Dealing with Difficult Students

Introduction

Difficult students may present a challenge to even the most experienced instructor. The links below describe problematic students and offer prevention strategies and suggestions for dealing effectively with them.

General Resources

“Classroom Management,” Lisa Rodriguez, Ph.D.  
This article discusses a wide range of student classroom behaviors from the annoying to the disruptive and suggests “preventive strategies and practical solutions.”  
http://www.4faculty.org/includes/108r2.jsp [1]

Scenes from a Classroom: Managing Conflict (University of Minnesota, Center for Teaching and Learning Services).  
An online video workshop with ten scenarios of difficult moments between student and instructor followed by advice from teaching consultants for ways each situation might be handled.  
http://cei.umn.edu/tutorials [2]

Dealing with Difficult Behaviors (Honolulu Community College, Faculty Development Website).  
Scroll down to this category to find links that lead to descriptions of problematic student behaviors, possible responses for each, and strategies for dealing with a variety of difficult behaviors.  
http://www2.honolulu.hawaii.edu/facdev/guidebk/teachtip/teachtip.htm [3]

“Dealing with Difficulties in the Classroom,” James McNinch (University of Regina, Teaching Development Centre).  
Discussion of why things go wrong in the classroom and prevention strategies.  

Responding to Distressed Students (University of California, Santa Barbara, Counseling Services)  
Addresses how to deal with students who have problems ranging from aggression and potential violence to substance abuse, suicide, and irrational behavior. Clicking on one of the problems listed, leads to a page of useful information, including dos and don’ts for each type of behavior.  

“Dealing with Disruptive Behavior in the Classroom,” Kathleen McKinney (Illinois State University, Center for Teaching, Learning, and Technology).  
Strategies to prevent and address disruptive student behaviors.
Contains an eight-step outline for holding difficult conversations with difficult students.

**Managing Difficult Students/Situations** (University of Denver Office of Teaching & Learning).
Offers a list of strategies for responding to inappropriate behavior, an example, resources at DU (available in most universities) to turn to if nothing else works, and links to other helpful materials.
http://otl.du.edu/teaching-resources/managing-difficult-students/ [8]

See also on this website
Learners and Learning--Dealing with Students in Crisis [9]
Academic Integrity and Classroom Management—Civility/Incivility in the College Classroom [10]

Back to top

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