



The Class is Cancelled While I Do My Job

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Dear Students —

I am sorry to say that I will need to cancel all classes for an indeterminate length of time while I work on doing my job.

I realize you think that teaching is my job, but there are many other aspects to being a professor. In the unlikely event that you are curious about what else a professor might have to do, here are a few of the issues that need my attention.

The recent change to our course-management system has meant that I need to re-upload every document and assignment and reassign every homework. I will be attending three two-hour training sessions to help me do this. I was staying ahead of the class for the first few weeks, but I've finally lost that battle.

My contract with this institution requires me to be active with research. Unfortunately, I have been too busy to keep up with what's happening in my field. So, I need to read six months' worth of journals and then develop a new research project to allow me to get the first pay raise we've had in three years. It's only a two percent raise, but on my salary, that makes a big difference. I would ask if you're interested in being a student researcher, but I don't know how to hire or pay you, and our department's administrative associate has been doing the work of three people since the recent budget cuts.

Research also involves dissemination, and I need to finish the two half-written journal articles and submit them before my annual review in three weeks. The annual review also requires me to write up my accomplishments in detail and submit them two weeks before the review. This involves searching four different places to find the correct information on how to submit the document.

I also need to provide service to the university or my professional communities. This includes reviewing and providing feedback on four manuscripts from three different journals. I don't know what I've missed from my university committees since they are regularly scheduled during my classes.

Current legislation requires training on different topics on a regular basis, and I need to finish up my training on FERPA, IT security, and sexual harassment, or they dock my pay.

I have to report the last three months of sick leave, or the system will deny me all earned sick leave for the last year. Since my workload leaves me so tired I catch a cold every three weeks, I have to be sure I have enough sick days to not lose money. And since my family is forgetting what I look like, sick days are doubly important to me.

Finally, there is yet another new software program for dealing with advisees that requires three hours of training next week. I realize we had a new program two years ago, but we are told this is a better one. (This reminds me: If any of you are my advisees, you will need to help yourself regarding next term's schedule until I know how to use this new system and I can find out who my advisees are.)

I promise that before our classes start up again, I will find out who has whiteboard markers and erasers so that I have something to write with. It used to be our custodial staff, but we lost half of the campus facilities employees two budget cuts back, and I have never figured out who controls the cache of markers.

I am sorry that my job is getting in the way of your learning. I hope that the time you gain can be productively used in employment so that you can pay for your college education.

Sincerely,

Your Professor ●

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