dishonesty case. The purpose of an Honor Review is to explore and investigate the incident giving rise to the appearance of academic dishonesty. Honor Reviews are before a panel normally consisting of three Honor Council members and two faculty members. At times hearings may be held with an “Ad Hoc” Board, in those cases the board consists of two students and one faculty member.

As a faculty member if you report a case of misconduct your attendance at an Honor Review is very important. A student Community Advocate will assist you through the hearing process and serve as the complainant for a hearing. The Community Advocate will present evidence and analysis upon which the charge is based to the Honor Board during the Honor Review.

The Office of Student Conduct regularly recruits faculty members to serve on Honor Reviews. This is a great opportunity to serve the University community, learn about the hearing process, and become further educated on the University’s policy on academic integrity.

STANDARD OF EVIDENCE: “CLEAR & CONVINCING”

The standard of proof used to determine responsibility is "clear and convincing." "Clear and convincing" means "the evidence should be ‘clear’ in the sense that it is certain, plain to the understanding and unambiguous, and ‘convincing’ in the sense that it is so reasonable and persuasive as to cause [one] to believe it.” Wills v. State of Maryland, 329 Md. 370, 374 (1993), quoting Maryland Civil Practice Jury Instruction Section 1:8b (1984). It does not call for “unanswerable” or “conclusive” evidence. Attorney Grievance Commission v. Harris, 366 Md. 376, 389 (2001). To be clear and
convincing means that it is substantially more likely than not that the allegations are in fact true but that it "need not be established with absolute certainty". Vogel v. State, 315 Md. 458, 473 (1989).

REPRESENTATIVES & ATTORNEYS

The accused student (respondent) may be assisted by an advocate, who must be a registered, degree-seeking student at the University. The role of the advocate will be limited to:

1. Making brief opening and closing statements, as well as comments on appropriate sanction.
2. Suggesting relevant questions which the Presiding Officer may direct to witness (or may question witnesses directly if permitted by the Presiding Officer).
3. Providing confidential advice to the student.

The accused student may also be accompanied by an advisor, who may be an attorney. The role of the advisor during an Honor Review will be limited to providing confidential advice only to the accused student, not the advocate, provided such advice is given without interfering with or disrupting the Honor Review. Even if accompanied by an advocate and/or an advisor, the student must take an active and constructive role in the Honor Review. In particular, the student must fully cooperate with the Honor Board and respond to its inquiries without undue intrusion by an advocate or advisor.

APPEALS

Students may appeal the board’s decision and the sanction within a limited time period. The complaining party may only appeal the sanction in a case, not the decision.
ACADEMIC INTGRITY CASES: A DIAGRAM

- Incident Referral
  - Preliminary Investigation
    - No Reasonable Cause
      - Case Dismissed
    - Reasonable Cause
      - Preliminary Interview
        - Informal Resolution
          - Agreement
            - Sanction Agreement Imposed
          - No Agreement
            - Responsible
              - Board Sanction Imposed
            - Not Responsible
              - Case Dismissed
        - Honor Review
          - Not Responsible
            - Case Dismissed
          - Responsible
            - Sanction Agreement Imposed
          - Agreement
            - Sanction Agreement Imposed
          - No Agreement
            - Case Dismissed
          - Self Referral
            - Self Referral Conference
              - Self Referral Sanction
FAQS REGARDING ACADEMIC INTEGRITY

HOW COMMON IS ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AT COLLEGES ACROSS THE COUNTRY??
In one study, Donald L. McCabe surveyed the extent of self-reported cheating by 1,800 students at nine medium to large state universities. He found that 52% of the students admitted to copying from others on an examination; 38% admitted to some form of test cheating on three or more occasions. McCabe’s research has important implications for ethics in business and the professions. It’s reasonable to hypothesize that students who develop the habit of cheating in college may also see cheating as an effective strategy in their careers.

WHAT IF A STUDENT REFUSES TO WRITE OR SIGN THE PLEDGE?
The Maryland Honor Pledge was reviewed by legal counsel and is carefully crafted to respect the autonomy of individuals who might object to a pledge requirement on religious or ideological grounds. The University Senate resolution on the Honor Pledge states that “signing or non-signing of the Pledge will not be considered in grading or judicial procedures.”

If a handwritten Honor Pledge and Pledge signature do not appear on a paper or examination, faculty members should ask the student for an explanation. Doing so has the added value of encouraging teachers and students to discuss the importance of academic integrity and the best ways to promote it. Students remain free to decline to write or sign the Pledge and should not be penalized for exercising that right. Students should be reminded, however, that they are subject to the requirements of the Code of Academic Integrity, whether or not they write and sign the Honor Pledge.

ISN’T IT BURDENSOME AND TIME-CONSUMING TO REPORT INCIDENTS OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY?
Accused students often admit the offense and accept the XF grade penalty. If a hearing is necessary, it is conducted as an inquiry (not a trial) by a panel of students and faculty members. Questioning by lawyers is not permitted. Furthermore, a student “Community Advocate” is employed to assist faculty members in presenting appropriate evidence. The majority of cases going to hearing result in a finding of responsibility and imposition of the XF grade penalty.
HOW IS “EDUCATION” PART OF THE ACADEMIC INTEGRITY SYSTEM OF MARYLAND?

In the broadest sense, simply holding individuals accountable for their behavior has an educational value, both for them and the community as a whole. Beyond that, administrators and Honor Council members give dozens of classroom presentations each semester, reviewing and discussing University academic integrity policies.

HOW SHOULD I DOCUMENT AN ALLEGATION OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY?

Keep the original evidence and send copies (with a cover memorandum marked "confidential") to Mr. Kevin Pitt at the Office of Student Conduct (2118 Mitchell Building, Campus). Do not impose a penalty or dismiss a student from class. Faculty members are encouraged to confer with accused students and to inform them the Honor Council will be conducting an appropriate inquiry. Concerned students, parents, or other parties should then be referred to the Honor Council administrator.

WHAT IS AN HONOR BOARD?

An Honor Board made up of students and faculty, hears cases of suspected academic dishonesty. If a student is found responsible for an act of academic dishonesty, the board also imposes a sanction on the student. In some cases, a student has admitted to committing academic dishonesty but petitions the Board for a lesser sanction.

HOW LONG DOES AN HONOR BOARD TAKE?

It depends on the case, but as a guideline, allow for 90 minutes to 4 hours.

WHY ISN’T THE ENTIRE BOARD MADE OF FACULTY?

Maryland is unique in that Honor Reviews are student-led; this policy has been in place since 1989 when the Code of Academic Integrity was adopted by the University Senate. While the process is student-led, the Code stipulates that each board must have two faculty members.

WHAT PENALTIES ARE IMPOSED FOR ACADEMIC DISHONESTY AT MARYLAND?

Strict penalties are necessary, so academic dishonesty is not trivialized. For example, the common practice at many colleges of simply awarding a failing grade for academic dishonesty is no deterrent to a student already in danger of failing the course.

The standard sanction for academic dishonesty at Maryland is the "XF" grade penalty, noted on the transcript as "failure due to academic dishonesty." Students may petition the Honor Council for removal of the "X" from the transcript one year after being found responsible for an offense if they successfully complete an academic integrity seminar. Other sanctions may be imposed based on mitigating and aggravating circumstances. The standard sanction for a graduate student is dismissal (suspension or expulsion).
ISN'T AN XF TOO LENIENT/TOO STRICT FOR AN ACT OF ACADEMIC DISHONESTY?

This is the standard sanction as stated in the *Code of Academic Integrity*. To hold a student to a higher/lower standard than an XF is unfair to both that student and all the other students who have been reviewed under the *Code*.

WHAT ABOUT THE THREAT OF LAWSUITS?

The state has policies to represent and indemnify employees for litigation arising out of the performance of their duties. Furthermore, we know of no reported case in the country where a faculty member has been found liable for a good-faith report of student academic dishonesty—even if the student was later determined to be innocent of any wrongdoing. No court has overturned a finding under the University's *Code of Academic Integrity*, even though over 1,500 students have been held accountable under the *Code*—most with serious transcript notation penalties.

I REPORTED A CASE AND THE STUDENT WASN'T PUNISHED. WHY SHOULD I REPORT ANOTHER CASE?

No fairly administered judicial system will result in a finding of responsibility against the accused in every case. At Maryland, given the severity of the XF transcript notation penalty, the *Code of Academic Integrity*, as adopted by the University Senate, requires "clear and convincing" evidence to support a charge. In close cases, students and faculty members on hearing panels will give the benefit of the doubt to the accused. Nonetheless, even the minority of students who "win" their cases regard a hearing as a serious and solemn event. Recidivism is extremely rare.

A finding that there was insufficient evidence to hold a student responsible for academic dishonesty is not a reflection against a referring faculty member. Most referring faculty members see "winning" or "losing" a particular case as secondary to upholding a process that has produced demonstrable results in promoting academic integrity on campus.
THE DISCIPLINE PROCESS: NON-ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

PURPOSE

The purpose of the student discipline process is to maintain the behavioral standards set by the campus community and to provide all students with a fair, administrative adjudication process.

Informal hearings and other proceedings at educational institutions do not follow the same procedures used in courtrooms. The University does not employ lawyers to “prosecute” students or apply the rules of evidence used in a civil or criminal trial. Instead, charges are investigated and resolved in an atmosphere of candor, truthfulness, and civility.

Students accused of violating University disciplinary regulations are encouraged to discuss the allegations with their parents or guardians, legal counsel, and with appropriate University staff members. Students are also encouraged to read the Code of Student Conduct in its entirety.

HOW TO MAKE A REFERRAL FOR NON-ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT

- Complete the short complaint form available on our web site at: http://www.studentconduct.umd.edu
- Submit supporting documents to the Office of Student Conduct at 2118 Mitchell Building, College Park, MD 20742. When possible please include documents collected.
- For advice or assistance, contact the Office of Student Conduct at (301)314-8204.

EXAMPLES OF NON-ACADEMIC MISCONDUCT IN THE CLASSROOM

- Falsified document to get out of taking or completing an exam/assignment
- Disorderly or disruptive behavior in the classroom
- Selling exams/homework/notes without authorization
- Bribery
- Intentionally interfering with the freedom of expression of others
- Damage to property (e.g. desk space, classroom space)
- Further information about other prohibited conduct may be located in Part 9 of the Code of Student Conduct at: http://www.president.umd.edu/policies/docs/V-100B.pdf
THE PRELIMINARY INTERVIEW

When the Office of Student Conduct or the Rights and Responsibilities Office in the Department of Resident Life receive a complaint, the referred student is contacted by e-mail and requested to schedule a “Preliminary Interview” with a staff member. The purpose of the meeting is to provide the student with the opportunity to respond to allegations made against him/her. Determination of disciplinary charges and an explanation of the process to resolve the allegations are discussed. The staff member conducting the meeting will gather detailed information by asking questions and inviting comments.

POSSIBLE OUTCOMES

Depending upon the case, possible outcomes of a Preliminary Interview include:

- Dismiss the case due to insufficient evidence or off-campus jurisdiction.
- Defer the case for a period of time, contingent upon the student’s good behavior.
- Resolve the case immediately in a disciplinary conference, if agreeable to both the accused student and the staff member.
- Notify the student of disciplinary charges and schedule the appropriate proceeding (i.e. Conference or Hearing) at a later date.

Students who are referred to a conference or hearing are informed of the specific charges against them and the exact date, time, and location of the meeting. As a faculty member if you report a case of misconduct your attendance at a conference or hearing is very important.
NON-ACADEMIC CASES: A DIAGRAM

- Incident
  - Conduct Case Referral
    - No Contact
    - Preliminary Interview
      - Defer
      - Assessment of Charges
        - Disciplinary Conference
          - Responsible
            - Sanction
              - Sanction Follow-up
            - Not Responsible
              - Central Board Hearing
                - Responsible
                  - Sanction
                  - Appeal
                    - Sanction Follow-up
                - Not Responsible
CLASSROOM DISRUPTION

Classroom disruption by students is a rarity at the University of Maryland. The Office of Student Conduct offers the following advice to assist faculty members who have never encountered a disruptive student, and may be unsure how to respond.

1. **Faculty members are responsible for management of the classroom environment.** Teachers (as one court recently suggested) can be compared to judges: both focus on relevant issues, set reasonable time limits, assess the quality of ideas and expression, and make sure participants are heard in an orderly manner. While their ultimate goals may be different, both judges and teachers need to exercise authority with a sense of fairness, and with appreciation for the reality of human fallibility.

2. **Classroom disruption should be seen as a disciplinary offense, as defined by the University's Code of Student Conduct.** The term "classroom disruption" means behavior a reasonable person would view as substantially or repeatedly interfering with the conduct of a class. Examples include repeatedly leaving and entering the classroom without authorization, making loud or distracting noises, persisting in speaking without being recognized, or resorting to physical threats or personal insults.

3. **Both students and faculty members have some measure of academic freedom.** University policies on classroom disruption cannot be used to punish lawful classroom dissent. The lawful expression of a disagreement with the teacher or other students is not in itself "disruptive" behavior.

4. **Rudeness, incivility, and disruption are often distinguishable, even though they may intersect.** In most instances, it's better to respond to rudeness by example and suasion (e.g. advising a student in private that he or she appears to have a habit of interrupting others). Rudeness can become disruption when it is repetitive, especially after a warning has been given.

5. **Strategies to prevent and respond to disruptive behavior include the following:**

   a. Clarify standards for the conduct of your class. For example, if you want students to raise their hands for permission to speak, say so, using reminders, as needed.

   b. Serve as a role model for the conduct you expect from your students.
c. If you believe inappropriate behavior is occurring, consider a general word of caution, rather than warning a particular student (e.g. “we have too many contemporaneous conversations at the moment; let’s all focus on the same topic”).

d. If the behavior is irritating, but not disruptive, try speaking with the student after class. Most students are unaware of distracting habits or mannerisms, and have no intent to be offensive or disruptive.

e. There may be rare circumstances when it is necessary to speak to a student during class about his or her behavior. Try to do so in a firm and friendly manner, indicating that further discussion can occur after class. Public arguments and harsh language must be avoided.

f. A student who persists in disrupting a class may be directed to leave the classroom for the remainder of the class period. Whenever possible, prior consultation should be undertaken with the Department Chair and the Director of Student Conduct (314-8204).

g. If a disruption is serious, and other reasonable measures have failed, the class may be adjourned, and the campus police summoned. Teachers must not use force or threats of force, except in immediate self-defense. Prepare a written account of the incident. Identify witnesses for the Campus Police, as needed.

The Office of Student Conduct can help by reviewing university disciplinary regulations with you, and meeting with accused students formally, or informally. It’s better to report disruptive incidents to us promptly, even if they seem minor. One of our preferred strategies is to develop behavioral contracts with students, so they have clear guidelines about what behavior is expected of them. In the most serious cases, we can suspend students immediately, pending disciplinary proceedings, or medical evaluation.

**STUDENTS OF CONCERN**

Although instances of students engaging in disruptive, threatening, or violent behavior are rare, circumstances may arise that cause concern among our faculty, staff, or students. Oftentimes, the concern stems from behavior, in or out of the classroom, that might be considered odd or out of the ordinary. Some warning signs might include the following:
- Disorderly or substantially disruptive behavior
- Verbal aggression – expressing uncontrollable anger, hostility, or frustration
- Unusual, bizarre, or disturbing behavior
- Threat of violence or physical harm – in person, over the telephone, or through electronic means
- Destructive behavior – causing damage to property
- Stalking behavior – pursuing another person
- Act/s of violence – striking, pushing, or assaulting another person
- Possession of a weapon

**WHAT SHOULD I DO IF I AM CONCERNED ABOUT A STUDENT'S BEHAVIOR?**

It is most important to remember that early intervention is vital and that trained colleagues are prepared to assist. Below are University resources available to address specific situations.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Issue</th>
<th>Resource</th>
<th>Contact</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>THREAT OF VIOLENCE, SUBSTANTIAL DISRUPTION,</td>
<td>Department of Public Safety</td>
<td>301.405.3333 or 911</td>
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<tr>
<td>POSSESSION OF WEAPON</td>
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<td>Immediate Police response and intervention</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEDICAL OR PSYCHIATRIC</td>
<td>UM Mental Health Service</td>
<td>301.314.8106</td>
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<tr>
<td>Immediate medical/psychiatric care</td>
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<tr>
<td>EMOTIONAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL</td>
<td>UM Counseling Center</td>
<td>301.314.7651</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Assessment, counseling, and consultation</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>DISORDERLY OR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR</td>
<td>Office of Student Conduct</td>
<td>301.314.8204</td>
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<tr>
<td>Behavior evaluation under Code of Student Conduct</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>BEHAVIOR EVALUATION, THREAT ASSESSMENT or</td>
<td>BETA TEAM</td>
<td>301.314.8428</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONSULTATION</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior evaluation or threat assessment</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
RESOURCES

IMMEDIATE THREAT OF VIOLENCE OR SUBSTANTIAL DISRUPTION
The University of Maryland Police will respond to a student who acts in a violent manner or threatens violence. Additionally, the Office of Student Conduct is authorized to impose an immediate suspension from classes (pending a hearing) if a student engages in threatening or disruptive behavior. Procedures may be initiated by the Vice President for Student Affairs or the Director of Student Conduct to require an evaluation conducted by campus mental health professionals or to dismiss students who pose a "direct threat" to self or others.

MEDICAL OR PSYCHIATRIC
If you think a student is at risk of harming him/herself or others (suicidal or homicidal) or is exhibiting extremely bizarre behavior, contact the University Health Center Mental Health Services at 301.314.8106. The University of Maryland Police (911) should be contacted if there is a threat of violence or medical transportation is required.

EMOTIONAL OR PSYCHOLOGICAL DISTRESS
When a student shows signs of emotional or psychological distress, comprehensive evaluation and treatment are provided by Mental Health Services in the Health Center on UM’s main campus. Counseling services available at the Counseling Center are free to students.

DISORDERLY OR DISRUPTIVE BEHAVIOR
A student who exhibits behavior that is disorderly, disruptive, or poses a concern for violence should be reported to the Office of Student Conduct at 301.314.8204 or studentconduct@umd.edu.

Disruptive or disorderly students may be in violation of the University’s Code of Student Conduct and/or be referred to specific counseling or mental health interventions, if appropriate. Additional advice is provided in a Classroom Disruption Advisory issued by the Office of Student Conduct and may be found at: http://www.studentconduct.umd.edu/OSC/GeneralFacultyDisruption.aspx.

BEHAVIOR EVALUATION AND THREAT ASSESSMENT
The Behavior Evaluation and Threat Assessment (BETA) team is an active team of staff members who provide resource information helpful to other staff, faculty, and administrators dealing with distressed, disturbed, potentially disruptive, or otherwise problematic members of the UM community. The BETA team is designed to provide information and referrals to those dealing with or concerned about these behaviors. The BETA team is NOT designed to deal with immediate threats or immediate crisis.
situations. Assistance in immediate crises is obtained by calling (911). The BETA team is not an administrative, treatment or disciplinary body. It does not adjudicate, discipline, or impose sanctions against any member of the campus.

Members of the UM community may contact and consult with the BETA Team, whose contact information is listed below:

Andrea Goodwin, Ph.D.
Director, Office of Student Conduct

Marta Hopkinson, M.D.
Director & Psychiatrist, Mental Health Service

Sharon Kirkland-Gordon, Ph.D.
Director & Staff Psychologist, Counseling Center

Judith Kinney
Assistant Director & Psychologist, Counseling Center

Cpt. Robert Mueck
Department of Public Safety

John Zacker, Ph.D. (Chair)
Assistant Vice President for Student Affairs