



TEXAS TECH UNIVERSITY
Ethics Center™

Red Raider Ethics Generator

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I am often asked how today's students compare with those of previous decades, especially those of the 1960s.

I think students on this campus have always had a very good work ethic. Many come from rural communities in Texas where they have been taught the value of hard work. Today's students are very bright and technologically savvy. I thoroughly enjoy working and dealing with them.

Texas Tech has attempted to stress proper ethical behavior to its students for several years. The University's theme song is "Do the Right Thing?" What does it mean to do the right thing?

Doing the right thing goes beyond not cheating or committing plagiarism. To me, it means being informed, honest and considerate of others. I don't mean to be demeaning, but if there is a theme song for our current and past few generations, it would be "It's All About Me."

I recently had a student mark out another student's name on my class roll and put his own name in its place and then refuse to move because, he said, "This is where I want to sit."

More and more, I am getting complaints from students that other students that sit near them are constantly texting on their cell phones or using lap tops to surf rather than take notes. Apparently, one student brought up a porn site while in class. This is not ethical conduct.

I have heard all of the following and more. The following comments in parentheses are not always what I said in response. Over the course of several incidents, I just thought about saying it.

"I've had a bad semester. I want to be able to drop this course with a passing grade even though it is long past the deadline." (Were you not furnished a copy of the deadlines when you enrolled?)

"I've had a bad semester. I know I am capable of making better grades than I have in this class. Can't you just bump my grade up to the next level?" (Why don't you come back next semester and show me what you are capable of?)

"I don't see why you can't let me make up that test I missed. My family had a skiing trip planned on that date, and I didn't want to miss it." (We all have choices to make. You have made a bad one.)

"I don't want you to count those 15 absences against me because I'm an adult and I ought to be able to decide when I want to come to class and when I don't." (Do you remember signing a document that said you understood the attendance policy and agreed to follow it? Missing class 15 times is not adult behavior.)

"Yeah, I signed in on the attendance roll for my friend. That's what friends are for!" (Friends don't let friends cheat!)

"I need an excused absence for Monday. I took five Viagra pills on Friday night and I just can't make it to class Monday." (I have some idea of why you cannot be there.)

"I missed your exam because my mother was having a vasectomy." (Wow, we need to contact the American Medical Association about this.)

"O my gosh, are we having an exam today?" (Yes dumb ass, it's in your course outline and we have talked about it for the last three class meetings.)

Students should take the time to read and understand the ground rules for their courses. Many of those rules will continue to apply after they graduate. They should be honest and not give weak excuses. They should realize life is not "all about me" and treat others with the same respect and consideration they expect.

One last question. How can Tech students sing "Strive for Honor" in the Matador song at football games when they have just finished booing during the opposing school's school song?

Despite some of these ethical lapses, I still thoroughly enjoy working with them and wouldn't trade my job for anything.