



SMART RESPONSES

WHAT IS THE STRANGEST (MOST BIZARRE) OCCURRENCE THAT YOU HAVE EVER ENCOUNTERED IN A CLASS ENVIRONMENT?

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For this issue we asked, “*What is the strangest (most bizarre) occurrence that you have ever encountered in a class environment?*” We solicited personal recollections pertaining to various occurrences, including:

- An unusual occurrence that has taken place in the classroom
- A unique happening during a presentation
- Student excuses
- Problems encountered
- And so forth.

The following details responses given:

Here is my most bizarre experience.

This incident occurred when I was a graduate student many years ago. I was one of 5 or 6 graduate students sitting in a classroom waiting for the professor to arrive to administer and proctor the final exam in a sport psychology class. When the professor arrived he informed us that he could tell that we were all very anxious and needed to relax a little more. He exclaimed that he had the solution. He brought in a large trash can and asked us all to gather around the trash can, close our eyes, hold our arms out over the top of the trash can and relax by performing the repetitive yoga mantra of "ohm." The professor then took the lid off the trash can and asked us to open our eyes. In the trash can was a fairly large snake he had found in his garden that morning. It certainly startled us. I am not sure if it had the desired effect but I was pleased with my score on that particular exam, although I am not sure I would recommend that particular meditative technique.

*John Vincent, PhD
University of Alabama*

I once had a student leave class and return with a brick trying to attack another student. We stopped him from entering the classroom, but he waited until after class and tried to jump on the student from a tree - breaking his own arm.

*Dan Drane, PhD
University of Southern Mississippi*

I once had a student turn in a paper that was clearly plagiarized from the internet. When confronted, the student asked, "How did my paper get on the internet?" After further discussions, he said he would appeal the grade of "F" I was giving him since the same paper was good enough for the professor who taught another sport management class. The class I was teaching was Sport Ethics.

*Warren Whisenant, PhD
University of Miami*

Timber the Seeing Eye Dog (Example #1)

I had a student who had a self trained his seeing eye dog, Timber. I must say the Timber was not well trained. He consistently sniffed the students as they entered the classroom. Timber frequently roamed around the class and would even leave the room and walk down the hallway. On one occasion a student put a snack on the floor beside his desk and Timber walked over and helped himself to the student's snack. Timber left much to be desired in a seeing eye dog.

The Classroom Snack (Example #2)

One day while showing a film in class, I sat in the back of the room while the film was playing and heard a noise that sounded like someone opened a soda can. I then noticed that there was some kind of commotion going on around this student. About that time I detected a horrible smell and the other students were moving away from a student. When I positioned myself to see what was going on, I discovered that she had opened a can of barbeque Vienna sausages and was stabbing them with a butter knife and eating them like popsicles. When I asked her what she was doing she said that she always had a snack when she watched a movie.

*Dr. Jeff Lee
Troy University (Criminal Justice submission)*

I got a call from a student's mother who was concerned about her son's class performance. She said that he had not declared a major and wasn't sure which class he was taking (which made me wonder why I was getting the call). But the situation was this - the son had been accused of plagiarism and had been told he would fail the class. The mother told me that her son had NOT plagiarized; that he had had someone else write his paper for him and THAT person had plagiarized. Since it was not her son who plagiarized, the mother reasoned, it should not be held against him.

*Bill Grantham, PhD
Troy University (Anthropology submission)*

I have been supervising preintern and internship experiences for 6 years and I have never had anyone “fail” either of these for credit experiences. I always bragged about the professionalism that was always displayed by my students in the undergraduate sport management program. This past spring semester that all changed. I had two instances in which I was called to handle unprofessional work behavior. They were both at sites on our campus. It seems one of my interns got bored and decided to visit some pornographic websites on the Internet while working in the marketing department. The person who was on the computer right after him noticed the history of sites and brought it to the attention of the director. It was truly embarrassing to sit in a meeting with all parties discussing his use of pornography at his internship site.

A week later, I received another phone call because another student had been showing pictures on his cell phone of himself (in sheer women’s underwear) to co-workers at his internship site. In addition, he asked them their opinion on the matter. The co-workers brought this to the attention of the director of our student fitness center and he, in turn called the Director of Recreation and Intramurals, who then called the Associate Vice-President of Student Affairs. Needless to say, this was another embarrassing situation which involved parties all the way up to the Provost. I am now very explicit in my explanations of what constitutes “professionalism” in the work place especially with the technological advances we have made!

Anonymous Submission

