

Course Content Notification and Emotional Responses

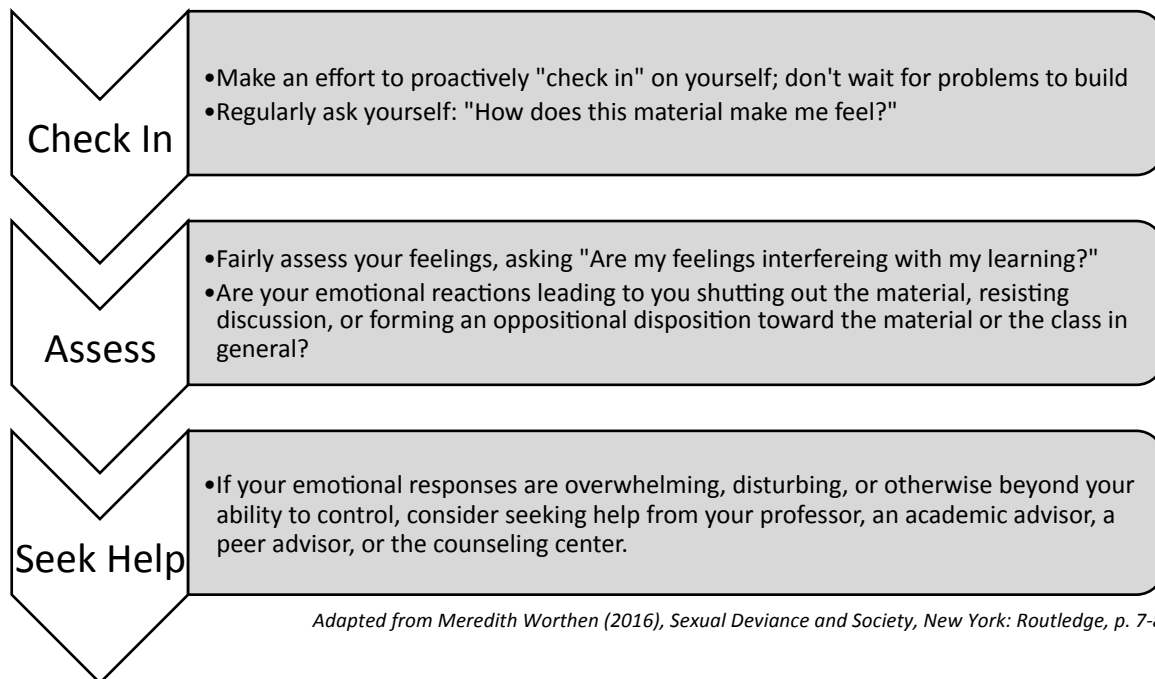
At times during this semester we will cover issues and events that may be disturbing to some students. The topics, the details, and the social, political, and ethical implications of the material in this class are likely to inspire a range of uncomfortable feelings. Personal experiences with being excluded, discriminated against, or coerced into compliance may amplify this discomfort. Some of us—probably all of us—have been treated as an “outsider.”

Just as some people have been harmed by the objects of our study, others have benefitted from them. Some of us—probably all of us—have been treated as an “insider,” to the disadvantage of “outsiders.” Consequently, “insiders” may feel defensive, particularly if they feel entitled to their advantages. They may even become angry or frustrated to have their privileged status acknowledged, let alone criticized.

Along with the emotional difficulties that are prone to happen as a consequence of the topical material, the intellectual rigor required to successfully engage assigned readings, lecture content, and discussions can be challenging or frustrating. Your instructor makes every effort to ensure your workload and the content of course material is appropriate for this level of study. Nonetheless, the instructor acknowledges that assumptions made about students’ prior knowledge, preparation, and time available for study may be inaccurate. All learning involves challenge, but these challenges can provoke feelings of frustration that make learning improbable.

All of these emotional responses are reasonable, and yet they must be resolved for successful learning. One way to resolve some of these feelings is to proactively engage in self-care. Self-care refers to planned actions that are intended to nurture your emotional and physical wellbeing and to support optimal learning.

The following steps may be helpful to support your self-care and learning.



If you are disturbed during class and need to step outside, either for a short time or for the rest of the class session, you may always do so without academic penalty. You are responsible for any material you miss. If you do leave the room for a significant time, please make arrangements to get notes from another student or see me individually at an appointment for office hours.