Office of Equity and Inclusion

FREE EXPRESSION IN THE CLASSROOM

Student makes a comment in class that may be upsetting or offensive to you or others.

It's your classroom and the students are looking to you to address the concern and facilitate an opening and welcoming learning environment.

Take a breath. Even when our own emotions are triggered by speech, these moments are often teaching and learning opportunities.

Here are some questions to ask yourself to help determine if the comment potentially violates PCC Policy.

Is it a general idea or opinion (could be an idea or opinion about anything)?

- **YES** → ***Likely not a violation of Policy, but consider...***
- **NO** → **Is it causing a substantial disruption in the class?**
  - **YES** → ***Likely not a violation of Policy, but consider...***

Likely not a violation of Policy, but consider...

Was the comment severely offensive or harassing (like racial or ethnic slurs, profanity laced, or otherwise highly inappropriate for a classroom environment)?

- **YES** → ***Potentially a violation of Policy,***
- **NO** → **Is the behavior ongoing and/or continuing?**
  - **YES** → ***Potentially a violation of Policy,***
  - **NO** → **CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING TO RESPOND TO THE HARMFUL OR OFFENSIVE COMMENTS**

Is it targeted at another person?

- **YES** → ***Potentially a violation of Policy,***
- **NO** → **Is it threatening harm or a risk to safety?**
  - **YES** → ***Potentially a violation of Policy,***
  - **NO** → **Is it causing a substantial disruption in the class?**

Potentially a violation of Policy,

- **YES** → **CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING IF THE COMMENT IS A POTENTIALLY A VIOLATION OF PCC POLICY**

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING TO RESPOND TO THE HARMFUL OR OFFENSIVE COMMENTS

If the comment is relevant to the topic of instruction
-guide students in a civil discussion of various viewpoints
-ask students to explore the expressed idea, included what makes it offensive
-reaffirm PCC values and appropriate classroom conduct

If the comment is not relevant to the topic of instruction
-redirect students back to topic or
-engage students in brief, guided discussion of the underlying issue if appropriate.

Request help or guidance from FreedomofExpression@pcc.edu

CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING IF THE COMMENT IS A POTENTIALLY A VIOLATION OF PCC POLICY

To address the student engaging in the conduct consider the following

- Direct the student to stop any further targeted or threatening comments.
- Contact Conduct & Care and/or file a CARE Report
  - If there is an emergency, or immediate threat to safety contact Public Safety at ext. 4444, or 971.722.4444
  - Consult your supervisor, Conduct & Care, or the Office of Equity and Inclusion before taking action that could be considered disciplinary

TO ADDRESS THE HARM TO YOUR CLASS CONSIDER THE FOLLOWING ACKNOWLEDGE THE COMMENT WAS HURTFUL

- Reaffirm PCC values and appropriate classroom conduct
- Engage the classroom 1n a brief, guided discussion of underlying issue if appropriate
- Follow up with directly involved students after class
  - Refer impacted students to resources