

UNCW Center for Teaching Excellence

Tips for Classroom Management After a Crisis

A crisis situation such as a school shooting can have a powerful impact on students and faculty as they reenter the learning environment. The anxiety that such an event engenders in students and in faculty can significantly affect learning and tax teaching resources. Although some students and faculty will be more affected than others, it is important to acknowledge what effect such an event has had on you, your students and the community itself

Talking with Students

If you notice signs that students are experiencing emotional distress in your class, you may wish to address the issue openly, but you also may feel unqualified to do so. If you are unsure of your ability to provide emotional support in regards to the crisis but feel the need to show that you are aware of its' impact on your students, you might simply acknowledge the crisis and point your students to available resources. You might also:

- 1)) Reassure students at to university safety procedures, and become familiar with them yourself. Go to [the campus safety site](#) for helpful resources.
- 2) Ask a professional from the Dean of Students Office or the Counseling Center to come talk to your students.
- 3) Help students reach out positively to help those at the crisis site. Simply posting a message on a MySpace message board may make students feel less helpless.

Remember that it is not necessarily your role to help students through the crisis. UNCW has many resources to support students in crisis.

Classroom Discussion

It is important to understand your responsibilities in discussions of school violence. Stressful events often require support at a level the individual faculty member cannot provide. If you do choose to engage in such discussions, please be prepared to refer students to appropriate support services. Also know whether you are prepared to deal with the degree of emotional intensity that may arise. Campus resources are listed below. Common student reactions to a crisis involve:

Student fears about such events happening locally.

Students' personal reactions to the event,

Students concerns about how the event may affect others, especially people they know.

It is important to know that discussions of this type are likely to be time intensive. If you choose to have a group discussion you might preface it by pointing to resources a student might use to follow up with any issues or concerns they may have arising from the conversation.

Campus Resources

The Center for Teaching Excellence (962-3034) has books on how to handle difficult conversations that are available for check-out. Our office is in Randall Library.

- [The Counseling Center](#) (962-3184): Offers counseling services to individuals and to groups. Free to all students.
 - [The Counseling Center Outreach and Education](#) Provides outreach to classes
- [CARE: Collaboration for Assault Response and Education](#) (962-2273) The UNCW Collaboration for Assault Response and Education is the campus initiative dedicated to intervening on violent behaviors.
- [Office of the Dean of Students](#) (962-3119). To report or discuss concerns with students.
- [University Police](#) (962-2222). To report concerning activity or to request training.

Important Telephone Numbers

Counseling Center: 910-962-3746

Collaboration for Assault Response & Prevention: 962-CARE

University Police: 910-962-2222 or 911

Dean of Students Office: 910-962-3119

Crisis Line: 910-392-7408

Off-Campus Police: 911

Source APA Task Force on School Violence