Classroom Management Scenarios

How do you handle a student who asks too many good questions to the point where you aren't able to get through your lecture material?

• Refer them to office hours or encourage them to come up and discuss some questions with you after class
• Be respectful and kind

How do you handle students who wish to take a quiz or exam early if it's for a personal reason (e.g. Not ill, non-university related activity)?

• Discuss with your instructor (as a TA), with course coordinator, or Nat/Kelly
• Response will likely depend on the situation
• Offer an exam drop policy, e.g. the student can replace one midterm score with final exam score
• Put in the syllabus that exam scheduling issues need to be addressed as soon as possible, e.g. within the first two weeks
• You can use the university testing center to proctor exams:
  • [http://testingcenter.utah.edu/](http://testingcenter.utah.edu/)

What do you do if it appears a student is cheating (looking at a neighbor's exam or making excessive eye contact with you during exam)?

• Make eye contact with the student (make them aware you are watching)
• Don’t interrupt the class; this is distracting for other students
• If possible, in the moment you can take picture evidence, write down names
• Compare tests side by side afterward. Make copies of exams in question
• Discuss with course coordinator, send email to student to address situation if necessary
How can you manage student questions after class not during an office hour? What do you do if students come to your office hours and continue asking questions after the office hour has ended?

- Make it clear that you are happy to answer questions, and that your office hours are set aside as a time to do so
- Suggest students make use of other resources, like the LCB tutoring center
- Schedule office hours after class to combine these times
- If students staying too long is an issue, consider scheduling office hours before other class/seminar

A student asks you a long question, but you do not understand what he is asking. You ask him to repeat his question, but he refuses. What do you do?

- Ask the student (in a kind and respectful way) to come ask after class
- Encourage student to come to office hours
- Try to repeat student’s question
- Answer a related question to help get discussion started
- Afterward, ask “does that answer your question?”

What should you do if you make a mistake on the board while you are lecturing?

- It is ok to admit you made a mistake; this can make you more relatable/humanized
- Don’t dwell on your mistake
- Students may want to catch the mistake; if so, thank them and correct it
- Go back and work through it properly; explain what you did wrong. This is a good learning opportunity for the students

You are lecturing and you run out of time to finish the problem that you have already started. What do you do?

- Start with that problem next class, at the beginning
- Have students try to finish the problem as a homework
- Post a solution online
The semester has ended, and you have uploaded all grades to canvas, but have not yet submitted them to the university. A student sends you a long email trying to convince you that the grade that she has earned does not adequately describe her understanding of the material. (Perhaps she did very badly on the final exam, but did well on other assignments.) She tries to convince you to give her a higher grade. What do you do?

- Be empathic, but do not change the grade
- Refer the student to the syllabus; appeal to fairness (same standards for every student)
- Talk to course coordinator or Nat/Kelly

You are giving a quiz during the last ten minutes of class and the time is up. A student refuses to turn in the quiz, and keeps saying "one more second." What do you do?

- Set expectations clearly (no quizzes accepted late)
- Treat everyone in the class fairly; same rules for all students
- Can consider quizzes at the beginning of class

A student comes up to you during the first week of class with paperwork from CDA stating that she has ADHD and needs special accommodation on exams. She is easily distracted, so she needs a quiet room to take her exams. The paperwork gives you two options - either you can provide this accommodation for her and find a quiet place for her to take her exam, or CDA can provide the appropriate accommodation. What should you do? What are the advantages and disadvantages of each option?

- If you provide the accommodations, you may have more control over how the exams are administered. However, this is extra time and effort for you, and you may not have as many resources as the CDA does.
- The CDA is equipped to handle many types of accommodations and they do so very effectively and efficiently.
- You can ask the student which option she would be more comfortable with
You give an exam, and grade the exam with your grader. After the exam has been graded and grades have been posted to canvas, you realize that there was a mistake on your solution and the exam has been graded incorrectly. What do you do?

• Give points back to all students for that problem
• Regrade (if possible, can be time consuming)
• Drop that question from the exam score

Mid-way through the semester, you realize that the final exam information in your syllabus is incorrect. You have posted an incorrect time and location for the final exam. What do you do?

• Correct the mistake as soon as possible
• Update your syllabus
• Email the class and post a Canvas announcement to clarify
• Make an announcement multiple times in class (perhaps every day)

During your office hour, a student becomes very emotional/upset and begins to cry. What do you do?

• Offer to wait if the students needs to take a break
• Show empathy, e.g. “I completely understand”
• Offer tissues, cookies, etc.
• Ask if there are accommodations for the student that you should be aware of
• If necessary, refer to counseling center: http://counselingcenter.utah.edu/

A student is upset with you, and when you try to leave the classroom he follows you. It is an evening class and it is dark outside and you are alone. What do you do?

• If you feel threatened or need an escort for any reason, you can call the Campus Police at 585-COPS.
• If there are other students or instructors around, you can leverage their support so you do not have to be alone with the student.
• May be good to have phone numbers/contact info of a friend or fellow grad student
• If there is a problem with student behavior being threatening, contact Dean of Students: http://deanofstudents.utah.edu
You have warned a student that if he continues disrupting your class by talking to his friends, you will kick him out of class. He continues to disrupt, so you ask him to leave. He refuses to leave. What do you do?

• If student refuses to leave the class, state that it is too distracting and that you will leave. The students will still need to be responsible for the material.
• If necessary, begin to pack up and follow through on your threat to leave.
• Can talk to course coordinator afterward; contact Dean of Students: http://deanofstudents.utah.edu/

You have an international student in your class. The student comes up to you two weeks before the final exam and tells you that she cannot take the final exam because she has already purchased a plane ticket back to her country, and the flight is before the exam. The date of the final exam was given to the student in your syllabus on the first day of class. What do you do?

• Discuss the situation with your course coordinator
• If appropriate, work with the student to find a time to take an alternate exam

A student claims to have turned in a homework assignment that is recorded as a zero on canvas. You check all of your files and cannot find the assignment. You ask the grader, and the grader also has no record of the assignment ever being turned in. The one assignment only counts for a very small portion of the student's final grade, but she is very upset by the zero and threatens to report you to the dean of the college if you do not correct the mistake. What do you do?

• If it’s a one time issue/low stakes, give student benefit of the doubt
• Keep track of students
• Acknowledge that accidents happen
• Consider policy where two lowest homework are dropped
• Talk to your instructor (as a TA) or course coordinator
You are giving your first exam. About five minutes before the scheduled class time is over, a student in the front row stands up to turn in her exam and throws up all over the ground in front of the class. The episode was caused by her test taking anxiety, and she is extremely embarrassed. You have a class of 80 students, and other students are lining up to turn in their exams. (You need to check their IDs for them to turn in their exams.) What do you do?

- Having proctors is very helpful, especially in a large class. You could have them continue to monitor the exam while you take care of situations. You can request proctors for your exams from Aryn DeJulis in the tutoring center.
- Remove the student from the situation quickly and quietly
- Find custodial staff if possible
- Have people you can text or call for help (other students, course coordinator)

Half way through the semester, a group of students approach you after class and hand you a petition signed by the majority of your class requesting that you assign them less homework. What do you do?

- Listen carefully and respectfully to students’ complaints
- Consider students’ points: is your homework load reasonable? Do they have a compelling argument?
- Discuss with your course coordinator