

## Role Play Scenarios

Sometimes it is helpful to think about how you would react to a situation before you actually encounter it. You can also discuss the situations with colleagues to broaden your point of view and options. Following are a variety of scenarios we might encounter in a community college classroom.

When considering them, you might want to write down what you have done in the past. Was it an effective response? What would you do differently, now that you know more about classroom management?

**Situation:** One table of students keep talking to one another while you are trying to present material. What do you do? (DOE Virginia)

**Situation:** You have your students sitting in pods of four. At one table one of the more fidgety students is pestering one of the other students at the table (e.g., taking things off her desk, staring at her paper, etc.). You have warned the students to stop but the pestering has not lessened. What do you do? (DOE Virginia)

**Situation:** You are asking your class deeper-level questions to help them process a lesson you are teaching. One of your students is acting particularly silly, raising a hand and offering flippant and irresponsibly incorrect answers. What do you do? (DOE Virginia)

**Situation:** You are giving a test. You see one of your students copying answers from a neighbor. It is obvious that they are trying to cheat. You have a rule against cheating in your class. What do you do? (DOE Virginia)

**Situation:** As you are lecturing, three girls in the class begin to pass a make-up set among one another, and use it when you are not looking. What do you do? (DOE Virginia)

**Situation:** As you are teaching, a handful of students find themselves being pulled into a negative interaction. It starts small with a minor put-down, but soon grows as each student escalates the conflict with greater and more significant put downs. (DOE Virginia)

**Situation:** Derek is early to class every day, but since he comes there from lunch, he needs to go to the bathroom during the class time. He asks to go to the bathroom about 20 minutes into class. This is a habitual practice of Derek's. He misses a lot of instruction time because he is gone for 10 to 15 minutes at a time. (Prentiss)

**Situation:** Randy has recently been hired in a part-time job and has to work until midnight four nights a week. He is falling asleep in most of his classes. His other teachers have all noticed and have discussed it— they feel that if Randy cares enough to learn, he will stay awake and pay attention in class. Randy ... is getting ready to graduate, but if he fails his classes, he won't be able to graduate ... (Prentiss)

**Situation:** Emilio often looks bored in class and today, like many days, he finished his work long before the other students. He has spent most of the rest of his class time bothering the girls in the row ahead of him. He has consistently earned A's on all the tests and assigned projects, and you suspect that the work is simply not challenging enough for him. (Prentiss)

**Situation:** Since November, Darla's grades have suddenly dropped from a "B+" to a "D" average. In class, she seems distracted and not herself. Ms. Gonzalez, her mathematics teacher, finds out that Darla's parents are in the process of getting a divorce. (Prentiss)

**Situation:** Bill, complains in a very belligerent manner in class about the type of questions on an exam. He believes that the questions were not what had been covered in the class and in homework assignments. He continues to be a disruption to you as you review the test. (Prentiss)

**Situation:** A student approaches you and tells you that he has ADHD (Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder). He can't take the test within the time allotted, can't turn in assignments on time, or can't take notes, etc. He is requesting special consideration. Other students in the class overhear your conversation and start to whisper among themselves. (usf.edu)

**Situation:** You've assigned on-line discussion groups. You are reviewing student postings and discover inappropriate language and sexual references to persons being discussed. (usf.edu)

**Situation:** John recently began teaching at USF. In the fourth week of the term, he administered the first exam. Mary, a traditional-age student, was a “no-show” who had also missed the previous week. After the exam, John telephoned her at the number she had provided on her student profile. A man answered the phone. John identified himself as Mary’s professor and asked for her. The man identified himself as Mary’s father, told John that Mary was not home, then asked the nature of the call. John replied that Mary had missed the test and went on to speculate about its impact on her grade. (usf.edu)

**Situation:** A student comes to class who is obviously on drugs or drunk. (usf.edu)

**Situation:** For a second time, a student arrives to your classroom late (the student is in a wheelchair). Your syllabus specifies a reduction in points for repeated tardiness. (usf.edu)

**Situation:** A student receives an “F” on a test. He protests his grade and is adamant about your changing his grade or allowing him to re-take the exam. You stand firm on your position and tell him that there are no make-ups or extra credit. His tone becomes increasingly aggressive. He calls you, he emails you, and he waits for you after class. (usf.edu)

**Situation:** Teri will frequently become upset over her grades and will ask for extra credit. While normally you would be supportive of someone with her motivation, you are concerned because she frequently gets A's and is often worried because of only a few points. (usf.edu)

**Situation:** A student misses a mid-term exam worth 40% of her grade. She tells you she was in the hospital. You have a “NO MAKE UP EXAM” policy and the student appears to be in good health. (usf.edu)

**Situation:** Mid-term is approaching. A student comes to you (who has been working very hard) but is in danger of failing the class. The student tells you that he has to pass this class to keep his financial aid. (usf.edu)

**Situation:** Many of your students come from different cultures with different ethnic and linguistic backgrounds. You have been lecturing and students are complaining that they cannot understand you or follow your logic. (usf.edu)

**Situation:** George ... is a know-it-all and calls attention to your mistakes whenever you wander into his field of expertise, so that you now fear discussing anything related to his field. (usf.edu)

**Situation:** Christopher, an older student in your class, is continuing his training by taking classes in his field. Because of his experience with the topic, the rest of the class defers to his opinion and will often wait until he has the first word. This is compounded by the fact that he frequently will make jokes or interrupt other students, especially if he disagrees with their opinion. (usf.edu)

**Situation:** After recently modifying your lesson plans to include in-class small team assignments you notice that Genevieve with her head on her desk while her partners are working through the problem. After asking her if something is wrong, she's replies that group work is a "waste of time" and thinks that "teachers should actually teach during class." (usf.edu)

**Situation:** Incensed by his failing essay grade, Michael demands a private meeting at your office, but he shuts the door as he enters, raises his voice, and gesticulates wildly. You notice his brawny arms, and you start to fear for your physical safety. (usf.edu)

**Situation:** Student Sam struggled the entire term in Janet's class. Janet provided him extra support and tutoring after class, and by the final class period it appeared he would get a satisfactory grade. Sam was genuinely appreciative, saying, "No instructor has ever gone out of their way like you!" As Sam came into the room for the final exam, he handed Janet a small bag with a wrapped gift. Janet was quite surprised when, after all of the students had left, she opened the package to find a pair of gold earrings. (usf.edu)

**Situation:** Marina finds spelling and grammar errors in your sentences on the board with embarrassing consistency, and she comes around after class to give you her critical opinion of the course. When she's in class, you feel like you're being constantly monitored. (usf.edu)

**Situation:** Mr. Gotto Coverit has been trying to get through several of the objectives which are part of the school district's curriculum. He has repeatedly told students that the material will be on the test and has wondered if they really understand the seriousness of what he has been trying to tell them for three days. When he gave the test his thoughts were confirmed. When he talked to them as a group, they claimed they knew it and they have been paying attention in class. They claimed

that the test was unfair because it was confusing and they did not understand for sure what he wanted. (Bob)

**Situation:** Mr. Gnu empathizes with students about how difficult it is to be quiet for long periods of time. He remembers his desire to share information with others about the lesson, after-school activities, and gossip. He believes that if students are not given an opportunity to do so they will be consumed with the ideas and unable to pay attention. Therefore, he allows students to talk whenever there is a break in the action (assignments and materials being passed or collected and transition times). This worked fine at the beginning, however lately it is harder to bring the students back together, to have them focus on their work, and to have meaningful on task discussions without students getting off task. (Bob)

**Situation:** Ms. Wanto Helplearn begins each class by asking students what they know about a topic, reviewing past learnings, explaining what students are to do, making an assignment, asking students what questions they have, and letting the students work. The same students volunteer ideas while others are not very attentive and do not volunteer answers. When she has completed her instruction and students are working on an assignment she roams the room and helps students with individual problems. As she helps she is constantly checking to see if students are on task and if not dealing with them before helping others. She also is able to check on students who may have trouble, based on her understanding of the student's needs and assessment data. Lately there seems to be more students who seek help, some who finish very quickly, and a general decrease in the quality of about half of the students' work. The early finishers talk, pass notes, walk around the class and visit. Occasionally a student will engage in a silly behavior behind Ms. Wanto Helplearn's back and make the rest of the class giggle. (Bob)

**Situation:** Mr. Must Doit believes students must be active if they are to learn, generalize, and be able to solve real life problems. He also believes students learn by communicating their ideas and that what they need to learn is not always in a textbook. At the beginning of the year things seemed to go pretty good. Lately the productivity of the students seems to have decreased. Students take longer to decide what they are going to do, who is going to do what, and argue about it. When they see that the allotted time is about to expire, they make hasty decisions and complete the task quickly, which reduces the quality of work. He was going to talk about this to the students yesterday when a similar situation arose. However, he did not. The class's behavior was incredible. The students' achievement was quality, the atmosphere was relaxed, the noise level was appropriate, and students were cooperative, congenial, and very satisfied with their products. The day ended very well. Mr. Must Doit is wondering what he should do. He hopes things will continue as yesterday, but he isn't sure it will since it has not in the past. (Bob)

**Situation:** Ms. Goal Setter believes students need to be empowered by making choices and setting goals. She has had very good experiences with most of the students. However, there are a few that are really hard to reach. She has days where they set goals and achieve them and days when they do nothing, just a little bit, or just enough to get by. Her usual procedure is to have students decide on a task, how to do it, and supporting them while they work (plan, do, review or state of the classroom). When they are done she usually gives them feedback, feed forward, and praise for their accomplishments. (Bob)

**Situation:** Kyle covertly bangs on the bottom of his desk, making distracting noises while you are teaching. When you ask him to stop, he looks innocent and claims he is not doing anything. And yet when you go back to teaching, he continues the noise again. What do you do? (TJ)

**Situation:** Devon is the ringleader of a group of students he has recruited to create distractions in your classroom. How do you stop the group and their actions before it gets any worse? (TJ)