

## **Scenario 1 – Student**

You are enrolled in the first of two courses for your senior project, and during the first meeting with your advisor you find out that you basically have to plan all of the stages of the project on your own, you have to choose any additional advisors, and have to contact them on your own whenever you wish to get their advice. The only requirement for this first course is a proposal, which is due at the end of the term and will either be rejected or supported (no grade). This makes you extremely anxious, as you are used to very structured assignments and feel uneasy about taking on the most important work of your undergraduate studies on your own. You meet with your advisor to explain your concerns, but are told that this is necessary in order for you to prove that you have mastered the content of your major. You feel that the advisor is completely insensitive to your concerns, and decide to take this up with him/her prior to writing an official letter of complaint to the Department Head.

## **Scenario 1 – Professor**

You met with the students in your department that are beginning their senior projects and have explained what is expected of them, thinking that they would find the emphasis on self-direction as refreshing as you did when you were in their shoes. However, one of your students is struggling with this and has asked for further assistance. In order to ensure that you are not providing this student with an unfair advantage over his/her peers, you explain that it is exclusively up to him/her to demonstrate mastery of what he/she has learned, and advisors can only guide students along the path they choose on their own. The student arrives in your office once again, this time to tell you that if he/she does not receive the structural clarity and guidance they need they will take the issue up with the Department Head.

What would you do?

## **Scenario 2 – Student**

You recently submitted an assignment for your freshman writing course to Professor Brown. You worked very hard on this paper and you are very proud of what you feel is a solid effort on your part. You are accustomed from high school to always getting top grades for your work, and assume there is no reason to think differently of what you are doing in college. However, when Professor Brown hands your assignment back to you with a grade of B+ and several detailed comments about areas for improvement for your next assignment you feel that he/she did not value your work and you were assessed unfairly. You decide to express your frustration with the professor during his/her office hours...

## **Scenario 2 – Professor**

You just finished returning graded assignments to your freshman writing students, and are proud of the fair, constructive criticism you gave them. It took you a long time to work on detailed, formative comments that you hope will be helpful to your students and will allow them to restructure their writing in a manner that will allow them to succeed in their future studies. However, a student comes to see you during your office hours complaining that he/she did not understand why you were critical of their work, that the criticism was undeserved, not only because they worked hard on their paper but no one ever criticized their work before...

What would you do?

### **Scenario 3 – Student**

Instead of the usual spring break vacation on the beach you decided to do something more meaningful and sign up for an alternative spring break program offered by your university, where you will assist in the construction of homes for local disadvantaged families. You expect this to provide you with a valuable learning experience in terms of project management and teamwork while giving back to the community. However, two days into this one-week program teamwork appears to be non-existent and none of your peer volunteers seems to be aware of what they should be doing, nor do they seem willing to take the initiative to lead the group and decide what specific aspect of the larger construction project the team should focus on. You are frustrated at what you perceive as a lack of guidance from your group coordinator (a staff member from your university) and you have decided to take this up with him/her...

### **Scenario 3 – Group Coordinator**

You have assembled a group of 20 students from your institution that have agreed to volunteer one week of their spring break to assist in the construction homes for local disadvantaged families. You admire the enthusiasm for the project expressed by the students, and look forward to seeing what they accomplish at the end of the week. You have explained to them that on the first day they should get together and assess what aspect of the larger construction project the group can realistically complete by the end of the week, and they should make sure that the builders are comfortable with this decision. However, two days into the project a student from the group comes to your office to inform you that this is proving to be a complete waste of his/her time, and that the lack of guidance by your office has been infuriating to the entire team...

What would you do?

## **Scenario 4 – Professor**

You are a senior tenured professor and have been directing majors in senior projects within capstone courses for many years. Recently, you have noticed that an increasing number of students seem unprepared for working independently on the final independent project that is a key element of the course. You are spending a lot of time having to chunk material, giving frequent guidance and monitoring to get acceptable projects. You know that there are other courses in the department and some in the college that involve freshman writing, service learning, and other high-impact practices but in talking to students they don't see these as a package. You decide to ask your Department Chair to make this a discussion topic for the next department meeting.

## **Scenario 4 – Department Chair**

Professor X has come to you and you recognize the concerns he/she has as legitimate. You agree to put this on the agenda but you and Professor X are taken aback by the level of resistance from a variety of faculty about the possibility of essentially doing a mini-program review that would lead to a linking of different high-impact courses into a package wherein students could build the skills starting with first year courses and moving formatively through the major so that they could effectively meet the learning goals of the capstone course. The attacks range from accusing you of infringing on academic freedom to the amount of time involved in doing this, and they are coming from tenured faculty and teaching faculty.

What would you do?