

Mano

>> I recently received this email from a colleague:
>> "Anecdotally I hear on a regular basis claims by faculty members that
>> student civility is worse now than it has ever been. These are claims of
>> direct, in-your-face, personal "attacks" by students on faculty members. I
>> have been hearing these comments pretty consistently for a while now. ...
>> Now, I don't know if things really are worse now than in the past. But it
>> would be interesting to try to ascertain (measure) how pervasive this
>> problem is (according to faculty) and how many faculty are making changes to
>> their courses as a result. Of course it would also be interesting to engage
>> the students in a discussion regarding this "problem."
>>
>> I am not so much interested in discussing or debating the issue of student
>> incivility on the POD list but would like answers to the following questions
>> related to this query:
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>> 1) Are you aware of any research that has investigated
>> a.) the increase in actual or perceived incivility?
>> b.) how this incivility has impacted faculty teaching activities?
>>
>> 2) If yes to 1., can you identify the instruments used to measure
>> incivility?
>>
>> 3) What campuses have already looked into this issue?
>>
>> Thank you for your help with this.
>>
>> James Groccia
>> Assistant Dean, Graduate School
>> Coordinator, Preparing Future Faculty
>

I have found the chapter "Moderating Classroom Incivilities" in R. Boice's "Advice for New Faculty Members" (Allyn and Bacon, 2000) to be an excellent study on this topic, and he gives some good citations to other studies as well.

Boice does not directly address the question of whether such incidents are on the increase. Rather he points out that the number of incivilities that occur in any given classroom depends on factors that the instructor influences and can usually control, except for the exceptional "classroom terrorist" case. Hence *if* any rise in incivilities is observed or postulated, the question can be posed as to why instructors nowadays are increasingly practicing the kinds of behaviors that generate incivilities.

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Mano Singham, Associate Director
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Amada takes a very clinical/psychological approach to incivility--focusing on disorders of personality, which is not particularly productive for faculty developers. Maybe because I am a social psychologist, I prefer to look for aspects of students' environment that might increase or decrease incivility. Here is a short list of resources I found on incivility issues when I was researching a workshop we did called: Incivility in the Classroom: Hang up your Cell Phone and Shut Up (!)

Resources on Classroom Incivilities

Amada, Gerald. (1999). *Coping with Misconduct in the College Classroom: A Practical Model*. Asheville, NC: College Administration Publications.

Boice, R. (1996). Classroom incivilities. *Research in Higher Education*, 37(4). Reprinted in K.A. Feldman & M.B. Paulson (Eds.). (1998) *Teaching and Learning in the College Classroom* (2nd ed.). pp 347-369. Needham Heights, MA: Simon & Schuster.

Boice, R. (1996). *First-Order Principles for College Teachers*. Anker Publishing.

Carbone, E. (1999). Students behaving badly in large classes. In S.M. Richardson (Ed.). *Promoting Civility: A Teaching Challenge*. New Directions for Teaching and Learning. Vol. 77. pp. 35-43. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Eble, K.E. (1988). Cheating, confrontations, and other situations. In K.E. Eble, *The Craft of Teaching*. (Second ed.), pp. 164-180. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

McKeachie, W.J. (1994). Problem situations and problem students. In W.J. McKeachie, *Teaching Tips: Strategies, Research and Theory for College and University Teachers* (Ninth ed.) pp 251-261. Lexington, MA: D.C. Heath.

Richardson, Steven M. (Ed.) (1999). *Promoting Civility: A Teaching Challenge*. New Directions for Teaching and Learning. Vol. 77. San

Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Sorcinelli, M.D. (1994). Dealing with troublesome behaviors in the classroom. In K.W. Prichard & R.M. Sawyer (Eds.), Handbook of College Teaching: Theory and Applications, 365-373. Westport, CT: Greenwood Press.

Best, Stephanie

Stephanie Nickerson
Faculty Development Consultant

From: Ed Nuhfer <enuhfer@carbon.cudenver.edu>
Date: Wednesday, November 14, 2001 1:53 pm
Subject: Re: [POD] Research on Student Incivility--Citations Needed

> Gerry Amada has two (maybe more) books out on this issue. I
> suspect that
> means some research was done. At last book Gerald Amada was in San
> Francisco. His books are produced by College Administration
> PublicationsInc. out of Asheville, NC. I'd go there for answers to
> your query.
> Ed Nuhfer
> CU-Denver
>

>

Stephanie-- Great reference book list--thanks!

We did a similar workshop where we polled the entire campus for examples of incivility. Then we had the theatre dept. students role play these at our workshop--one of the most powerful workshops we ever did because all the examples were real and local. We gave out Amada's book as a part of this. I still get requests for the book and good comments from faculty about it. Ultimately if faculty find a book useful, that is probably an indication that developers should consider its worth.

Best wishes,
Ed

Going back to this thread, here is a little anecdote. We did an informal survey among our faculty of incivilities in the classroom. Our secretary,

who is also a part time student, was doing a tabulation of the results and she told us afterwards that she was really surprised at some of the things that faculty considered incivil classroom behavior. She was amazed that faculty even NOTICED that students were reading newspapers, eating and drinking, going in and out of class, putting their feet up on chairs, not taking notes, looking and acting disinterested, etc., let alone considered them incivilities.

This led to a discussion on why these things were viewed so differently by faculty and students. One person suggested that this type of behavior is common when people watch television, and that students who did these kinds of things were seeing the instructor's presentation as similar to waatching a TV program.

Perhaps this is another argument for more interactive classrooms as opposed to a lecture "performance"....

Mano

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This comment by Mano Singham:

"She was amazed that faculty even NOTICED that students were reading newspapers, eating and drinking, going in and out of class, putting their feet up on chairs, not taking notes, looking and acting disinterested, etc., let alone considered them incivilities."

reminds me of a study done by Drew Appleby (Journal of Staff, Prog, & Org Dev, Vol 8(1), Spring 1990, pp 41-44), where he looked at both faculty and student perceptions of irritating behaviors in the classroom. He found interesting relationships and similarities between the kinds of behaviors that faculty found irritating in students and those that students found irritating in faculty. He also saw a lack of awareness in both students AND faculty of the behaviors the other group found irritating.

A few examples from the article:

Faculty were irritated by immature and inattentive behaviors such as talking during lectures, sleeping during class, acting bored or apathetic, and not paying attention, and so forth.

Students were irritated by faculty who present poor lectures (e.g., unprepared, monotone, digress, too, fast, ramble, repetitious, unorganized),

who cannot explain concepts clearly, who cannot or will not answer student questions, who take lectures straight from the text book, and so on.

Faculty were irritated by students who come to class late.
Students were irritated by faculty who come to class late.

Faculty were irritated when students pack up their books and materials before the class is over.
Students were irritated when faculty continue to lecture after a class period is over.

Faculty were irritated by students who cut class.
Students were irritated by faculty who cancel or who do not show up for class.

Faculty were irritated by students who chew gum, eat, or drink noisily during lectures.
Students were irritated by faculty who eat, drink, or chew gum while they lecture.

Faculty were irritated by students who wear hats to class.
Students were irritated by faculty who dress in a shabby or unprofessional manner.

Results of the study suggested that both faculty and students would benefit from becoming more aware of how their behaviors were perceived by the other group.

Terri

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