

Chapter 6

Online Student Incivility: What It Is and How to Manage It

Renate W. Prescott

Kent State University at Geauga, USA

ABSTRACT

Student incivility in the online classroom has remained largely unaddressed because many administrators believe that its causes and solutions can be managed the same way in the classroom. Online incivility, however, is uniquely different and therefore presents a different set of challenges and solutions. This chapter defines online incivility (unintentional and intentional) and offers strategies for instructors who find themselves having to contend with uncivil students when there are no explicit guidelines available at their institutions.

INTRODUCTION

The Kent State University Regional Campus System

More than 42 percent of students at the seven regional campuses of Kent State University are nontraditional or place bound (Fact Book, 2011). It would be difficult to pursue higher education if it were not for the regional campuses in their communities. Because five of the seven regional campuses are located in rural areas or small towns, distance learning courses and degree programs are economical ways to provide student access to

higher education. As Table 1 indicates, headcount and FTE enrollments in all courses have increased dramatically for the Kent and Regional Campuses over the last year.

As Table 2 demonstrates, during the same period online enrollment has also risen. The availability of online courses has contributed significantly to student access to coursework and degree programs that otherwise may not have been available to them. Although it is most likely that students who take online courses also enroll in face-to-face courses, access to distance learning logically contributes to the University's rising enrollment patterns.

DOI: 10.4018/978-1-4666-0206-9.ch006

Table 1. Headcount and FTE enrollments 2010-2011 (Kent State University Research, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness)

Campus	Headcount Spring 2010	Headcount Spring 2011	Percent Change	FTE Spring 2010	FTE Spring 2011	Percent Change
Kent	24,449	25,747	5.3	19,083	20,854	5.5
Ashtabula	2,485	2,568	3.3	1,381	1,408	1.1
East Liverpool	1,337	1,446	8.2	659	697	5.8
Geauga	2,040	2,470	21.1	921	1,028	11.6
Salem	1,719	2,017	17.3	1,065	1,114	7.5
Start	4,521	4,733	4.7	2,936	3,010	2.5
Trumbull	2,776	3,047	9.8	1,667	1,712	2.7
Tuscarawas	2,387	2,617	9.6	1,536	1,652	7.5
Total	41,714	44,645	7.0	29,248	31,475	5.5

The Regional Campus System was originally intended make available a Kent Education throughout Ohio and to be feeder campuses for students to move to the Kent Campus to complete their degrees, but that has never been fully realized because most students at most regional campus are place bound, which means they are not able to leave their local area to attend an educational institution. However, with a mandate from the Ohio Board of Regents’ Strategic Plan for Higher Education (2008), all the regional campuses now have evolved from offering Certificate programs and Associates degrees to include offering the Bachelor’s and Master’s degrees in major disciplines. Unlike the Kent Campus, the Regional Campus System serves commuter students exclusively, and so its campuses recognized the value of distance learning earlier. Regional Campus students found online learning more ac-

cessible and convenient, and they quickly embraced this opportunity.

As Figure 1 demonstrates, the number of online courses taught increased dramatically between 2009 and 2011, and the head count enrollment has followed a similar trend, growing more than 60 percent between 2009 and 2011.

The dramatic rise in student preference for online courses makes good sense for both the students and the University. Instead of going to the “main” Kent Campus, students can save money by living at home and attending one of the seven regional campuses; nontraditional students who are already in the work force and raising families find online courses not only less expensive than driving to a campus, but also much more convenient. Distance learning also benefits the University because it reduces the facility costs.

Table 2. Headcount online enrollment 2010-2011 (Kent State University Research, Planning, and Institutional Effectiveness)

Campus	2010S	2010M	2010F	2011S	2011M	Total
Kent	7,360	5,133	7,907	11,708	7,557	39,665
Regionals (combined)	4,424	2,702	5,238	6,323	3,969	22,656
Total	11,784	7,835	13,145	18,031	11,526	62,321

*An individual student could be counted more than once in a given term.

17 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:

www.igi-global.com/chapter/online-student-incivility/63322

Related Content

Digital Storytelling: An Alternative Way of Expressing Oneself

Taralynn Hartsell (2017). *International Journal of Information and Communication Technology Education* (pp. 72-82).

www.irma-international.org/article/digital-storytelling/169115

Intelligent Agents Supporting Distributed Collaborative Learning

Weiqin Chen and Barbara Wasson (2008). *Online and Distance Learning: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications* (pp. 1105-1127).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/intelligent-agents-supporting-distributed-collaborative/27454

Administrative Concerns for Distance Learning

Henryk Marcinkiewicz and Jennifer McLean (2005). *Encyclopedia of Distance Learning* (pp. 53-55).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/administrative-concerns-distance-learning/12086

WEBCAP: Web Scheduler for Distance Learning Multimedia Documents with Web Workload Considerations

Habib Sami and Safar Maytham (2010). *Technologies Shaping Instruction and Distance Education: New Studies and Utilizations* (pp. 166-180).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/webcap-web-scheduler-distance-learning/40518

The Effects of Communicative Genres on Intra-Group Conflict in Virtual Student Teams

Jung-Lung Hsu and Huey-Wen Chou (2009). *International Journal of Distance Education Technologies* (pp. 1-22).

www.irma-international.org/article/effects-communicative-genres-intra-group/1737