

## **Department of Social Work**

### **Distraction and Technology Use Policy**

The purpose of class is learning and educational interaction with the instructor and other students. In order to fulfill that purpose and to help students develop professional behavior that extends far beyond the classroom, the Department of Social Work has developed this policy on Distraction and Use of Personal Technology in the classroom. Each faculty member may implement this policy and consequences for behaviors that violate this policy as they see fit, but should make students aware of the issues at the beginning of each course.

We ask that students arrive and be prepared to begin class at the time indicated in the course registration materials and not leave prior to official course ending time, unless instructor makes other arrangements. To maximize classroom learning and minimize classroom disruption, please be respectful of the instructor and other students when you do have to enter late or leave early. If you must arrive late or leave early, discuss this matter with the instructor as soon as possible and choose a seat in the room that is least disruptive to classroom activity in progress. Chronic tardiness or leaving early may impact your course grade.

As we all know, we live in an increasingly technological society and many of us use a variety of personal electronic devices. While helpful, the use of these devices in classroom and work settings is often distracting and can detract from both learning and work. While you may bring such devices (e.g. computers, PDAs, I-Pods, cell phones, etc.) into the classroom, their usage during class time should be restricted to educational purposes related to the class itself. In many cases, laptops or other devices may be used for note-taking with instructor permission. Students who use their devices for other purposes (e.g. to text message, search the Internet, play games, listen to music, or read email) may be asked to close their computers or leave the room. Cell phones should be turned off or set to vibrate during class time; messages or calls should be responded to during class only in the case of an emergency. If students anticipate this, they are asked to make the instructor aware and should leave the classroom to take care of personal business.

Faculty members may use a range of responses in dealing with situations where students violate this policy. These responses may include, but are not limited to reducing participation points, lowering grades, asking students to turn off equipment or leave the class, and even asking security to remove the student in some rare situations. Upholding basic interpersonal respect and professional behavior should make unnecessary for faculty to take any action, while following this policy will also help us all to maintain an optimal learning environment.

## **Distraction and Technology Use Policy**

*(Bullet point version for inclusion in syllabi; Faculty may refer students to Website or handbook.)*

In order to fulfill the educational purposes of the classroom and to help students develop professional behavior, the Department of Social Work has adopted this policy on distraction and use of personal technology in the classroom effective January 24, 2007. *(The full policy will be available in the student handbook and/or on department website.)*

### **Behavior/Conduct**

Students should:

- Be prepared to begin and end class at the times indicated in registration materials, or as determined by the instructor.
- Be respectful of the instructor and other students, if you arrive late or leave early.
- Arrive late or leave early only in emergencies and discuss this with the instructor as soon as possible.
- Choose a seat in the room that is least disruptive to classroom activity in progress if you must arrive late or leave early.
- Use electronic devices during class time only for educational purposes related to the class itself.
- Use laptops for note taking during class time only with instructor permission.
- Not use their devices for other personal business not related to class (e.g., make calls, text message, search the Internet, read email, listen to music, play games, etc.)
- Turn off cell phones or set them on vibrate during class time.
- Not initiate personal calls or messages during class time and should not respond to non-emergency calls or messages.
- Inform the instructor if they anticipate the need to respond to an emergency call during class and leave the classroom to take care of personal business.

### **Consequences**

Faculty members may use a range of responses in dealing with situations where students violate this policy. These responses may include, but are not limited to:

- reducing participation points,
- lowering grades,
- asking students to turn off equipment or move to another location,
- restricting or withdrawing permission to use technology in the classroom,
- asking students to leave the class, and
- asking security to remove the student, in some rare situations.

Upholding basic interpersonal respect and professional behavior should make unnecessary for faculty to take any action, while following this policy will also help us all to maintain an optimal learning environment while recognizing appropriate uses for technology in the classroom.