It ain’t easy being mean: Evaluating tough teaching tactics for rigor and results
FROM: XXXXX
TO: Matthew LaPlante
SUBJ: CRAPPIEST TEACHER EVER

Professor LaPlante,

If you think your such a great teacher, maybe you should know that not everyone feels that way like you do.

You pretend like your such a cool guy but then you give out bad grades like we’re supposed to know everything that is in your head but its your job to teach us the things that aren’t good about our writing before you just give out bad grades like we’re supposed to know.

Your walking on thin ice and you better watch your back.
Mr. Nish

• Smart

• Funny

• Tough

• Musical
Mr. Nish
• Smart
• Funny
• Tough
• Musical

Mr. Gallegos
• Great lectures
• Challenging projects
• Tough
• Stayed late to help us with assignments
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Dr. Clinton
• Challenged beliefs
• Loved teaching
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• Made us think
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This guy
“Way out here, we can do to you little maggots whatever the hell we want.”
This guy

This guy
“I don’t care if I fail every single one of you. You’ll either rise to meet my standards, or you’re going to fail this class. Those are the only two choices.”
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TOUGH...
AND NOTHING ELSE?
TOUGH...
AND NOTHING ELSE?

RIGOR WITHOUT
RESULTS IS POINTLESS
DOES MY TEACHING PHILOSOPHY, OR PERSONAL CREED, REFLECT MY AMBITION AND DECISION TO BE A TOUGH TEACHER?
United States Navy
recruit division commander creed:

“These recruits are entrusted to my care. I will train them to the best of my ability. I will develop them into smartly disciplined, physically fit, basically trained Sailors. I will instill in them and demonstrate, by my own example, the highest standard of honor, courage and commitment.”
United States Marine Corps
drill instructor creed:

“There are recruited to my care. I will train them to the best of my ability. I will develop them into smartly disciplined, physically fit, basically trained Marines, thoroughly indoctrinated in love of the Corps and country. I will demand of them and demonstrate by my own example, the highest standards of personal conduct, morality and professional skill.”
United States Army
drill sergeant creed:

“I am a Drill Sergeant. I will assist each individual in their efforts to become a highly motivated, well disciplined, physically and mentally fit soldier, capable of defeating any enemy on today's modern battlefield. I will instill pride in all I train. Pride in self, in the Army, and in Country. I will insist that each soldier meets and maintains the Army standards of military bearing and courtesy, consistent with the highest traditions of the U.S. Army. I will lead by example, never requiring a soldier to attempt any task I would not do myself. But first, last, and always, I am an American Soldier. Sworn to defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, both foreign and domestic.”
Matthew’s teaching creed

“My duty, on behalf of every student I teach, is to stimulate thought, sharpen skills, nurture confidence and foster respect for our diverse world... I strive to accomplish this by providing my students opportunities to apply knowledge to practice... In all things, I set high standards in deference to my belief that we value most that which we have worked hardest to achieve.”
Does my teaching philosophy, or personal creed, reflect my ambition and decision to be a tough teacher?
NO CREED?
NO CREED?

NO DIRECTION.
TOUGH TEACHERS ARE EXCEPTIONALLY WELL-PREPARED TEACHERS.
TOUGH TEACHERS ARE EFFICIENT TEACHERS.
TOUGH TEACHERS MAKE EVERY SECOND COUNT.
AM I WORKING HARDER THAN MY HARDEST-WORKING STUDENT?
TOUGH TEACHERS WALK THE TALK.
TOUGH TEACHERS WALK THE TALK — AND STUDENTS CAN SEE IT.
AM I OFFERING A REALIZABLE VISION OF SUCCESS?
TOUGH TEACHERS OFFER SOCIAL PROOF THAT WHAT THEY DO WORKS.
TOUGH TEACHERS RAMP UP RIGOR OVER TIME — ALLOWING SOCIAL PROOF TO DEVELOP IN SUPPORT OF THEIR METHODS.
Are the goals I’ve set reachable by any given student?
WHEN ONLY THE BEST STUDENTS SUCCEED, YOU ARE NOT CHANGING THE STATUS QUO.
TOUGH TEACHERS SEEK OUT THE HARDEST ASSIGNMENTS.
DID MY HIGHEST ACHIEVING STUDENTS STRUGGLE?
TOUGH TEACHERS PUSH HIGH-ACHIEVING STUDENTS HIGHER.
HAVE I MAINTAINED MY STANDARDS THROUGH THICK AND THIN?
FAILURE HAS TO HURT...
FAILURE HAS TO HURT... TEACHERS.
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