

A Day in the Life of a University Professor – Grading Culminating Projects

Written by Rebecca Denton

Dedicated to Robin Miller and Jayne White –

Two of the Most Dedicated Faculty I Know

7:00 am: Wake up and look at the clock. It is entirely too early to start the day. After all, a good professor must be rested in order to grade her students' hard work!! Another hour should do it. Those little angels deserve my best!!

7:30 am: Look at clock. Wow – only thirty minutes have passed? Must be really excited to start looking at those wonderful projects – since sleep isn't coming. Might as well wake now and get started. This is going to be great! These students take such pride in their work.

8:30 am: Have coffee – lots of it – constantly for one hour in fact – need the additional time to create new, more exciting coffee drinks to prepare me for the wonderful experience waiting for me. Hot chocolate and old candy canes added to three shots of espresso should do it. Need to be super pumped to grade these gems and everyone knows that peppermint and chocolate are good for you! Reports are even saying that they help with endorphins, or something like that. Melt half of a Hershey's bar and pour into the coffee. Now my endorphins will be really good. Find an old box of Thin Mints in the freezer – eat one whole roll. Ready for some major grading now! Thank you Girl Scouts of America!!

9:30 am: Still having coffee – shaking rather badly. Polish off the second roll of cookies. Not feeling especially well – so shaky! Perhaps a nice cup of juice would help. Grading can wait a few moments longer. These projects are too important to grade under these circumstances! Orange juice would be best. I need my vitamin C – it would be horrible if I fell ill before grading these projects. Drat – just knocked over my juice and it got all over Jesse's project. Hands shaking unbelievably now – it must be my excitement about the grading. Yuck – orange juice doesn't really settle well with my previous goodies. Where is the Pepto?

10:30 am: Thank you pink tummy miracle! Feeling much better – have to take a short nap to re-energize.

11:00 am: Strip both beds in house and am doing some deep cleaning. It is not a good idea to grade when the house is not clean – lack of organization hampers concentration. Will grade in a few minutes – after cleaning a few more things. Better have another cup of coffee – with chocolate....

11:30 am: Have three more cups of coffee – moving to green tea. Burn my hand while pouring hot water into mug – hands really shaking violently now. Hopefully the tea will calm the nerves so the grading can begin!! After all, those darned projects need my full attention! A blister is forming on my hand. I had better search the Internet for at-home treatment for burns. This really hurts. Blasted projects.....

12:30 pm: Find many interesting remedies for burns – don't have any yucca or aloe plants. They are supposed to be the best, so I better go out and buy a couple. The projects can wait. I don't think the students did their best anyway.....

2:30 pm: Just returned from shopping for yucca plants. This town is so backward – no yucca plants. Finally settled for aloe gel – the young man at the health food store said I needed the purest form of aloe because of my advanced age (old skin doesn't heal as quickly and easily as young skin) and sold me a tube for \$45.00. I think I was taken advantage of. That young man was just like my students! No respect!

3:00 pm: The aloe has not helped at all; I think the product has spoiled – the gel is clumpy and it smells quite badly. I am feeling really tired. The caffeine must have worn off. I am not in the mood for coffee – perhaps a nice energy drink – which of course I don't have. I better run to Walgreens and buy a few. This is the only way I will have the proper concentration needed to grade these 'projects' (if they can even be called projects!) I said COMPREHENSIVE – five pages long Sarah? Really? While ranting about my students' shoddy work, I trip over a pile of these pitiful excuses for college projects. I think I broke my wrist trying to break the fall. Am going to Walgreens for the energy drinks, anyway, so will ask the pharmacist about my wrist while I am there.

8:00 pm: Return home from the emergency room. My wrist is broken and I have an angry looking rash where I put the rancid aloe gel. A doctor with a nasty attitude scolded me for my poor wound care. I informed him that I was a college professor and would not tolerate his disrespectful attitude. He laughed at me and then refused to prescribe any pain medicine. Another example of disrespectful youth! I bet he was a very lazy student in college – probably turned in projects like the ones I have just angrily thrown into a corner.

8:30 pm: Yikes, there really were a lot of very sick and sad looking folks in emergency rooms. Feeling light headed and nauseated. I wonder what that means? Maybe I contracted something while I was waiting. There were a lot of people coughing and I think that one of the ladies using the restroom failed to wash her hands! I wonder what types of diseases are transmitted to innocent, hard working professors in emergency rooms? If that incompetent doctor was doing his job properly this would never have happened. And my students! Do they care about all of the work I do for them? Of course not! I stand and yell at the pile of papers in the corner – I need a drink.

10:45 pm: One drink simply wasn't enough. I know I read somewhere that drinking red wine was really beneficial to one's health. I wanted it to be really beneficial so I drank an entire bottle. Why am I so light headed? Perhaps the wine is doing its healthy thing on my heart! When is the last time I had something to eat?

11:30 pm: My heart is absolutely broken from the poor quality projects my students have turned in. In order to mend it, I drink another bottle of wine. Time for bed – I will start grading first thing in the morning.....☺