

Diversity

Civility & Communication in the Midst of Differences

Incivility

Speech or action that is disrespectful or rude. Indicates disregard and insolence for others; causes atmosphere of disrespect, conflict, stress. A lack of manners, consideration, and courtesy. Lack of regard for others' rights, opinions, backgrounds, beliefs. A self-centered behavior that is impolite and boorish, or shows a disrespect for rights & concerns of others. Selfishly elevates the wants of one over another. A low intensity deviant behavior that violates workplace norms for mutual respect, and may or may not be intended to harm the target. Incivility violates an unspoken or implied understanding of respect for the learning process and the institution. Incivility is contrary to the wellbeing of the classroom community, and includes behaviors that distract the instructor or other students, disrupt classroom learning, discourage the instructor from teaching, discourage other students from participating, or derail the instructor's goals.

Incivility leads to violence, apathy, workplace dissatisfaction, remoteness, and disruption in academic and/or workplace operations and objectives.

*Incivility is seen as the **new norm** in today's society. We all expect some level of rudeness and disrespect. *Incivility* is considered marketable and entertainment.*

How does incivility show itself on a college campus?

Workforce (harassment, bullying), Greek life (relations), Residential Life (hostile environment), Academic classrooms, Athletics, Diversity (stereotypes, prejudice, race relations, etc.), Health behaviors (alcohol and other substance abuse, anxiety, depression, etc.), and Extracurricular activities (programming, student organizations, boundaries, and cultural norms).

Less serious in Incivility

Fans at sporting events using profanity
Cursing
Talking during meetings, others talking
Cell phone usage
Missing meetings or work
Tardiness
Gossip
Computer usage
Making demands and unreasonable requests
Groans/rolling eyes/sighs
Insubordination to authority

More Serious in Incivility

Celebratory riots after athletic events
Verbal attacks, Slander
Stalking
Sexual Assault
Shootings
Workplace Harassment
Bullying
Unlawful computer usage
Threats, Intimidation
Invasion of Privacy

Less serious in Incivility

Class: Sleeping
Arriving late, leaving early
Missing class
Unwanted negative evaluation feedback
Coming to class unprepared
Failure to participate or show interest in course
Packing up items before class is over

More Serious in Incivility

Class: Unjustified complaints to professor
Disruptions in class
Cheating, Plagiarism
Inappropriate emails to professor
Verbal threats, Intimidation

Let's talk Civility

Good manners, courtesy, being polite. Treating other people with respect even if you disagree. Means respect, period. Treating others as you would want to be treated (Golden Rule). Form of personal conduct that shows respect and appreciation for others. Civility is displayed twofold: 1) individual to individual, (civis, citizen) and 2) individual to community (civitas, art of government). Civility is nonpartisan, the glue holding dialogue together.

Four Principles of Civility Forni, P. M.

- 1) Civility is complex
- 2) Civility is good
- 3) Whatever civility is, it includes courtesy, politeness, good manners
- 4) Civility belongs in the realm of Ethics

“Civility is a form of goodness; it is gracious goodness. But it's not just an attitude of benevolent and thoughtful relating to other individuals, it also entails an active interest in the well-being of our communities....”

Incivility vs Civility

Challenges:

- Not everyone plays by the same code of conduct, therein lies the issue. It resides in the eyes of the beholder. Respecting each other's lines and boundaries is the key, but difficult.
- Uncivil behavior tends to be enacted covertly (especially when 'getting even') thus it is extremely hard to quantify.
- Laws or policies do not exist regarding incivility, so the risk of bringing complaints to the surface is high. Therefore, it is more likely to spread.
- We may extend civility and it not be reciprocated.

Civility on Campus

Use civil language

Maintain inclusive attitudes

Teach students and subordinates how to disagree with one another

Listen to students and colleagues in a respectful manner

Model respectful and empathetic behaviors

Speak *with* students instead of *at* them

Learn names of students and colleagues and use them

Respond to uncivil behaviors as they happen... reinforce expectations and boundaries

Critical Reflection

What is this person's motivation? Am I trying to see through their lens?

What values and beliefs are being challenged in this situation?

What facts and information do I need to acquire in order to increase my understanding and knowledge?

Why is this difficult for me? What is the main issue or concern? How can I communicate that clearly and calmly?

What assumptions or biases can I identify in this scenario?

What is the other person not understanding about me or this situation? How can I make them understand better?

Are there reasons behind the other person's words or behavior that I need to seek further clarification?

Use 'I Statements'

I have a problem. When _____ (specific behavior), then _____ (specific consequences) happens, and I feel _____.

Describe the feelings you experience as a result. Be specific and honest.

I want to talk to you about the continuing comments that are being made during class. They are distracting to me as I teach and disruptive to the class. I need this to stop. Do you understand my perspective?

I am upset when I hear your comments in the office regarding International students. They are stereotypical and inappropriate.

I value working with you, that is why I am having this conversation with you. The behaviors you are exhibiting in staff meetings are disrespectful.... cutting me off midsentence, rolling your eyes when I ask a question, or questioning the deadlines. These behaviors are belittling and make me angry.....