Addressing Incivility in the Classroom

October 1, 2019

With Dr. Chavella Pittman
Addressing Incivility in the Classroom
October 1, 2019
With Dr. Chavella Pittman
Addressing Incivility in the Classroom: Effective Strategies for Faculty & Chairs

Chavella T. Pittman, PhD
Professor of Sociology
Diversity & Inclusion in Teaching Consultant
Chavella@effectivefaculty.org
Overview

- What is classroom Incivility?
- Faculty (esp. marginalized) experiences with classroom incivility
- 3 types of strategies to address classroom incivility
- Webinar format: Interactive
- Q & A
Addressing Classroom Incivility

Classroom Incivility

- What is it?
Classroom Incivility

• **What is it?**
  • ...disrespect for standards of classroom behavior as posted in the syllabus
  • ...behaviors that hamper the ability of instructors to teach or students to learn
Classroom Incivility

- What are examples of it?
Classroom Incivility

• What are examples of it?
  • late arrival
  • sleeping
  • texting or other cellphone use during class
  • offensive language and comments
  • failing to respect the rights of other students to express their viewpoints
  • creating excessive noise
  • refusing to comply with reasonable faculty direction
  • verbal abuse of instructor or students
  • harassment of instructor or other students
  • aggressive dispute of the instructor’s judgment, authority or expertise (e.g., frustration over a grade or other instructor decision)
Classroom Incivility

• What causes it?
Classroom Incivility

• What causes it?
  • Faculty incivility
  • Students as consumers
  • Students not academically challenged before college (changes in parenting of recent generations)
  • No respect for authority (recent generations thinks their opinion has equal status with faculty expertise)
  • Recent practice of calling professors by their first name gives the illusion that students and faculty are equals
  • Student entitlement
  • Distractions of technology
Classroom Incivility

- Can you ignore it?
Classroom Incivility

• Can you ignore it?
  • Detracts from student learning
  • Breeds more classroom incivility
Faculty (esp. marginalized) experiences with Classroom Incivility

- General
  - Do students notice classroom incivility?
Addressing Classroom Incivility

Faculty (esp. marginalized) experiences with Classroom Incivility

- Marginalized faculty
  - Differences from experiences of non-marginalized faculty?
Faculty (esp. marginalized) experiences with Classroom Incivility

• Consequences for faculty
Addressing Classroom Incivility

Strategies to address Classroom Incivility

- Importance of prevention strategies
Strategies to address Classroom Incivility

- Prevention
  - Syllabus policies*
  - Model civil behavior*
  - Classroom code of conduct*
  - Establish authority*
  - Command class attention*
  - Uphold teaching standards*
Strategies to address Classroom Incivility

- **Prevention (Illustrations)**
  - Classroom code of conduct (Guidelines for classroom interactions; Learning Behaviors; etc.)

- [https://www.mtholyoke.edu/sites/default/files/teachinglearninginitiatives/docs/civilitysamples.pdf](https://www.mtholyoke.edu/sites/default/files/teachinglearninginitiatives/docs/civilitysamples.pdf)

- [https://deanofstudents.illinoisstate.edu/downloads/ExampleClassroomBehaviorStatementsforyourSyllabus.pdf](https://deanofstudents.illinoisstate.edu/downloads/ExampleClassroomBehaviorStatementsforyourSyllabus.pdf)
Strategies to address Classroom Incivility

- Again ☺️ Prevention strategies are important—your foundation
Strategies to address Classroom Incivility

- In the Moment (abbreviated)
  - Stay safe
  - Address immediately
  - Address later 😊
Addressing Classroom Incivility

Strategies to address Classroom Incivility

- In the Moment: Indirect Incivility (abbreviated)
  - Comment to class rather than individual student*
  - Move towards area of student incivility*
Addressing Classroom Incivility

Strategies to address Classroom Incivility

- In the Moment: Direct Incivility (abbreviated)
  - Talk with student outside of class*
  - Listen without being defensive*

©2019 Effective & Efficient Faculty  Chavella@effectivefaculty.org  www.effectivefaculty.org  @EEFdei (Twitter & IG)
• Caveat*: Some of the “best” practices assume faculty power and authority
  • prior strategies w/an asterisk*
Final thoughts

- Classroom incivility is a real issue w/real consequences
  - Esp. for marginalized faculty

- Marginalized faculty experience more & more extreme versions of it
  - Structural/societal (not individual) level issue

- The effectiveness of classroom incivility strategies depend on:
  - Faculty statuses
  - Pedagogy
  - Course content
  - Etc.

- Next steps: Need for institutional support (resources, informal/formal, procedures, practices, policies, training, etc.)
Addressing Classroom Incivility

Thank you!

Q & A?