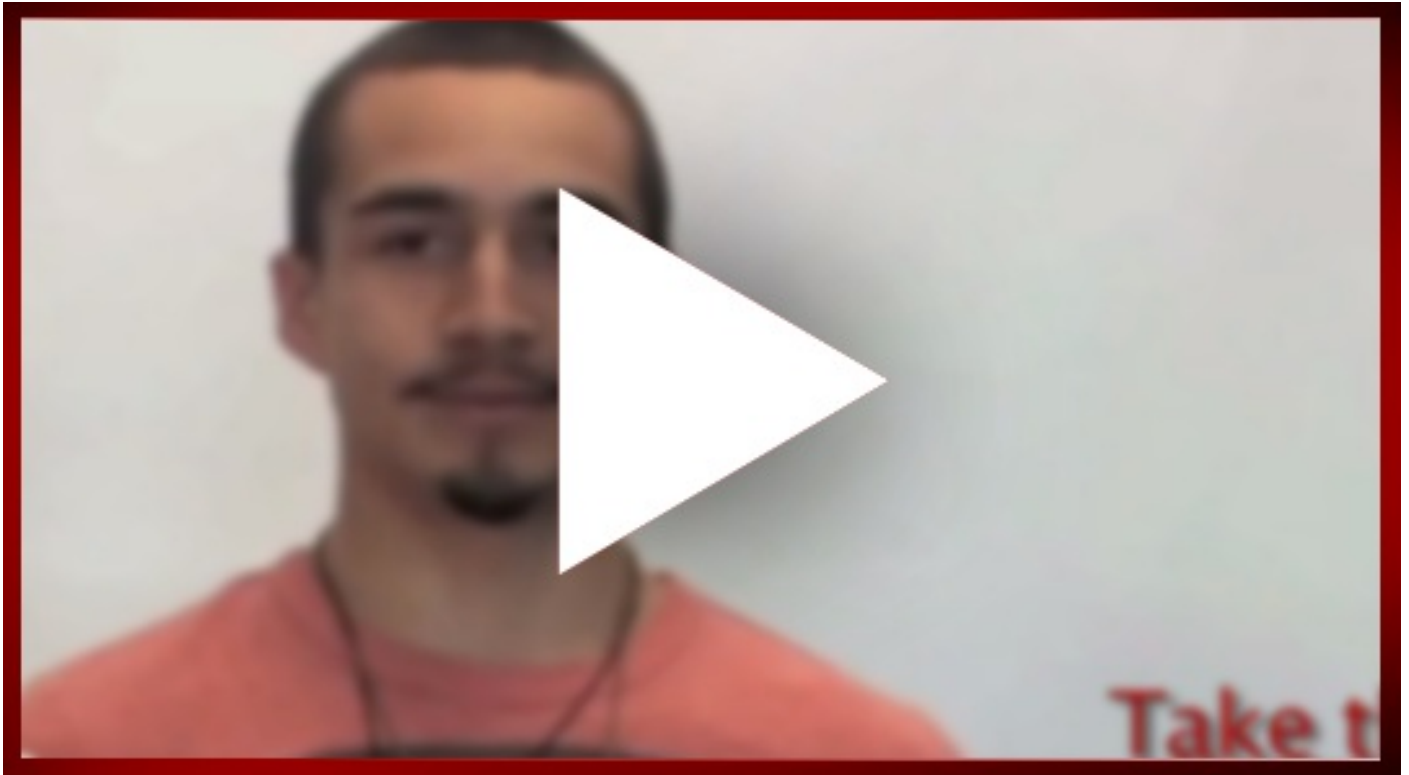


Building a Community of Respect



There are over 24,000 graduate and undergraduate students on Stony Brook's campuses. Each student has been selected for their academic excellence and their unique experiences. Each student comes from a different background and is pursuing different different educational goals.

As a campus community we have a responsibility to respect each student, faculty, and staff member as a human being and an individual so that each one of us can achieve our goals. It is in our personal and academic interests to learn from one another, and this can only be achieved by listening and communicating with each other in respectful ways.

How do we demonstrate that respect? Civility is the language of respect. Civility refers to a set of organizing principles, rules, and societal norms that govern our behavior as members of a community. In a community in which each of us may have different goals, different ways to show respect, and differing societal norms, it is important to build some shared community guidelines. On campus there are layers of these guidelines, including the Code of Conduct, the Terms of Occupancy for Residence Halls, class ground rules, the Community Pledge, as well as unwritten expectations like "appropriate classroom behavior" and "civil discourse."

The following discussion outlines some of these, and they are by no means fixed or comprehensive. These guidelines and expectations will change as we grow as a university and a community. Committees that decide campus guidelines typically have at least one student member, and your actions help define behavioral norms both on and off campus. As you read consider the following discussion questions:

- What does civility mean to you? How does your own conception relate to the guidelines and expectations outlined in this chapter?
- What kinds of civil and uncivil behaviors do you experience on campus? How do the civil behaviors foster community? How are the uncivil behaviors disruptive to others?
- What elements of civil discourse could you incorporate into your daily interactions?

Civility, n

Polite, courteous, and considerate behavior or speech appropriate to community interactions.e.

(adapted from the www.dictionary.com, accessed February 2013)