Do’s and Don’ts When Addressing Challenging Student Behavior

Do’s:

- Let the student know when their behavior is inappropriate or disruptive. This will give the student a chance to modify their behavior.
- Meet with the student in private. If you are concerned about meeting with the student alone for any reason, request another faculty member or administrator sit in on the meeting.
- After discussing a student’s conduct with them, follow-up by sending the student an email summarizing the discussion. This is a way of documenting the steps you took to address the student’s behavior.
- If a student is in emotional distress, let them know about the Personal Counseling Center. If you’re able to, offer to walk the student to the Personal Counseling Center.
- Call Public Safety immediately if a student’s behavior becomes aggressive or threatening.

Don’ts:

- Do not have what should be a private conversation in front of other students—discussing a student’s behavior with them should be a private matter.
- Do not grade a student based on their behavior. A student’s academic grade should be based on the grading rubric outlined in the course syllabus.
- Do not ban a student from coming back to class or an office permanently—this is a violation of the student’s due process rights. Before any permanent action can be taken, a written complaint (Student Behavior Form) must be submitted to the Office of Judicial Affairs so that the disciplinary process can be initiated.
- Do not copy other faculty or staff members (with the exception of your chairperson or supervisor) when reporting a student’s behavior via email. Any report or complaint must be kept confidential.