

LMU Student Classroom and Course-Related Behavior

Introduction

In keeping with the mission of the University and in accordance with the current LMU Bulletin and Community Standards, students and instructors both have a responsibility for maintaining an appropriate learning environment. Students who fail to adhere to behavioral standards conducive to an effective learning environment may be subject to disciplinary action. Instructors have the professional responsibility to treat students with dignity and respect in all classroom, laboratory, creative, and other learning environments and to define reasonable standards and set limits for what is acceptable as students engage in respectful discourse and exchange of ideas.

Disruptive student behavior in an academic setting hinders the educational process. Disruptive student conduct is prohibited by the Loyola Marymount University Community Standards, Student Conduct Code IV. The purpose of this policy is to clarify:

- what constitutes disruptive behavior in an **academic setting**, including, but not limited to: classroom, laboratory, creative arts/production spaces, faculty offices and other academic locations on and off campus;
- what actions Instructors, Department Chairs or Program Directors (or equivalent), and respective Deans' offices may take in response to disruptive classroom conduct; and,
- what authority the Office of Judicial Affairs has to initiate disciplinary proceedings against students for disruptive classroom conduct.

What Constitutes Disruption?

"Disruption," as applied to academic settings, means behavior that an Instructor would reasonably view as interfering with normal academic functions related to the learning activity and/or learning environment. Examples include, but are not limited to: persistently speaking without being prompted or recognized, or interrupting other speakers; behavior that distracts the class from the subject matter, discussion or performance; or in extreme cases, physical threats, harassing behavior or personal insults, unsafe laboratory or production practice, or refusal to comply with faculty direction.

Civil expression of disagreement with the course instructor, during times when the instructor permits discussion, is not in itself disruptive behavior and is not prohibited.

Students with qualifying disabilities are entitled to reasonable accommodation but they are held to the same standards of conduct as any student.

Policy

- Students are required to adhere to the behavior standards listed in the Loyola Marymount University Community Standards and to refrain from disrupting classes and other academic settings.

For cases involving immediate threats to the safety of the Instructor or Students in the class:

- If a Student's disruptive behavior in the determination of the Instructor threatens the safety of the Instructor or students in the class, the Instructor should immediately call the Department of Public Safety (if this behavior occurs off campus the Instructor should contact the appropriate Safety authority, e.g. police). At this point, the appropriate judiciary processes and procedures as outlined in the Loyola Marymount University Community Standards will be followed and the case will be referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs. In addition, the Instructor should inform the Department Chairperson or Program Director (or equivalent), and the Dean's Office of the incident as soon as possible.

For cases **not** involving immediate threats to the safety of the Instructor or students in the class the following policy and procedures are to be followed:

- If a Student is disruptive, the Instructor, the Department Chair, Program Director (or equivalent), and/or the respective Dean's Office may ask the student to stop the disruptive behavior and warn the student that such disruptive behavior can result in academic or disciplinary action.¹
- If a Student is in a course in which another Student is continually disruptive and thinks that the Instructor is not acting to stop the disruptive behavior, the Student should inform the Instructor that s/he feels that his/her learning is being impeded by the disruptive behavior.
 - If then, in the opinion of the Student the Instructor fails to address the disruption s/he may bring this situation to the attention of the Department Chairperson or Program Director (or equivalent) to resolve the disruptive classroom environment.
 - If either the Student or the Instructor thinks the action of the Department Chairperson or Program Director (or equivalent) does not resolve the handling of the disruptive behavior s/he may bring the situation to the attention of the appropriate Dean of the Instructor's college or school.
- An Instructor may ask a student to leave the classroom or other academic site at the time of the disruption if the Instructor deems it necessary to prevent further or continuing disruption. If a Student is dismissed from class or another academic site, the Student remains responsible for the class activity during the period missed. If the Instructor takes such action, s/he should report such action to the Department Chair or Program Director (or equivalent), and the Dean's Office and describe the circumstances and action taken in writing within 24 hours of taking the action.
 - A student's refusal to follow the instructor's request for the student to leave constitutes an additional act of disruptive behavior and may be viewed as a threat to the safety of the Instructor or other students in the class.
 - If the Student feels the Instructor's request for the Student to leave the classroom was not justified, the Student may appeal this decision to the Instructor's Department Chair or Program Director (or equivalent), and/or respective Dean's Office within three (3) business days.
- The Dean, after consultation with the Instructor and the Instructor's Department Chair or Program Director (or equivalent), may exclude the student from a classroom or other academic area, pending resolution of the matter, by: (1) informing the Student, in writing, of the exclusion, and (2) informing the Student of his/her rights to request an expedited review of the exclusion to the Dean or her/his designee. The request for expedited review must be in writing and received by the Dean's Office within three (3) business days of written notification of the exclusion. (The exclusion review shall occur only between the student and the Dean or her/his designee; the Instructor and Department Chair or Program Director (or equivalent) are informed about the outcome of such review.) If a Student is excluded from class or another academic site, the Student remains responsible for the class activity during the exclusion period.
- Nothing in this policy prohibits an Instructor or Student from immediately calling the Department of Public Safety or referring the matter directly to the Office of Judicial Affairs. If the Department of Public Safety is called or the incident is referred to the Office of Judicial Affairs the Instructor shall inform the Department Chair, Program Director, or the equivalent and the Instructor's Dean's Office as soon as possible.

¹ For Disruptive Behavior occurring in an off campus LMU program, (e.g. Study Abroad, Experiential/Engaged Learning, etc.) the policies, rules and procedures of the respective program will apply. If the off campus program does not have an applicable policy, the situation will be handled in accordance with this LMU Student Classroom and Course-Related Behavior policy.