

Honor Society of Nursing, Sigma Theta Tau International

Leadership Forum

20 - 22 September 2012 • Indianapolis, Indiana, USA



Taking a Stand: Steps to Stop Incivility in the Academic Setting

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Objectives

- Identify and define incivility in the academic setting and identify strategies, tools and steps to defuse these situations.
- Feel empowered and motivated to be an agent of change in situations of incivility.

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Purpose/ Target Audience

- Provide faculty with strategies to feel empowered and motivated to recognize strategies to defuse situations of incivility

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Establishing a Sense of Urgency

- Boldly disclosing the evidence based situations
- Creating guidance with wisdom and references from the experts

(Kotter, 2008)

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Definition of Incivility

Rude or disruptive behaviors that often result in psychological or physiological distress for the people involved and may progress into threatening situations when left unaddressed.

(Clark, Farnsworth, Landrum, 2009)

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Significance

ANA Code of Ethics

Requires nurses to treat colleagues, students, and patients with dignity and respect. Harassment, disrespect, or threatening action will not be tolerated.

Joint Commission

2008 Sentinel Event Alert – Consequences of disruptive behavior by health providers and their effects on patient care leading to medical errors, poor care, and increased costs.

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Effects of Incivility

- Erodes self-esteem
- Damages relationships
- Increases stress
- Contaminates workplace
- Escalates into violence

(Clark, 2012)

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Civility

. . . brings decorum to discourse . . .

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Perceived Faculty Stressors

- Multiple work demands (examples) 63.5%
- Problematic students 19.9%
- Low salary and financial pressures 8.3%
- Faculty-to-faculty incivility and “hazing” 8.3%

(Clark & Springer, 2010)

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Uncivil Behaviors Displayed by Faculty

- Uncivil faculty behaviors toward faculty and administrators (examples) 80%
- Avoidant, isolative, and exclusionary behaviors (examples) 34%
- Uncivil faculty behaviors toward students (examples) 30%

(Clark & Springer, 2010)

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Perceived Student Stressors

- Juggling multiple roles and meeting competing demands (work, academic, family) 48.3%
- Financial pressures 29.7%
- Time management 28%
- Lack of faculty support and faculty incivility 15%
- Mental health problems and personal issues 6%

(Clark & Springer, 2010)

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Uncivil Behaviors Displayed by Students

- In-class disruptions (examples) 63.4%
- Aggressive, intimidating, bullying 8.6%
- Anger or excuses for poor performance 8.1%
- Cheating and other forms of academic dishonesty 5.9%
- Displaying a sense of entitlement 5.0%
- Blaming others for their shortcomings 4.5%
- Shunning or marginalizing other students 4.5%

(Clark & Springer, 2010)

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Factors Contributing Toward Incivility as Reported by Students and Faculty

- Student attitude of entitlement
- Faculty attitude of superiority

(Clark, 2008)

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What Faculty Can Do

(From Faculty Field Guide 2009)

- Faculty role modeling
- Planning for success
- Instituting cooperative and active learning strategies
- Assessing the learning environment

(Clark, 2009)

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What Faculty Can Do

(From Faculty Field Guide 2009)

- Partnering with student services
- Providing open forums
- Creating a culture of civility

(Clark, 2009)

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What Students Can Do

- Respectful of others
- Foster and assume goodwill
- Be honest and non-judgmental
- Strive for inclusiveness and collaboration
- Open communication

(Clark, 2010; Clark, 2012)

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What Students Can Do

- Self care and stress reduction
- Assume personal responsibility
- Creating norms - classroom and clinical
- Conform to norms
- Clarify – ask questions and seek resolution
- Model civility

(Clark, 2010; Clark, 2012)

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What Students Can Do

- Participate in university governance
- Model respect – self and others
- Hold each other accountable
- Attend class, be on time, be prepared
- Avoid distracting behaviors

(Clark, 2010; Clark, 2012)

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“Transforming an organization’s culture
is not only
time-consuming and complex,
it requires commitment”

(Clark, 2012)

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Role of the Nurse Leader

Responses

- Create a culture of civility
 - Provide education, open forums and address directly
- Policy development and implementation
- Stress Reduction
- Other

Frequency

203 (85.6%)
116 (48.9%)
21 (8.1%)
10 (4.2%)

(Clark, 2010)

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Fundamentals for Transformation

- Raise the level of awareness
- Engage the organization
- Communicate the vision
- Empower for action

(Kotter, 2008)

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Organizational Transformation

- Changing our conversations
- Respecting one another's point of view
- Revising our assumptions
- Creating a meaningful vision of the future

(Showkeir & Showkeir, 2008)

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Changing Conversation

- To be clear state the reason or ask the reason for the meeting.
- When confronting difficult issues, remember to extend good will with your tone and mannerisms.
- Stay with the intention and do not to use language for manipulation or be defensive.

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Respecting One Another's Point Of View

- Keeping the intent in mind and always maintaining good will.
- Am I understanding the perception of the student rankism and entitlementism.
- We seek collaboration not victory.
- It is simply being human that establishes dignity.
- Respect and tolerance is a great gift to give

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Revising Assumptions

- Faculty did trigger the incident
- Faculty are trying to weed-out students
- Student does not have a voice or right to question
- Faculty need to defend themselves and the school
- Faculty assuming they “outrank” the students
- Students believing that based on the cost of tuition they have a right to direct the education process

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Creating a Meaningful Vision of the Future

- Faculty understand the need to have the discussions with students using authentic conversation principles (Showkeir, 2008).
- Faculty understand challenge sets the process in motion and support ensures success.
- Students and faculty understand the value of open discussions (Faculty can listen without feeling they have to change something).

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Empowering Faculty

- The operation might begin with the faculty
 - Conveying critical information about addressing conflict situations
 - Keeping in mind education is a team sport in which both parties have to take some ownership
 - How do we enhance the teaching-learning situations
 - What are the limitations regarding policies
 - Stay on focus with the student issue
 - Counterproductive to blame the student
 - Counter productive for faculty to use defensive language
 - The outcome should be a victory for both, not a winner and a loser

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Concerning Students

- The conversations with students may take place any time the incidents arise.
- If you take away this occasion for student and faculty development, you have missed the opportunity for them to learn a great lesson of life.
- However the faculty have to have some skill to appreciate the spirit and approach of the conversations
- Knowledge the difference between behaviors that foster conversation which do not mean raised voices and sarcastic retorts.
- Small group discussions of experiences because the brain does not know that it is rehearsal

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Imperative Measures

- Measure the distinguishing attributes
- Use existing tools or develop your own
- Confirm Significance
- Affirm Direction

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Staying on Track

- Having periodic and consistent cultural assessments
- Using a framework to organize the initiative
- Celebrate successes no matter how small.

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Group Discussion

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Thank You

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Sample # 1 Scenario for Discussion

- Context: Students were instructed by the faculty member to divide into 5 groups of 4 and identify the steps of the research process they could identify in the research article they had just reviewed.
- Student dialogue: one of the students spoke out in class and said “you never teach us anything. We have to do all the work”
- Faculty dialogue: The faculty member explained that this was a learning activity that was important in understanding the research process and learning to critique published research. The student was reluctant to be involved.
- Actions taken: the faculty member provided more encouragement and asked the student to contact her for a time when they could meet and discuss the learning principles guiding the teaching in the class.

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Sample #2 Scenario for Discussion

- The student made the appointment and met with the teacher and the teacher explained the rationale for the appropriate response. The student was rude with undesirable communication behaviors such as blaming and critical of faculty members teaching.
- Actions: The faculty member told the student that she did not know what else to say. The student could just talk with the director. In the conversation with the director, the student said she did not understand that her behavior was unacceptable. She did not believe that she was rude, her actions were appropriate for what the situation called for.
- Projections: Is counseling this student the strategy of choice. Does there need to be a discussion with the class; does this need to be brought to the attention of the faculty with a discussion of the appropriate action?
- Was the threat to the mission great enough to conduct an assessment and launch a campaign?