



# **Working with students on their responsibility to self and others**

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## Presentation Goals

- Outline steps for MSU employees to use in managing students' compliance with COVID policies and procedures
- Provide resources related to MSU COVID policies and procedures

# Why manage disruptive/negative behavior

- If a student comes to your class/lab/workplace and is not in compliance with the MSU COVID-19 policies, you should have a conversation with the student
- Allowing the student to remain in the class/lab/workplace creates a public health risk
- Talking with the student directly, as soon as the behavior happens, often will resolve the issue and help prevent additional instances of non-compliance
- If you make exceptions or do not confront inappropriate behavior, you signal to the student and others that the rules do not matter

## STEP 1: Be proactive

- We have provided template language about the COVID policies and recommendations for class attendance on the Keep Teaching Website
- Use these suggestions and build appropriate policies into your syllabus.
- In addition to putting information into the syllabus, you might consider:
  - Put announcements in D2L and build reminders into class presentations, emails, or other updates
  - Talk about the policies on the first day of class (work) with your students

## What if something happens?

- Most of the time speaking with the students proactively will help avoid negative behaviors
- A majority of the compliance issues MSU has experienced with COVID have related to misunderstandings or forgetfulness **not bad intentions**
- If you do find that you have to have a conversation with a student about their actions then proceed to Step 2

## STEP 2: Get in the right mindset

- Take a moment to compose yourself; difficult conversations are stressful, and you do not want your stress to derail the interaction
- Do not rush in to confront individual and do not assume ill intent or that you will be challenged; the situation is often a mistake or a misunderstanding
- Be mindful of your status, positionality, and identities; some students may not respond well to authority or may be triggered by aspects of your identity
  - Mindful difficult conversations:  
<https://www.mindfulschools.org/personal-practice/difficult-conversations/>

## STEP 3: Set the stage

- [Make Body Language Your Superpower](#) (video)
  - Consider how you can apply posture, positioning, hand gestures, and audience reading when you engage with other people
- Move individual to a space that is private and free of distractions or interruptions
- If other students ask what you are doing or what is going on, remember it is confidential and you should not share details with them
- Have the basic facts you need to engage in an educational conversation and be prepared to ask and answer questions

## STEP 4: Focus on facts and education

- Describe for the student the behavior that needs to be addressed (e.g., you are not wearing your mask correctly)
- Cite specific actions that need to be corrected and how they violate policy; take an educational approach as, most likely, the student made a mistake
- As warranted or needed, consider the following tactics:
  - Explain how the student's behavior affects the learning environment, peers, you, and them.
  - Ask the student to explain what happened in a neutral way and listen without being angry or accusing.
  - Be prepared to help the student learn how to correct the problem and avoid making a mistake in the future.



## STEP 5: Listen & Empathize

- [Power of Listening](#)
  - How do we switch the “me” part of listening off & re-focus these thoughts onto the person speaking?
- [Validation, communication through empathy](#)
  - How does showing empathy impact the other person involved in your conversation? Does their position (happy or angry) play a role
- Listen to the student’s explanation calmly and provide validation to their concerns
  - Example: “I understand that you have been really busy lately, but masking is really important”
  - Example: “I’ve been late and forgotten my mask before too, but we’ll need to get you one before you can come into class.”

## STEP 6: Respond

- Outline for the student what needs to happen to address the situation
  - Example: “We need to find you a mask,” or “You need to either mask up or leave the classroom until you have a mask.”
- As warranted, explain the consequences of the behavior if not resolved and/or if it continues
- Inform the student that you must report the situation and that continued non-compliance could result in additional consequences
- Give the student choices, especially if they are refusing to comply

## Managing a major disruption

- Using the previous steps should resolve most behavior problems with students.
- If the student refuses to leave, causes a major disruption, or seems to pose a threat to self or others, then consider the following actions:
  - Dismiss the class and follow up with them in an email later
  - if you sense danger then dial 911
- Dismissing class or calling for emergency services should be a last resort. Please do not dismiss the class until you have tried to speak with the student

## STEP 7: Report

- If you talk with a student about a COVID issue, even if they are agreeable and it is a mistake, you should complete the Qualtrics survey
- This survey allows campus to keep track of the number of times a student has an issue across time and space; a single instance will not warrant any conduct procedures
- When completing the form, stick to just the facts and what was actually said; do not put in any of your opinions or interpretations
  - Good example: the student admitted to being confused about the testing process and left the classroom when asked.
  - Inappropriate example: the student seems incapable of following directions and has some mental health concerns.
  - Do not ascribe any behaviors to a students' identity, health status, political beliefs,



# **Resources and information**

# MSU COVID resources

- [Together We Will](#)
- [Keep Teaching](#) – instructor-facing
- [Keep Learning](#) – student-facing

# COVID Safety Resources

- [Staying Safe](#)
- [Isolation on Campus](#)
- [How To Create a COVID Bubble and Why You Should Consider One](#)
- [Spartan Health Screening Form](#)
- [Cloth Face Coverings – Do's & Don'ts](#)
- [Cloth Face Coverings: Fact Sheet](#)
- [Masks are MSU's Best Defense](#)
- [General Cleaning Procedures](#)

# Self-Care and Wellness Resources

- [CAPS – Virtual Care Kit](#)
- [Keep Learning: Mental Health](#)
- [What do you do if someone close to you is confirmed positive for COVID-19?](#)
- [Resource Center for Persons with Disabilities](#)
- [Office of Institutional Equity](#)