



Managing Online Classroom Environments

The University of Wisconsin-Madison is committed to promoting a safe learning environment that is free from disruption and harassment. We will continue to uphold these standards in the online environment and expect students to conduct themselves in the same manner as if they were taking their classes in person.

Share the following expectations with your students:

- Students have the right to express themselves and participate freely in an online class.
- Students are expected to treat each other and the instructor(s) with respect and courtesy.
- Offensive or inappropriate language or images should not be used in any form of communication (e.g. emails, discussion chats, group projects, submitted assignments).
- The discussion/chat areas of the course are reserved for postings related to course work only. Postings of a personal or non-academic nature are not permitted and may be removed by the instructor.
- Grades and personal issues should be handled in private via direct chat or email to the instructor.
- If students receive inappropriate emails or chats from others in the class, they should notify the instructor immediately.

Students who violate these expectations or others outlined in UWS [Chapter 14](#) and [17](#) may be referred to the [Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards](#) for disciplinary action.

Managing Disruptions: Disruptive vs. Distressed Students

Disruptions are behavior that interferes with a student's ability to participate in and/or an instructor's ability to deliver academic content.

Disruptive Student Behavior

- Disruptive or dangerous
- Verbal or physical threats
- Active threats of suicide or homicide and resisting help

Examples

- Persistent and unreasonable demands for time and attention
- Yelling/screaming, intimidating words
- Offensive or inappropriate language or images in remote classes, chats, emails
- Words or actions that may be intimidating or harassing of another
- Threats of physical violence

Distressed Student Behavior

- Troubled or confused
- Very sad, anxious, or irritable
- Lack of motivation
- Detachment from reality
- Lack of concentration

Examples

- Change in academic performance
- Excessive absence
- Disproportionate emotional response
- Depressed or lethargic mood
- Agitated or very rapid speech

How to Respond

- Request a private virtual meeting with the student
- Let them know you are concerned about their well-being
- Express what you are observing in a non-judgmental way
- Listen
- Help them explore options
- Refer them to appropriate resource

Confronting Academic Misconduct

1. Contact the student privately and tell them you need to speak to them via video conference or phone.
2. During the virtual meeting, tell the student what you suspect and ask them to tell you from their perspective how they wrote their paper, what they were doing during the exam/quiz, or how they completed their academic work.
3. After the meeting, decide whether the student is responsible or not responsible for committing academic misconduct and recommend an appropriate [sanction](#).
4. Compose an email [letter](#) to the student informing them of your decision.
5. Copy the Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards on the email to the student, conduct@studentlife.wisc.edu.

Additional Resources

Dean of Students Office: <https://doso.students.wisc.edu/>

Concerned about a student?

https://cm.maxient.com/reportingform.php?UnivofWisconsinMadison&layout_id=2

Instructional continuity - Assessment

<https://instructionalcontinuity.wisc.edu/assessment-remote-instruction/>

Email: instructionalcontinuity@provost.wisc.edu

Online Proctoring - Examity

<https://instructionalcontinuity.wisc.edu/online-proctoring-at-uw-madison/>

Office of Student Conduct and Community Standards: <https://conduct.students.wisc.edu/>

Teaching and Learning: <https://teachlearn.provost.wisc.edu/>