



Minnesota
STATE COLLEGES
& UNIVERSITIES

WEEKLY UPDATE

A WEEKLY COMMUNICATION FROM THE CENTER FOR TEACHING AND LEARNING

January 15, 2007

SoCTL

Conduct Becoming a College Student

A new semester means a new start with new students. But as this year begins, you may be concerned with the prospect of again encountering certain *rude* students, or of finding ways to prevent and deal with incivility. Students can be uncivil in small ways and in bold ones; they can affront their instructors and their fellow students. They can disrupt a class session or challenge the success of an entire term. It's not hard to find anecdotal evidence that the incidence of incivility is on the rise—but then, it never has been hard to find.

Faculty have been concerned about, and insulted and appalled by, the behavior of college students for hundreds of years. One of the frequently cited reports in the history of student incivility is the [Yale Bread and Butter Rebellion of 1828](#), in which students refused to attend classes until their complaints about the dining commons were addressed. In a [1998 Chronicle of Higher Education article](#), Kathy Franklin from the University of Arkansas claimed that the rise of teaching guilds in the 13th century at the University of Bologna was (at least in part) a protective response by professors whose students “beat them up if they didn't like their grades.”

But taking the long-view is not particularly consoling for most faculty, because incivility, no matter how historically continuous, is a pressing and immediate issue for someone with students “in your face,” and because the particular forms of incivility are ever-changing and seemingly ever-worsening.

Research on student misbehavior is scant. Robert Boice reviewed the empirical literature on incivility in 1996 and not much more has appeared in the decade since. Indiana University, however, conducted [a survey](#) in 2000 obtaining answers from more than 1,000 faculty about what behaviors constituted incivility and how often they were encountered. The College of Saint Benedict-Saint John's University held a recent [forum](#) to review that survey and to discuss how university policies and procedures could prevent or correct incivility, and what faculty might do in their classes. The forum's notes, like many other online and published resources suggest that establishing civility as a standard requires a variety of approaches. Here's a summary:

Policies, procedures, and services are needed at the college or university level. Student conduct codes, small class sizes wherever feasible, clear procedures for conciliation and mediation, student services for students with emotional or mental instabilities—all help to create a civil campus culture.

Course policies and procedures should include: stating clear expectations about conduct, and the consequences for their not being met, in the syllabus; allowing students to customize a 'class code of conduct'; setting an early tone of mutual respect and responsibility; and responding openly, quickly, and at an appropriate level to misbehavior.

- Lynda Milne

In addition to the links found in the text above, here are some useful practices for preventing and responding to incivility.

Boice, B. (1996). Classroom incivilities. *Research in Higher Education*, 37, 453-486.

[Reducing Incivility in the University/College Classroom](#)
[University of Iowa tutorial](#) citing Boice's research 1996 and many other great resources
[Resources for Classroom Civility](#)

REALIZING STUDENT POTENTIAL/ITEACH 2007 CONFERENCE
FULL PROGRAM

Conference Information: www.ctl.mnscu.edu

Teaching Tip of the Week

"What Goes on the Board is Important"

Many instructors will list their daily objectives, topics and notes for the class period on the board to visually show students what is important information. But have you considered jotting down student input on the board, as well? Or better yet, when possible, having the student come up and put their point on the board! "One study on note-taking during lectures reports students recorded 88% of the information on the board, but 52% of the critical ideas were left unwritten." Including student input on the board shows the students that their ideas are being heard, while helping to build a classroom culture that values student thinking.

- Zala Fashant

Source: Magnan, Robert, (1990). 147
Practical Tips for Teaching Professors p.
32. Atwood.

CTL Report

CTL is pleased to report the addition of two staff members. Thomas Wortman is our new Assistant Director for Grants and Yvonne Shafer as Faculty Coordinator for Technical Colleges. Both bring unique experiences and talents to their positions.

Tom joins CTL from Penn State, where he was the chief research and grants administrator at Penn State Behrend in Erie. He also was an affiliate faculty member, teaching courses in education. His Ph.D. from Penn State is in Higher Education. We are excited about the research and project management experience that Tom brings to CTL. Yvonne Shafer joins CTL as the new Faculty Coordinator focusing on colleges that offer career and technical programs. Her teaching background includes Pine Technical College, Dunwoody College of Technology, and Metropolitan State University. Yvonne taught courses in computer networking, software systems, and in management information systems. In addition to teaching and working in the IT/business field, Yvonne has experience with a couple of learning management systems, including D2L, and has developed online courses.

Committed to Improving Student Learning

Dates to Remember

MAR 16-17: ENGLISH COMPOSITION: CROSSING LINES, FORGING CONNECTIONS & EXTENDING OPPORTUNITIES

Century College.

Discipline Workshop Information

MAR 25-26: CHINA SYMPOSIUM 2007

St. Cloud State University.

Discipline Workshop Information

Submit Your Paper Proposal

APR 2: PROMOTING HEALTHY BEHAVIORS

Inver Hills Community College.

Discipline Workshop Information

APR 21: WHAT NEW SIGN LANGUAGES CAN TEACH US ABOUT ASL

Location: North Star Academy, St. Paul.

Discipline Workshop Information

APR 27-28: MATHEMATICS: SHARPEN THE FOCUS

Duluth Entertainment Convention Center.

Discipline Workshop Information

MAY 1: LIBRARY REFERENCE AND INFORMATION LITERACY SERVICES IN THE DIGITAL AGE

North Hennepin Community College.

Discipline Workshop Information

CTL Announcement

CTL Instructional Development Grants: 2007-2008

Faculty Collaborations to Expand College Readiness

The Center for Teaching and Learning is seeking proposals for the enhancement of teaching and learning at Minnesota State Colleges and Universities campuses.

Proposals are due by February 23, 2007. Notification of awards is planned for April 2007. Projects may begin upon award and are to be completed during the 2007-08 academic year. Center for Teaching and Learning grant programs are supported by funds from the Office of the Chancellor.

Eligibility

All full- and part-time faculty members, administrators, and staff at Minnesota State Colleges and Universities are eligible. Individual faculty members pursuing projects on their own should work with at least one other faculty or staff member in some capacity, for example as an outside evaluator for the project, a consultant on instructional design, or an administrative partner to overcome barriers to student access or learning.

Funding

Amount of award: up to \$10,000

Grant activities should foster change within smaller programs or courses or pilot larger projects. Budgets should not exceed \$10,000. If the grant is intended or expected to be supplemented by other grantors, these potential supplements should be identified in the application. At least \$100,000 is available for this grants program.

Only 45
Days Until
RSP/ITeach
2007

Featured Event

The Chinese New Year starts soon, so let's celebrate! Join your system colleagues on March 25-27 at the China Symposium 2007 to learn more about the culture of the world's largest population and fourth-largest economy. The demand for Chinese language instruction is rising; are we ready? The goal of this symposium is to provide a catalyst for motivating faculty to pursue further knowledge and understanding of China and to seek strategies for incorporating this knowledge into college courses.

Don't wait! [Register](#) today to attend the China Symposium 2007 at St. Cloud State University

Why not celebrate the Chinese New Year as a presenter? If you have a background in Chinese political, economic, educational or social/cultural systems, this is a great time to share your global wealth with others by being a presenter. [Submit your paper proposal by January 15.](#)

-Yvonne Shafer

CTL Resources for Faculty

An eHandbook for New Faculty

Everything you always wanted to know about getting started.

Now that a new semester is upon us, there are many new faculty members at institutions throughout the state. It can be challenging to start a new teaching job, so CTL developed an e-handbook to give new faculty members important information, tips, and tools. The eHandbook offers new instructors an introduction to the basics for starting in the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system. (**Note:** Even "seasoned" faculty members can get good, useful, information from this site!)

This publication collects information and resources from colleges and universities throughout the country (and even overseas) and makes it available to the reader. Topics in the handbook range from general information about the Minnesota state system to recognizing students' learning styles to motivating students. There is even a section about using humor in the classroom. You can view the eHandbook for New Faculty at <http://ctlnewfac.project.mnscu.edu>.

-Thomas Wortman