The Student who is Demanding

Facts about students who are demanding:

Students who are demanding can be intrusive and persistent and may require much time and attention. Demanding traits can be associated with anxiety, depression, and/or personality problems.

Characteristics of demanding students include:

- A sense of entitlement
- An inability to empathize
- A need for control
- Difficulty in dealing with ambiguity
- Perfectionism
- Difficulty with structure and limits
- Fears about handling life

What to Do

- Talk to the student in a place that is safe and comfortable.
- Remain calm and in control.
- Set clear limits and hold the student to the allotted time for the discussion. (“I have 10 minutes right now. Within that amount of time, how can I help you?”)
- Emphasize behaviors that are and aren’t acceptable. (“If you wish to continue this conversation, I will need you to lower your voice and talk in a calm manner.”)
- Respond quickly and with clear limits to behavior that disrupts class, study sessions, or consultations.
- Be prepared for manipulative requests and behavior. (“You came seeking my help, and I have offered several options. However none of these seem okay with you. What ideas do you have?”)
- Call the Dean of Students Office (608-263-5700) for help identifying strategies for dealing with disruptive behavior.

Avoid

- Arguing with the student.
- Giving in to inappropriate requests or adjusting your schedule or policies to accommodate the student.
- Ignoring inappropriate behavior that has an impact on you or other students.
- Feeling obligated to take care of the student or feeling guilty for not doing more.
- Allowing the student to intimidate you.