



Teaching For Success presents

**A+ Faculty Training and Development**

# *Positive Classroom Discipline*



## **A Teaching For Success QuickCourse**

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# Positive Classroom Discipline

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## Course Benefits

**D**iscipline is a fundamental component of the Critical Success Factor of good Classroom Management and a professional teaching skill. This QuickCourse will help you create an effective and easy-to-use program of positive discipline for your classroom or laboratory.

### Why Bother?

In college after college, faculty report that students enter their classes with very diverse attitudes about what constitutes proper classroom behavior and how to positively interact and enter into discussions and team projects with peers. No longer can you assume that students know what is expected of them or are aware of the specific



**T**his QuickCourse will help any instructor create an effective and easy-to-use program of positive discipline for their classroom or laboratory. It's crucial to develop a systematic method for positive classroom management.

behaviors that their instructors, institutions or states cite as inappropriate and out of bounds. In the same regard, students need to know the positive behaviors that undergird and foster rapid and effective learning.

Therefore, classroom behavior standards and consequences for ignoring the rules should be specified by faculty from day one and communicated to students via the syllabus and supporting handouts.

If you wait to deal with behavioral issues when they occur, valuable class time is wasted. In addition, if handled poorly, minor infractions can erupt into serious student-instructor conflicts that may require disciplinary action and involvement by administrative officials.

### What benefits can You expect from this QC?

Using the advice and following the steps found in this QuickCourse, you will be able to determine what behavior is

### Success Tip

Teaching For Success strongly recommends that instructors always coordinate their disciplinary policies, measures, methods with those codified by their department, institution and state.



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unacceptable and outline a strategy for dealing with this behavior in a systematic way.

By learning how to proactively approach discipline, you will be much better prepared to deal with unexpected student behaviors that disrupt or degrade the learning process for everyone. Mastering this professional classroom-management skill increases your instructional effectiveness many times over.

### The bottom line

While you may find enforcing classroom discipline to be awkward or distasteful, the fact is that instructors and their serious students in all disciplines are faced with learning-disruptive behaviors from time to time.

### Your turn:

**Question:** *What is your philosophy on classroom discipline?* (Input your response in the field below)

### Expectations

But, before you can enforce a code of behavior, you must be absolutely clear about institutional and personal



**T**he truth of the matter is that you will have to deal with discipline in the college classroom.

Most of your students will be motivated and well-behaved, but there are always going to be some who will be disruptive.

expectations for acceptable behavior and punishments for unacceptable behavior.

In addition, it's crucial for you to develop a systematic method of delineating acceptable versus unacceptable behavior and the consequences of engaging in unacceptable behavior. This QuickCourse includes instructions needed to create a plan to maintain positive classroom discipline, and it also offers recommendations on how to get additional guidance concerning student conduct and appropriate corrective measures.

Once you have determined your philosophy, the behaviors you expect of your students and those required by your institution and state mandates, you can then proceed to detail and communicate the consequences of unacceptable behavior. And, when necessary, inform students about your institution's system of appeals.

### Quotes

Life is tons of discipline.  
—Robert Frost

Only the man who can impose discipline on himself is fit to discipline others...

—William Feather





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### Applicability

This QuickCourse is designed for full-time and part-time instructors and teaching assistants at the college level, but educators and trainers in other environments can also benefit from this course.

### Time required

On average, it should take between one and two hours to read the material in this QuickCourse, create a plan, and implement the recommended tips and action steps. As you study this information, this QC helps you create a positive disciplinary system that is ready to implement at the beginning of your next class meeting.

### Six steps to disciplinary success

I will guide you through the six steps in designing an effective discipline plan. They include:

1. Learn your institution's student-conduct code.
2. Identify disruptive and desirable behaviors.
3. Choose consequences for disruptive behaviors.
4. Simplify and organize your list of behaviors and graduated sequence of consequences.
5. Transfer these policies to your course syllabus.
6. Explain these policies to your students and activate your entire plan from day one.

Interactive text fields are provided along the way so that you can enter notes and ideas pertaining to your specific situation. The recommendations and information contained in this QC will likely trigger ideas that you would like to try with your class. Be sure to enter these ideas in the text fields as you progress through each section.



**A**ccording to the rules of your college or university, what are you legally allowed to do with students who misbehave or disrupt?

Do you have the right to insist they leave your class and should you do so?

## Why study discipline?

**W**hen you take the position of instructor or educator, you are asked to play many roles. One of the least pleasurable roles (in my experience) is that of disciplinarian.

I, as perhaps you, would much rather focus on the less confrontational aspects of the teaching profession. I'd certainly rather not worry about having to correct the behavior of other people. Teaching would be much easier in a class of polite, non-disruptive students who actually want to be in the classes you teach.

### Crucial Questions:

- ☐ What are your discipline options?
- ☐ What are your rights?
- ☐ What are your students' rights?
- ☐ What could you do to prevent serious confrontations from occurring?



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However, the truth of the matter is that you will have to deal with discipline in the college classroom. Although most of your students will be motivated and well-behaved, there are always going to be some who will be disruptive in one way or another to you and your class.

And, if you remember the old adage that it takes only a bad apple to spoil the bunch, you can imagine the harm one or two disruptive students can do to a class!

This **Teaching for Success QuickCourse** is designed to help you deal with discipline in your classroom in the most effective way possible.

### Your turn

***Situation: A single parent brings a one-year-old child to class saying it will only be for a week or two while a day-care facility is being found. What would you do?** Input your response in the field below.*

### Do you know what to do?

Discipline is a fairly subjective matter. If we consider parenting for a moment, we can clearly see that there are different ways of handling discipline. Metaphorically speak-



**I**t is important for instructors to understand that the code of student conduct is the vital centerpiece for dealing with student misconduct. In effect, it is the "law of the land."

ing, are we to spare the rod and spoil the child?

But, as a professional higher education instructor, are you prepared to handle the disruptive students, who are adults, that you are bound to encounter?

Do you know what to do if, for example, two students annoy the rest of the class as they carry on a conversation while you are in the middle of a presentation?

Do you talk to them after class or scold them in front of the entire class? What if they continue to disrupt after you spoke to them? According to the rules of your college or university, do you know what you are

### Success Tip

- ☐ If no Code of Conduct exists at your institution, locate the recommended sources in the Works Cited section and send them to your appropriate college officials.
- ☐ You can still develop a good discipline plan without such a code, but it would be stronger with a supporting official, student code of conduct already in place.



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legally allowed to do with students who violate policy, misbehave or disrupt?

Do you have the right to insist they leave your class and should you do so?

If you have the right, at what point should you act, and when you ask a student to leave, what will be the likely effect on the rest of your class?

Moreover, what could you have done to prevent the situation from escalating?

### Your Turn:

**Question?** *What are your main concerns about enforcing discipline and your rights as an instructor? (Input your response in the field below.)*

I share many of these same concerns. Here are some of the failed disciplinary strategies that I have tried over the years and represent the motivation behind the ideas in this QuickCourse to approach discipline in a more fair and systematic way.



**F**inally, remind students that following the student code of conduct is a sign of respect they offer you, the school, their classmates, themselves and those who have helped them get to college.

### Varying approaches

Over the years I have experimented with different approaches, and I've relied on three common procedures:

- ☐ Ignore the disruptive behavior.
- ☐ Give a disapproving look to the student.
- ☐ Talk to students after class.

Sometimes these typical responses worked, and sometimes they didn't. But I wasn't satisfied with a hit-and-miss approach. I wanted to know what to do and have a plan that I could fall back on. I talked to other instructors, read articles, attended workshops and took my own experience into consideration.

### Code of Conduct

Here's an example of codified behavior. Delaware County Community College's Student Handbook states, "Obstruction or disruption of teaching, research, administrative disciplinary procedures or other College activities, including the College's public service functions or other authorized activities on College-owned or controlled property" (DCCC 43) is a **major violation of the code of student conduct**.

This type of clear policy statement by your institution will help you lay the foundation for an effective course plan.



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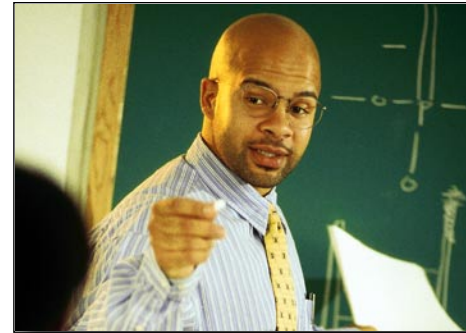
Through these varied sources, I found a much better system for dealing with disruptions than my old one.

Through the succeeding sections of this QuickCourse, you will find practical information from the fruits of my research for improving your current approach or developing an brand-new effective discipline plan to use in your classroom. Learning the following steps will put you on the right track.

If you would like the piece of mind of knowing that discipline will not be a stumbling block to your success, follow these six steps to creating a disciplined, yet positive learning environment for your class.

#### Your turn:

*Enter, a list or description of your current methods or approaches to discipline in the field below.*



**S**ome even interrupted my lecture in-progress to find out if “they missed anything important.”

It didn't take long for me to recognize that we were operating on very different planes.

## Step 1: Learn the Code

**O**ne of the most important but often overlooked steps is to use your college's student code of conduct as the foundation for your discipline plan. Gerald Amada, author of *Coping with Misconduct in the College Classroom*, explains why: “It is important for instructors to understand that the code of student conduct is the vital centerpiece for dealing with student misconduct. In effect, it is the ‘law of the land,’ at least insofar as student behavioral issues are concerned” (Amada 22).

Start out by locating your college student code of conduct. At most colleges, the student code of conduct is outlined in the student handbook. It may also be in the college catalog. If your college doesn't have a student code of conduct, strongly encourage them to develop one.

Student conduct codes should be included in the student-information section of your institution's website.





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### Your turn:

**Question:** List your institution's documents that define disallowed behaviors and the consequences of engaging in these behaviors? (Input your response in the field below.)

Once you have located the student code of conduct, study it carefully. Find out what kind of behavior the college has outlined as unacceptable and the procedures for dealing with it. If you have any questions, be sure to address them to the proper college authorities.

To effectively meet situations in the classroom that arise quickly and often unexpectedly, you must know the behaviors that your college has defined as acceptable and unacceptable.

At most colleges, unacceptable behavior is called the disruption or obstruction of teaching, and it is usually outlined as a major violation of student conduct. It is this particular code that can give you, as an instructor, leverage in dealing with disruptive students. It's important to be clear, firm and decisive on disciplinary matters. State in your syllabus and during the first class session that you take the college's student code of conduct seriously, and so should your students. (Step 5 deals with this in more detail.)

Also let them know on day one the ramifications that can come from their not following this code of conduct. (See Steps 4 and 5 for more on this point.)



**B**e sure to keep in mind those consequences that your college may have already put in place. My college has a strict policy on absences. After the third absence, an instructor has the right to withdraw a student from his/her course.

## Step 2: Identify Behaviors

In the next step, list the positive behaviors you will expect students to exhibit in your classroom as well as those behaviors considered unacceptable or disruptive.

List even those behaviors that seem obvious to you. This is important because, as Virginia Gonzales and Estela Lopez point out in their article "The Age of Incivility: Countering disruptive behavior in the classroom," "Professors can no longer assume that there is a commonly understood set of behaviors that will be adopted within the classroom" (Gonzalez and Lopez 2-3).

### Uncommon courtesy?

Unfortunately, I learned this truth the hard way. When I first started teaching, I was surprised at the lack of what I considered common courtesy displayed by my students. For example, many of my students thought nothing of getting up to sharpen a pencil in the middle of a lecture.





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Also, many students who were late made no attempt to be inconspicuous about it. Some even interrupted my lecture in-progress to find out if “they missed anything important.” It didn’t take long for me to recognize that we were operating on very different planes. At first I was appalled, but then I realized that my students weren’t intentionally displaying bad manners, they really just didn’t know any better.

That is when I realized how important it is to explicitly define appropriate and inappropriate behaviors for students from day one.

If you are new to teaching and aren’t sure what kinds of things to list, you may want to consult with some of your department colleagues about the kind of behavior they encounter. Perhaps your college or department has an instructor’s handbook containing disciplinary and behavior guidelines. To help you create your list of crucial or desired behaviors, I’ll share my lists.

### Positive Behaviors Expected:

- ☐ Attend all classes when possible.
- ☐ Pay careful attention in class.
- ☐ Take notes.
- ☐ Contribute to class discussions with meaningful comments or questions.
- ☐ Bring your textbook to each class.
- ☐ Complete all assignments.
- ☐ Come to class ready to work, not sleep. This class will require you to actively participate in class discussions, group activities, peer reviews.
- ☐ Respect fellow students.
- ☐ Have a positive attitude.



**O**n the first offense, you might speak to that student after class and clearly explain how his behavior is violating the student code of conduct. On the next offense, you might change that student’s seat.

### Your Turn

**Question:** *What are the positive behaviors that you expect from your students? (Input your response in the field below.)*



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### Unacceptable, negative or disruptive behaviors:

- ☐ Talking while I or another student is talking.
- ☐ Repeatedly coming to class late.
- ☐ Excessive absences.
- ☐ Verbally degrading another student or me.
- ☐ Using profanity in the classroom.
- ☐ Sexual harassment (Note: Your college student handbook should have a section defining sexual harassment.)
- ☐ Sleeping in class.
- ☐ Doing homework for another class or my class during lecture/teaching/in-class project time.
- ☐ Reading an unrelated book, magazine, or newspaper during lecture/teaching/in-class project time.
- ☐ Sharpening a pencil when I'm teaching.
- ☐ Approaching me to ask a question while I'm teaching. (Of course, raising hands is encouraged, but approaching me as I lecture is not.)

Note: if you teach a laboratory or clinical class, you may need to emphasize additional safety and patient-related behaviors that are important to your discipline.

Now, create your list of unacceptable or disruptive behaviors that you will not tolerate and will cause you to take disciplinary action. Amada identifies this activity as an important step to controlling disruptions in the classroom (23). You will also need these lists to complete the step 3.

*On following page, you will find a text field for entering your list of behaviors. It's perfectly OK to brainstorm an initial list now, and then add to it later.*



**D**iscipline is a tricky business, but one that must be mastered to ensure that precious class time is not wasted dealing with behavioral instead of learning issues. Your students deserve a class where learning is respected!

### Your turn

*List all of the negative, unacceptable or disruptive behaviors that you will not tolerate in your class? (Input your response in the field below.)*



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## Step 3: Choose Consequences

**A**fter you have completed these lists, look over the disruptive behaviors you compiled. Now, decide on the appropriate consequences for each behavior. Gonzalez and Lopez (2) as well as Amada (24) see this as a **key step** in an effective discipline plan.

### Clear consequences

Be sure to keep in mind those consequences that your college may have already put in place. For example, my college has a strict policy on absences. After the third absence, an instructor has the right to withdraw a student from his/her course. In this case, I don't have to think up a consequence, there is already one in place for me to use.

### Unclear consequences

But what about behavior for which there are no clear consequences spelled out by the college? For example, what if students talk to each other while you are trying to teach? What will you do the first time this happens? The next time? Is there a point when the discipline will have to go outside of the classroom? When?

To help you decide the appropriate actions to take at each stage in the discipline process, I think it is helpful to consider some principles that Amada explains in his book *Coping with Misconduct in the College Classroom*.

First, Amada suggests that instructors use what he calls "graduated disciplinary measures." That is to say that



**B**ut what about behavior for which there are no clear consequences spelled out by the college? For example, what if students talk to each other while you are trying to teach?

instructors should increase the consequences each time a student violates a specific code of conduct (Amada 30-31).

For example, let's return to the "student talking while you are teaching" illustration. On the first offense, you might speak to that student after class and clearly explain how his behavior is violating the student code of conduct.

On the next offense, you might change that student's seat. If this doesn't solve the problem, then you may need to give a written warning. Below are some tips from Gerald Amada's *Coping with Misconduct in the College Classroom*.

### Amada's Graduated Sequence:

Amada suggests the following graduated disciplinary measures for repeated violations:

1. Spoken Warning (clearly connect the behavior to the code of student conduct)
2. Written Warning (to student)
3. Reprimand ("a formal written notice" or report to student and appropriate college official)
4. Removal from Class
5. Suspension
6. Expulsion





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### Warning example

An example of a spoken warning: "Jennifer, when you talk with Clarissa when I'm speaking, it's distracting to me and your fellow students. This behavior violates the student code of conduct which states disruption or obstruction of teaching will not be tolerated. If you continue with this behavior, here is what will happen...."

Amada's system serves as an excellent model for which all college instructors can base their own personal discipline systems. Of course, your graduated system will vary depending on your college's policies as well as your own personality.

You may want to add a step or two before a formal report is written up; others may want to stick to Amada's plan religiously. The most important part right now is to develop a graduated system of consequences that you feel is fair and that you will consistently enforce.

It's equally important that your plan is consistent with your college's disciplinary process.

### Proportionality

Another principle Amada explains in his book is the principle of proportionality (24). In other words, the severity of a consequence should increase with the severity of an infraction.

For example, with student chattering, it makes sense to start small and then to increase the consequences for repeated infractions; however, some behavior, like threatening another student, might require immediate, and quite possibly, severe consequences.



**F**or example, with student chattering, it makes sense to start small and then to increase the consequences for repeated infractions; however, some behavior, like threatening another student, might require immediate, and quite severe consequences.

I've provided a chart in the appendix for you to use in planning your discipline system. Right now would be a great time to stop and apply what you've just learned. When you are finished writing up behaviors and consequences, continue with the next step.

The "Behavior and Consequences Positive Discipline Chart" (Click to view.) located in the appendix contains interactive text fields so that you can enter data into the chart all at once or as you learn more about positive discipline.

In the left-hand enter a brief description of each negative behavior. Then in moving from left to right across the chart columns enter in the consequence for the first, second, third, etc. occurrence of this same behavior.

When you have completed this chart you will have created a graduated-consequence chart. This chart may also be printed as a convenient attachment to your syllabus or used as separate handout.



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### Your turn:

*In the text field in the left column, create a list of increasingly severe consequences that you could impose in the case of undesirable behavior.* (Input your response in the field provided below.)



**C**ategorize behavior according to similar consequences. For example any behaviors which would mean immediate dismissal from class could be in one category.

## Step 4: Simplify Your System

**N**ow that you have identified unacceptable behaviors and developed a graduated system of consequences for dealing with each one, it is important to simplify your system for yourself and for your students.

### Form categories

One way to do this is to categorize behavior according to similar consequences. For example, any behaviors which would mean immediate dismissal from class could be in one category. (Be sure to check with your college's and/or state's policy on this. Some states allow an instructor to remove a student for one class period without a review. Other states do not allow an instructor to remove a student from class; it has to be done through the college's disciplinary process, which usually includes a review and allows for a hearing if need be.)



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Another category might be those behaviors that would follow the graduated system of consequences—a spoken warning, followed by a written warning, etc.

You also may want to specify a “behavior that violates good manners” category, a behavior group that would not necessarily invoke immediate punishment.

### Examples

For example, last week after I collected homework in my developmental English course, I started explaining the next activity. Right in the middle of this, one of my students got up from his seat and walked towards me to hand in his homework and wanted to talk to me right there about it. Was this disruptive? Certainly. Was his intention to be disruptive? No, I don’t think so.

In these cases, (this happens more frequently than you might think), I take the paper, so as not to embarrass the student unnecessarily, but I do say to the student quietly something like, “Rob, this is the kind of thing that you should see me after class about, OK?”

Then I talk to the student after class and gently explain to him or her the kind of behavior that is appropriate and inappropriate while I’m teaching.

This kind of behavior, in my opinion, stems from ignorance, and so the first step in situations like this is to educate and guide. Of course, if a student continues the undesirable or prohibited behavior despite several confrontations, then it is appropriate to begin the discipline process. The bottom line is to simplify your discipline plan as much as possible and to write it in the clearest terms possible. This will make it easier for you and your students to understand.



**T**he bottom line is to simplify your discipline plan as much as possible and to write it in the clearest terms possible. This will make it easier for you and your students to understand.

Be sure to designate easily-defined categories of unacceptable behavior and the resulting consequences.

Just remember to make sure the consequences are within the guidelines established by your school and state.

## Step 5: Transfer to Your Course Syllabus

**O**f course a clear, well-thought-out discipline system is of no value unless it’s effectively communicated to your entire class of students. Most experts in the field suggest that instructors clearly state behavior expectations in the syllabus first (Amada 23-24; Gonzalez and Lopez 2; Morrisette 6) and then discuss these expectations along with the consequences of violating these expectations during the first class session. Doing these two things assures that students have no excuse not to be aware of the behaviors that are unacceptable in the classroom.





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### First day recommendations

The first day of class is also a great time to discuss common classroom courtesies (like turning off cell phones before coming in to class and not talking during a lecture). Remember, some students really haven't been taught common courtesies and need instructors to be patient and explain this aspect of their education to them kindly.

Another benefit to clearly spelling out acceptable and unacceptable behaviors and consequences in the syllabus is a legal one. It boggles the mind for us to think that any student would sue a teacher over matters like this, but it has been done. Clearly stating your discipline plan in the course syllabus prevents the likelihood of a lawsuit and protects you in the rare case of becoming involved in one.

As with all the advice given in the Teaching for Success QuickCourse, always make sure you check your rules and policies against those of your school and your state. You can not overrule or supersede a policy of either the school or state, no matter how much you'd like to.

And by sticking within these rules you will be playing it safe in legal matters. Ever hear the phrase "you can't fight city hall"? Well, to your students YOU are city hall if you lay your policies and rules of behavior out clearly in your syllabus and during the first session of class. But to you, your school and state are city hall.

While it's a rare occurrence for instructors to become involved in a legal challenges, it's far better to be prepared and to take disciplinary policy planning, communication and enforcement seriously. Performing each of the recom-



**T**he first day of classes is also a great time to discuss common classroom courtesies (like turning off cell phones before coming in to class and not talking during a lecture).

mended steps in this QuickCourse is one of the best ways to adequately prepare an effective disciplinary plan.

## Step 6: Activate Your Plan!

**N**ow that you have clearly described your disciplinary system, transferred it to your syllabus and explained it to your students on the first day of class, you should be well-prepared to deal with behavior disruptions in your classroom. However, be patient; it will take practice to implement any new system effectively.

Here are some implementation tips that I found helpful:

- ☐ Always treat students with respect especially when disciplining. It's important to treat students with the golden rule in mind: treat students the way you would want to be treated when you are a student.
- ☐ Deal with disruptive behavior right away; don't



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ignore it. The best way to extinguish disruptive behavior is to deal with it immediately. If you decide to ignore it, the behavior will continue and may even get worse.

- ☐ Follow your plan; that's what it's for. In the middle of a disruptive situation, it's easy to digress from your plan, or even to forget that you have a plan in the first place. But these are the times when it is most helpful to have a plan in place. Instead of relying on temporary feelings and inconsistent consequences, you can rely on a solid plan that you have carefully thought out well before the incident.
- ☐ Be consistent. There is probably no better way to incite feelings of ill-will among your students than to be inconsistent with your discipline standards. Make sure to stick to your plan and enforce it consistently for every student and every infraction.
- ☐ Make adjustments as necessary. Always monitor how effectively your plan is working and make adjustments as necessary. The best time to make changes is at the start of a new semester so that any changes can be clearly written in the syllabus.

### Document behavior problems.

According to Amada, "Accurate documentation is an integral and indispensable part of the disciplinary process, usually constituting the primary evidentiary basis of an administrative investigation of a disruptive incident." (26) Although it may seem tedious, keeping written records of disciplinary problems is really in your best interest. If you ever have



**H**ere is how to keep documentation. Have a folder set up on your computer titled "Discipline Documentation". If you have to speak to a student twice about a behavior problem, then start a documentation file on that student.

to file a report to a disciplinary board, you will have all of the information you need on hand. Also, depending upon how far the case goes, you may be called upon to testify in a hearing before a disciplinary committee or during civil legal action. In addition, if there is ever a lawsuit filed by a student, you will have built a solid case on your behalf.

### How to organize your documentation

Here is how I keep documentation. I have a folder set up on my computer titled "Discipline Documentation." If I have to speak to a student twice about a behavior problem, then I start a documentation file on that student. I include the date and a brief summary of what happened for each incident. It doesn't take long to record things this way, and then if I'm called upon to state my case, I don't have to go fishing in my memory or looking for slips of paper I might have misplaced, it's all on my computer.

### Keeping up with new ideas

To keep up with new ideas in discipline and other crucial areas of good teaching, ask your faculty developer or top-level administrator to continue to purchase TFS QuickCourses and subscribe to TFS Monthly for you and



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your colleagues. For more information on Teaching for Success, go to [teachingforsuccess.com](http://teachingforsuccess.com).

## Review

The steps in designing an effective discipline plan include consulting the student code of conduct, listing disruptive behaviors, setting up consequences for those behaviors, simplifying the list, writing out your plan in the course syllabus (and then discussing it with students on the first day of class), and finally, putting your plan into action.

If you have completed each step as you took this Teaching for Success QuickCourse, you should now have an effective working discipline plan. This will save you much stress, give you confidence in handling disruptions, and ultimately make you a better teacher. If you haven't completed each step yet, what are you waiting for?

Lastly, please send your QC evaluation comments via e-mail to [jack@teachingforsuccess.com](mailto:jack@teachingforsuccess.com). Thanks for teaching for success!

## Works Cited

Amada, Gerald. Coping with Misconduct in the College Classroom: A Practical Model. The Higher Education Administration Series. Asheville, NC:



**W**ith everyone pulling together in a class supported by a positive disciplinary plan, learning can become the enjoyable experience it was meant to be.

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Gonzalez, Virginia, and Estela Lopez. *The Age of Incivility: Countering disruptive behavior in the classroom*. AAHE Bulletin (April 2001). 9 Aug. 2001.  
Morrisette, Patrick J., *Reducing Incivility in the University/College Classroom*. International Electronic Journal For Leadership in Learning 5.4 (2001): 1-11. 2 Aug. 2001.

## Appendix

On the following page, you will find a Six-step Summary Chart, a working copy of the "Behavior and Consequences Positive Discipline Chart." This chart contains active text fields so that you may identify a behavior and then enter a graduated sequence of consequences for that behavior.





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Step	Six-step Disciplinary Plan Summary	
1.	<b>L</b> earn the code of conduct.	Your institution's code of conduct combined with any local, state or federal guidelines, laws and requirements constitute the centerpiece of your disciplinary plan.
2.	<b>I</b> dentify behaviors	Not only list disruptive behaviors that will trigger disciplinary action, but also list acts of common courtesy that you expect and positive behaviors that enhance learning.
3.	<b>C</b> hoose consequences	Create a list of consequences that each disruptive behavior will trigger. Then organize your list of consequences into a graduated sequence of consequences that will occur if the behavior is repeated.
4.	<b>S</b> implify	Simplify your system by categorizing behaviors according to similar consequences.
5.	<b>T</b> ransfer and communicate	No matter how good your disciplinary plan is, it will not be effective until you are able to communicate it clearly to your students. The syllabus represents one of the best ways to communicate your disciplinary policies. Initiate explanation and clarifications with students.
6.	<b>A</b> ctivate	Activate your plan carefully monitoring student behavior and applying consequences as required. Document behaviors and consequences as a back up in case of administrative actions.



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# Test Your Knowledge

1. Why is it important to create a disciplinary plan?
  - A. To establish an authoritative atmosphere and gain the students' respect.
  - B. To prepare for unexpected and disruptive student behaviors.
  - C. To submit to the Dean's office on request.
  - D. To send home to the students' parents.
2. What is the most important characteristic of a good disciplinary plan?
  - A. It's systematic.
  - B. It's at least 10 pages long.
  - C. It has a "three strikes and your out" clause.
  - D. It's available on your institution's website.
3. What is the first step to take when creating the recommended disciplinary plan?
  - A. Consult with students.
  - B. Read your institution's student code of conduct.
  - C. Ask you colleagues for advice.
  - D. Attend departmental planning meetings.
4. Where could you look to find information describing your disciplinary rights and the obligations of students.
  - A. Your institution's *Teacher's Handbook*.
  - B. Your institution's *Course Catalog*.
  - C. Your institution's *Student Handbook*.
  - D. All of the above publications.
5. In what document should you state your student-behavior expectations and the consequences of repeated violations of your policies?
  - A. Your syllabus.
  - B. The Student Handbook.
  - C. It should be filed in your Department's students records.
  - D. It should be sent to your Academic Dean for approval before communicating your expectations to your students.
6. What does Gonzales, Lopez and Amada consider to be a key step in the formation of an effective discipline plan?
  - A. Having your students vote on the appropriateness of each of your behavior policies.
  - B. Deciding on appropriate consequences.
  - C. Conferencing with your department chair or more experienced faculty member.
  - D. Getting the approval of your faculty senate.
7. Which unacceptable behaviors should you list when you are creating your plan?
  - A. Only those involving safety.
  - B. Only behaviors listed in the student handbook.
  - C. All of those approved by the department chair.
  - D. List even those behaviors that seem obvious.





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8. The author was surprised to learn that she needed to include which type of behaviors in her discipline plan?

- A. Acts of common courtesy.
- B. Proper conduct during a terrorist attack.
- C. Laboratory safety procedures.
- D. Code of ethics for testing situations.

9. How many steps are there in the process that leads to implementing a positive discipline plan in your class:

- A. 5.
- B. 6.
- C. 7.
- D. 8.

10. List the disciplinary-plan creation steps in chronological order in the interactive text field below.

11. What is the recommendation for dealing with repeated violations of a prohibited behavior?

- A. Set up a meeting with the student outside of class to discuss the situation.
- B. Follow the graduated sequence of disciplinary consequences described in your syllabus.
- C. Stop the class and discuss the violation with the student.
- D. Stop the class and use humor to embarrass the student in hopes the behavior will cease.

**If you missed more than two questions, it would be best to review the plan steps before you develop and activate your disciplinary plan.**

Answers:

- 1. B.
- 2. A.
- 3. B.
- 4. D.
- 5. A.
- 6. B.
- 7. D.
- 8. A.
- 9. B.
- 10. See page 4.
- 11. B.

Number of questions missed:\_\_\_\_\_.