**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).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Less serious in Incivility</th>
<th>More Serious in Incivility</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fans at sporting events using profanity</td>
<td>Celebratory riots after athletic events</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cursing</td>
<td>Verbal attacks, Slander</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Talking during meetings, others talking</td>
<td>Stalking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cell phone usage</td>
<td>Sexual Assault</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing meetings or work</td>
<td>Shootings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tardiness</td>
<td>Workplace Harassment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gossip</td>
<td>Bullying</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Computer usage</td>
<td>Unlawful computer usage</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Making demands and unreasonable requests</td>
<td>Threats, Intimidation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groans/rolling eyes/sighs</td>
<td>Invasion of Privacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insubordination to authority</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

---

5
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 mid-sentence, rolling your eyes when I ask a question, or questioning the deadlines. These behaviors are belittling and make me angry……