

## WHAT WOULD YOU DO?

1. A student in your section interrupts you mid-sentence when thoughts come to his mind.
  - Depends a lot on the comments. I encourage students to interrupt when confused, but if it's nonsense then ask him to hold off. Encourage him to come to office hours or share his thoughts with you after section. If it's something relevant, address his comments and repeat when you were saying before.
2. You have reason to believe students are cheating, but the professor doesn't want to turn them in. Maybe he believes there is not enough information or he just doesn't want to deal with the hassle.
  - Write down all evidence of cheating. You can fill out a report online so the professor doesn't have to. Yes, you are **ALLOWED** to fill it out on behalf of the professor, with his or her permission. You select instructor on the website. You can also submit an anonymous "Stand Up for Integrity Report" online. Note: an official instructor report must be filed in order for any academic sanctions to occur. Otherwise it's a violation of student rights.
3. The grader for your class often loses homeworks.
  - Address this immediately. Let the instructor know of the issue, and if it happens more than once, Scott should be informed so the grader isn't rehired. Speak nicely, but firmly, to the grader. Tell the grader that they could be terminated, or have a written warning added to their employment file.
4. A student threatens you or another student.
  - If you or a student is in immediate danger, call 911 from any campus phone (immediately redirected to campus police) or call 858-534-HELP from any phone to get campus police. For student of concern, contact the Dean of Student Affairs for the student's particular college. They are the Principle Administrator (PA) who is in charge of initiating and continuing support for a student's health and safety. All relevant phone numbers can be found by searching "UCSD Red Folder" on Google. Many classrooms also have a "Red Folder" notice posted somewhere with important phone numbers.
5. A student in your section falls asleep and is snoring.
  - If they're disturbing other students, wake them up!
6. A student contacts you via email. He would like to set up a meeting with you to discuss the possibility of extra credit, since passing this class is really important for his scholarship.

- You are not at liberty to award any extra credit to any student for any reason. Only the professor can do this, at their choosing. Defer any further discussion to the professor.
7. A student complains that he got a 33% on his homework, because two of the three problems that were graded were the only two on the entire assignment that he didn't know how to do.
- Explain that while you sympathize with his situation, the grading guidelines were made clear and it would be unfair to the other students to modify them on a case-by-case basis. Suggest he come to office hours in the future to get help with problems he's unable to solve on his own. It is every student's responsibility to solve all assigned problems, not just the easy ones.
8. You realize the next day that you've given the wrong information in section maybe you made a computational error and got the wrong answer, or maybe you cited a theorem that isn't true.
- Remind your students at the start of the quarter that they need to be critical thinkers: if you make a small error, like a sign mistake, it's up to them to catch it. After all, they shouldn't be copying your work. They should take away the main ideas and reproduce the work themselves. That being said, if you make a larger error and state something false, correct the situation as soon as possible. Consider sending an email out the moment you notice. Your students will appreciate your honesty.
9. You get an anonymous note complaining that one particular student is getting inflated grades on his homeworks because he is friends with the grader. What do you do if you believe the allegations to be true?
- This is a rather serious accusation and worth looking into. Examine the next homework assignment to see if there is any truth to it. If there is, immediately address this with both the grader and the professor. Follow up each week to ensure the problem does not persist. Let Scott know. Call the office of academic integrity for guidance on whether this is an academic integrity issue and how to proceed.
10. In the middle of section, a student challenges your grading on an exam question because he believes his answer is correct and deserves more points.
- It's best to avoid engaging with students about points awarded on a particular question in front of everyone. Say something like "How about we discuss this after section so I can take another look?" Be firm about when it's time to move on with a question.
11. Students are talking to one another while you are trying to speak, but you can tell they are talking about math and trying to explain it to one another.

- Hooray! Students in your section are engaged with the material and have a desire to understand! Consider allowing them a few minutes to discuss problems with each other before you discuss it together. However, remind them that once the group discussion begins they should share comments with everyone and not talk over you.
12. A student claims to have submitted his homework on time and wants to know why it was marked late.
- If a student says they submitted it “on time” and I ask when, theyll usual say “It was at 5:02pm!” Remind them that TAs are often very prompt with picking up homework, and it would be in their best interest to turn it in early. The student usually doesnt have much of a case here: if it’s submitted to a homework box then either it’s in the pile with everyone’s or it isn’t. Do be sure to check with the other TAs that no one is over-eager and picking up the homework at 4:59. That being said, be careful not to simply call the student a liar and then ignore them. If you feel an error really has been made you can consult the professor to see what your options are.
13. A student brings their homework assignment to your office hours to ask a question. While going over one problem, you notice that the grader has given them full points on another question whose solution is obviously wrong.
- The homework has already been graded, so you should not take off those points. It’s likely that other students made similar mistakes and all problems were graded that way. Point it out to the student, explain what happened, and let them know that you’ll be looking in to this to ensure they get the most accurate feedback possible in the future. Immediately meet with the grader to discuss what happened, and watch out for future mistakes. Tell Scott about the grader issue! Also be aware of your co-TAs grading practices.
14. On the day you return exams, a student raises her hand to comment that she thought the exam problems were nothing like the problems they had seen in class. Soon, everyone in the class is complaining about how unfair the test was.
- Try to think of ways to explicitly connect the exam problems to homework problems or things they’ve seen in lecture before. When going over the solutions, try to give a clear step-by-step thought process that would lead them to the answer using things focused on in class. Occasionally a professor unintentionally makes an exam much harder than intended, or students feel that your reasoning requires too big a leap. Remind them that as they solve more and more problems of these types their ability to recognize when to use which technique will improve. Whatever you do, dont say “Oh yeah, the professor really screwed you over.” Focus on how you can help them do better on the next exam. If the exam seemed too difficult, discuss this with the professor.

15. Everyone did very well on the first exam. Nobody bothered to study for the second exam, which was very hard. Now, students don't know what to expect for the final and are worried about their grades.
  - Ask the professor to provide a clear list of topics that will be covered on the exam. If the professor has a grading scheme in which a midterm score can be replaced by a final exam score, remind students of this. Material covered on midterm 1 is generally simpler, which is why the exams are usually easier. You should always anticipate the next exam being at least as difficult as any exam you've already had from a particular professor. Talk to the professor about the intended difficulty.
16. A student answers her cell phone during class.
  - Tell her to take it outside. That's not appropriate classroom behavior and undermines your authority.
17. You show up to your 8am section and the classroom is locked.
  - Call campus police at 858-534-HELP(4357). This number should already be programmed into your phone!
18. You are teaching your own class as an Associate Instructor (AI). A student makes it clear to you that she pays a lot of money to go to this school and wants "real professors" with PhDs.
  - The amount of money paid is somewhat irrelevant. All students are treated the same, regardless of how much they pay to attend. Ask the student what's more important to her: an instructor with a degree, or an instructor who is good at teaching the material. Tell her that you know the course material inside and out and are excited to devote lots of time and energy to making this a worthwhile class that she can learn a lot from. Remind her that grad student and professor knowledge of something like calculus is essentially the same. Being slightly younger makes it easier for you to remember what it was like to be a student, which has its advantages, though you don't want to emphasize too much how young you are. Remind her that you're working closely with current faculty to make sure your curriculum, assignments, and exam are all appropriate for the course you're teaching. (And actually do this!) Cite the UCSD policy which allows you to teach this course and remind them that they chose to attend a university which allows grad students to teach.