

# Classroom Conduct & Community Standards

A Workshop for De-Escalating Conflict  
and Helping Students in Crisis

# Topics

- Preparing for your role
- Definitions
- Reporting to BIT
- Classroom disruptions
- Students in Crisis
- De-escalation

# Community Standards: Our Role

- College officials have an obligation to...
  - Support the community to ensure success for all community members
  - Teach students about civil discourse
  - Enforce civil behavior on campus

# Potential Barriers to Success

- John Jay students report **stress, sleep, work, and depression** have the most academic impact on them.
- John Jay students report **higher levels of interpersonal violence** than their peers, but lower levels of substance abuse than their peers
- John Jay students **do not use contraception as frequently** as their national peers, and also report **higher rates of unintended pregnancy**
- John Jay students also report **poorer nutrition and less exercise** than their peers nationwide, which reflect the disparities in health outcomes among communities of color
- John Jay students report significant levels of **depression, anger, and suicidal ideation**, which are consistent with elevated reports of these symptoms at college campuses nation-wide.

# What's on your syllabus?

- Guidelines for class discussion and participation?
- Appropriate classroom behavior
- Language addressing non-discrimination
- Info for how students can find college policies on the above

# Definitions

- BIT:
  - Behavioral Intervention Team
- Conduct Officers:
  - College officials who interpret & enforce the CUNY Code of Conduct
- Title IX Office
  - aka Office of Compliance & Diversity
  - College officials who investigate complaints of discrimination & sexual misconduct

# Definitions

- Disruption:
  - Behavior that affects your students' ability to learn OR
  - affects your ability to teach
- Crisis:
  - Any situation that affects a student's wellbeing OR
  - Any situation in which a student may be a danger to themselves or others

# Behavioral Intervention Team Membership

- Assistant Vice President / Dean of Students
- Senior Director of Student Affairs
- Director of Counseling
- Director of Health Services
- Director of Accessibility Services
- Director of Women's Center for Gender Justice
- Legal Counsel
- Director of Public Safety
- Student Relations Specialist
- SEEK (Search for Education, Elevation and Knowledge) Counselor

[jjay.cuny.edu/behavioral-intervention-team](http://jjay.cuny.edu/behavioral-intervention-team)



# Behavioral Intervention Team (BIT)

BIT provides threat assessments and early intervention of reported students before a crisis arises on the campus.

What should a faculty member report?

- Elevated & severe behavioral concerns
- Suicidal thoughts or impulses
- Violent and aggressive impulses
- Depression
- Disruptive behavior
- Emotional/behavioral dysregulation
- Clear indication of physical and sexual abuse



Email [BIT@jjay.cuny.edu](mailto:BIT@jjay.cuny.edu) or reach out to any member of the team.

# BIT Process

## Report

- Faculty and/or staff report a student of concern
- Reports can be made through email or phone calls to any team member



## Evaluation

- Student is discussed in BIT meeting
- Information gathering through contact with professors, background check, etc.
- Use of threat assessment tools to determine risk



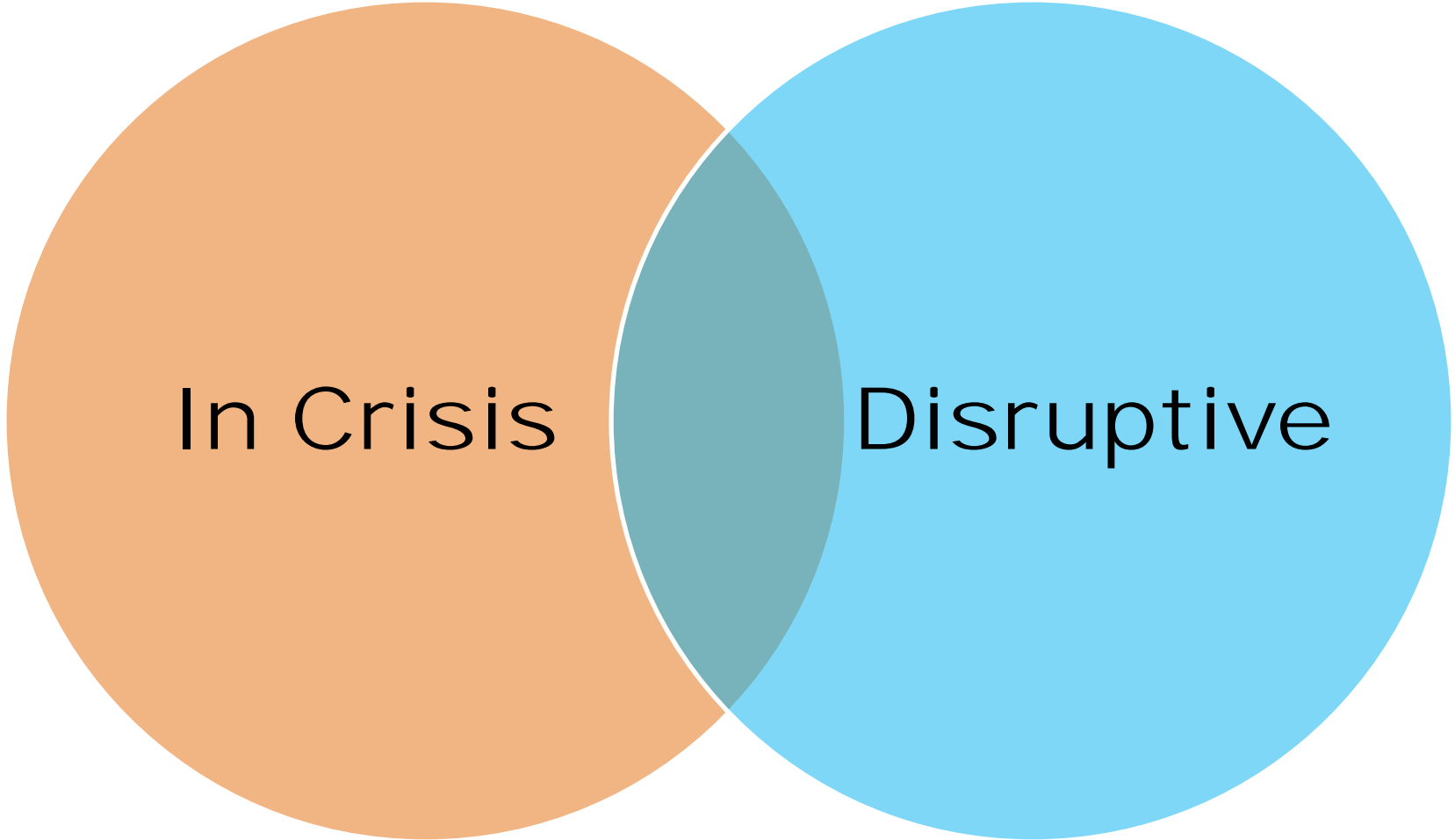
## Recommendations

- Student may be invited to meet with Dean of Students to discuss concerns
- Behavioral contracts and/or referral to mental health treatment
- Involuntary Medical Withdrawal Process
- Disciplinary Process

[jjay.cuny.edu/behavioral-intervention-team](http://jjay.cuny.edu/behavioral-intervention-team)

# Scenario 1

- A student has sent several emails disputing his grade on a homework assignment
- His language is exaggerated and the emails switch between effusively praising your teaching skills and suggesting you may have a disability or medical problem that prevents you from grading him correctly
- He ends every email with a deadline by which he expects a response from you



In Crisis

Disruptive

# Disruptor 1: Lord Byron

- Lord Byron (Romantic poet, b. 1788, d. 1824)
  - In 1805, George Gordon Byron attended Trinity College at Cambridge University
  - Students were not permitted to keep pet dogs on campus
  - The poet brought a bear to live with him in the dorms

# Scenario 2

- Student has accommodation letter that allows her to step outside of the classroom
- Student has been using this time to make phone calls in the hall
- When you tell her students can't use their phones during class, she says it's illegal for you to deny her the accommodation

# Scenario 3

- Student has an accommodation for extended time to take exams
- You're a little late getting the exam to class that day, but the student only took 10 minutes on the test
- The student claims you denied her accommodation by not giving her the entire allotted exam time

# Disruptor 2: Sealioning

- Pestering a target with unsolicited questions delivered with a false air of civility
- Aggressive cluelessness that masquerades as a sincere desire to understand



# Disruptor 2: Sea Lion



# Scenario 4

- Student fails a quiz and requests you meet with him to go over his answers
- He argues that your “correct” answer for Question 3 is wrong and asks for proof in the textbook
- You show him
- He brings it up again in the next class session
- The other students tell him his interpretation of the question is wrong
- He refuses to drop the topic

# Scenario 5

- Two students complain that the third student in their group isn't doing her share of the work
- When you speak with Third, she says she's having trouble with the material and asks her group for help, and what's so wrong with that? Aren't they supposed to be working together?

# Scenario 6

- A group of students always sit together, talk during lectures, make jokes, and are generally disruptive
- You ask a quieter, more mature student to join their group for a project so she can keep them on task
- You receive an email from your chair saying the quiet student filed a formal complaint against you—how could this have happened?!

# Disruptor 3: In Crisis

- Students who may be a danger to themselves or others
- Students who may be in danger

# Disruptor 3: In Crisis

- Signs of distress
  - Anxious, sad, withdrawn
  - Confused, irritable
  - Seeks constant attention, is paranoid or delusional
  - Expresses suicidal or threatening thoughts
  - Demonstrates bizarre or erratic behavior
  - Disheveled, unwashed, in pain, or hungry

# True/False

- John Jay has a food pantry with free food for any student who needs it.

True

- John Jay has resources to put a homeless student into housing.

False

- John Jay has free psychiatric care for students.

True

- John Jay can pay a student's rent or utilities if they're about to get evicted or cut off.

True



# True/False

- I know what to do if a student tells me they've been sexually assaulted or are experiencing domestic violence.
- I know what to do if a student tells me a classmate is harassing them
- I know what to do if a student tells me someone is stealing/plagiarizing their research
- I know what to do if I suspect a student cheated on an exam
- I know what to do if a student says the FBI has bugged their phone & email



# Scenario 7

- Your student is falling behind in coursework, missing classes, coming to class smelling unwashed and disheveled.
- Student has outburst in class discussion, starts to cry, and yells at you for letting the other students “attack” him.

# Scenario 8

- Your student brings her newborn baby to class every session
- She says ACS is threatening to remove her baby from her custody if she cannot provide proof from the college that her baby is being cared for while she's in class
- She says there's no College policy that her baby can't come to class with her

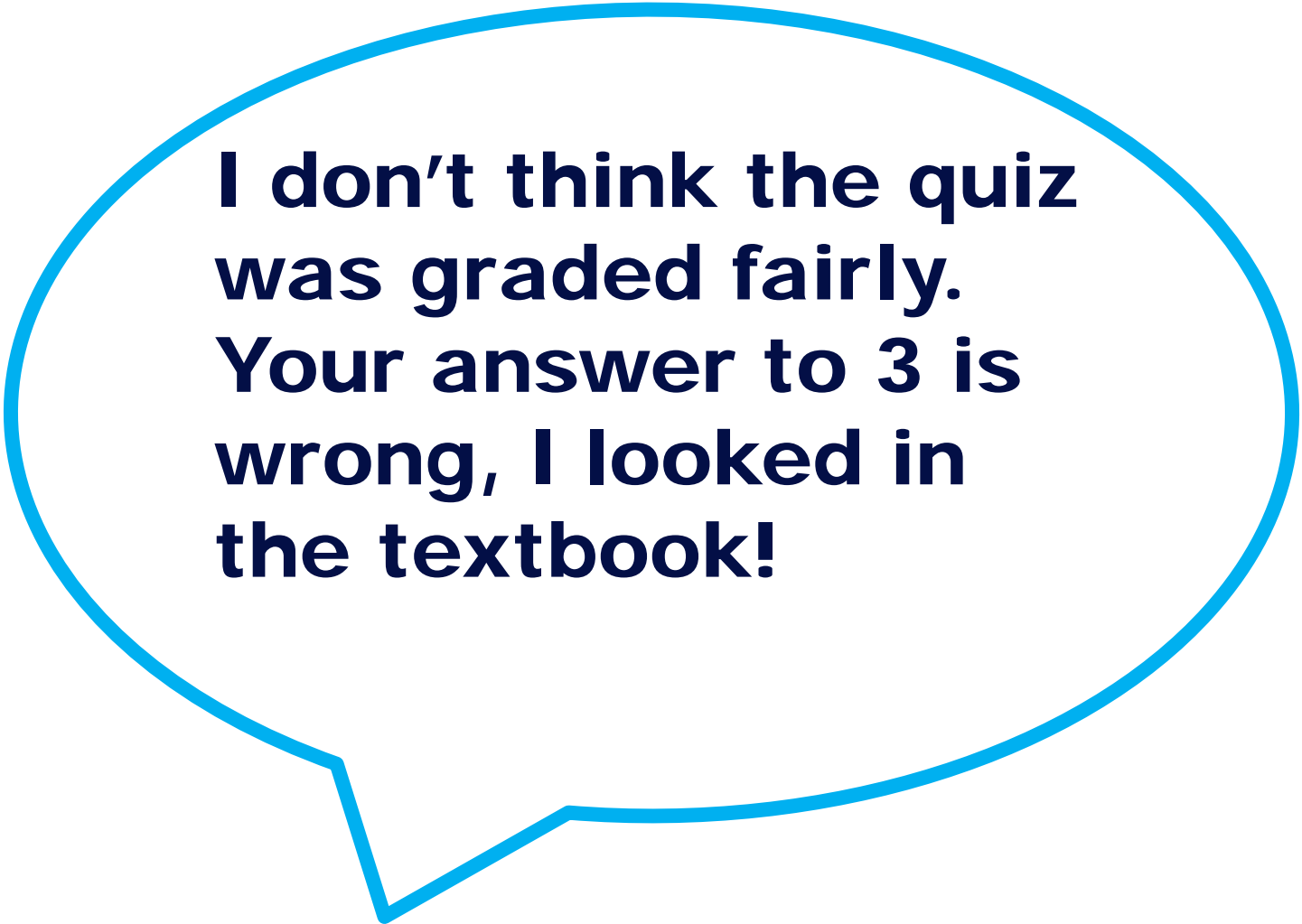
# De-Escalation: Interrupt the disruption

- Set boundaries
  - Make them clear & simple
  - Deliver them without judgment
- Don't argue
- Maintain authority

# Useful phrases

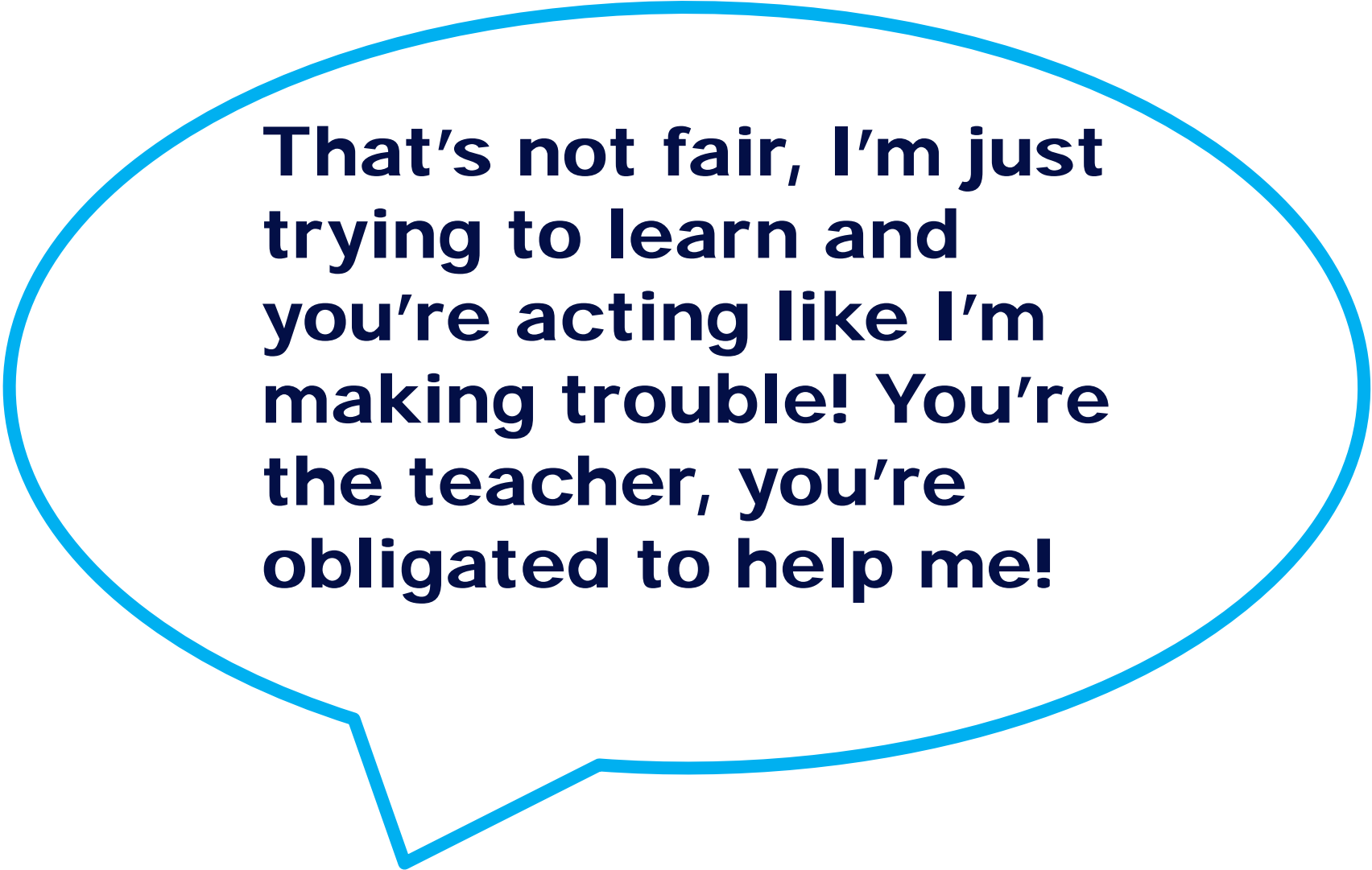
- We need to move on now.
- It's time to give other students the chance to talk.
- Let's discuss this later.
- I'll follow up with an email.
- Would you like to take a moment to go compose yourself?
- We don't do that here.
- You need to leave the classroom.

# Practice



I don't think the quiz  
was graded fairly.  
Your answer to 3 is  
wrong, I looked in  
the textbook!

# Practice



That's not fair, I'm just trying to learn and you're acting like I'm making trouble! You're the teacher, you're obligated to help me!

# Practice

I paid for this class, I have a right to be here! You can't tell me to leave, that violates my student rights, I'm not leaving!

# It's not a disruption to...

- Cry
- Get upset about an upsetting topic
- Disagree with classmates or faculty



# Scenario 9

- Professor: "One of my students is out of control! She spoke very aggressively toward me and raised her voice in class, and I'm afraid of what she might do."

# Scenario 9

- Student: "Yeah, I called the teacher out! We're 4 weeks into the semester, we've only met once, and the teacher still hasn't graded our work from the first week of classes. I work and I have kids, I don't like having my time wasted!"

# Scenario 10

- Professor: "I had to ask a student to leave the classroom after he got aggressive and threatened me. I think he doesn't respect me because I'm a woman."

# Scenario 10

- Student: “We were talking about the guy who got killed last week and the professor told me I had to leave. I think she’s prejudiced against cops. I want to file a complaint against her and I told her so!”

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# Conduct Officers

Rachel Brown, L.71

212-621-4143

[rabrown@jjay.cuny.edu](mailto:rabrown@jjay.cuny.edu)

Danielle Officer, L2.71

212-237-8185

[dofficer@jjay.cuny.edu](mailto:dofficer@jjay.cuny.edu)