

INTERACTION BETWEEN COLLEGE STUDENTS AND THEIR PROFESSORS: A COMPARISON OF STUDENTS' AND PROFESSORS' VIEWS

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This study compared students' and professors' views about the appropriateness of special considerations being requested or granted in different contexts. Areas investigated include: personal issues, teaching/learning adjustments, and grading. Similarities and differences between student and professor participants' views are noted and areas where rare appropriate and frequent inappropriate behaviors occur are highlighted. The results suggest that some disagreement exists between students and professors in all three areas examined: grading concessions, the role of advice by professors, and failure by students to request modifications in the professor's teaching style which would facilitate comprehension and learning. The implications of the results for effective interaction between students and their professors and for the teaching/learning process are discussed.

Learning and teaching in college and university environments present difficulties for both students and professors. The transition for freshmen is often a stressful experience (Chickering and McCormick, 1973) when students must adapt to greater independence, often at the expense of close relationships with teachers and classmates. Professors must find suitable ways to engage and instruct large numbers of students whom they may know only slightly. For both groups there is often a question of what would and would not be considered an appropriate set of behaviors. There is little opportunity to explore this question in terms of the other group's viewpoint and actions are often modeled after those of a peer group. The result may be confusion and misunderstanding which can impede the teaching/learning process. Yet, stu-

dents' actions should enhance learning in the classroom (Williams and Winkworth, 1974) and professors should be responsive to the needs of their students, who, after all, are the consumers of the professor's teaching activities (Tennyson, Boutwell and Frey, 1978).

The literature on student-faculty interaction indicates that information on effective communication with professors is one of the top 10 learning needs of students who present at learning assistance centers (Davies, 1983). As a result, information on student-professor relations is frequently incorporated in programs designed to help students succeed in higher education.

Some specific information on appropriate student behaviors exists. For example, in a recent investigation Brozo and Schmelzer (1985) obtained desirability ratings of

57 student behaviors from 218 professors; their results pinpoint a variety of actions which, from the professor's vantagepoint, are desirable for students to emulate. Their data also identify a variety of undesirable actions; among behaviors deemed inappropriate was for students to "request special favors".

But requesting special favors is a catch-all which can involve grading and evaluation, teaching/learning issues, and personal concerns and advice. Is requesting special consideration undesirable in all of these areas? Is it inappropriate for a student to ask for extensions when course requirements are difficult to meet? May one ask for a make-up exam in the case of failing grades? What should be done when one cannot hear the professor? The learning process could be facilitated if students knew which requests had a reasonable chance of being granted.

Similarly, teaching is hampered when professors are not sure about how to deal with certain concerns about students. For example, how will a student react if the professor were to suggest that he/she not take a course because it is likely to be too difficult? Is it appropriate to recommend that a student get help at a tutorial or at a learning assistance center? What should one do if one notices that a student has problems with inappropriate social behavior?

Both student and professor behaviors have been shown to have an impact on the other group (Pascarella, 1975; 1980). Yet, views about the appropriateness of different student and professor behaviors in the same situations have rarely been explored, even though such comparisons would enable members of both groups to better appreciate the other's perspective as well as their own roles in the education process (cf. Galerstein and Chandler, 1982). Therefore, in the present investigation, students'

and professors' beliefs are compared with regard to requesting and granting special considerations in a variety of contexts. The fact that professors and students rated the appropriateness of behaviors by both groups permits a comparison of similarities between students' and professors' views and also highlights areas of disagreement. Furthermore, because frequency estimates for behaviors were also collected, it is possible to identify common inappropriate and rare appropriate behaviors by both groups.

It is expected that the results of the present investigation will have a variety of practical applications. These include supplementing Brozo and Schmelzer's (1985) and Williams and Winkworth's (1974) data base of appropriate and inappropriate student behaviors; these listings can serve as the basis for empirically based "tips" in orientation programs for freshman students and can be incorporated in self-help pamphlets and in learning skills packages. The present results will also provide a preliminary list of suggested professor behaviors for use in teaching effectiveness workshops for faculty. The findings will also help bridge the communication gap between student service professionals and the faculty (Fried, 1986) and will provide a basis for professors and students to explore the teaching/learning reality from the other's viewpoint.

Method

During the course of a study on effective professor-student interaction between disabled students and their teachers, able-bodied students and professors were sampled for normative purposes. Data analysis provided some interesting findings on the perceived appropriateness of requesting and granting special considerations on the part of the able-bodied students and their professors. These data are presented here, outside the context of the larger study, in the hope that the insights

gained will allow college students and their professors to interact more easily and effectively and to come to appreciate reality from the other's vantagepoint.

Participants

Participants were 62 college and university students and 96 college and university professors. All were participating in a larger study which examined similarities and differences between student-professor relations in disabled and nondisabled students and their professors (cf. Amsel and Fichten, in press).

The student sample was obtained by contacting two able-bodied students for each of the disabled student participants in the larger investigation; able-bodied students were selected so as to match the disabled students on sex, educational institution, and program of studies. Eighty-three percent of students contacted participated: this resulted in 31 male and 31 female students. Mean age for these students was 22 (range = 18-48). Forty percent of students attended junior/community college and 60% attended university. 67% of students were enrolled in arts, 15% in science and 18% in other faculties.

Professors were solicited by contacting, on a random basis, two professors for each of the professors of disabled students in the larger investigation; the same matching criteria used for students were used to select professors. Sixty-five percent of professors contacted participated: 71% of participating professors taught at a junior/community college and 29% at a university. 61% taught in arts, 14% in science and 25% in other faculties.

Procedure

Both student and professor participants rated the appropriateness of 32 student behaviors (e.g., student asks professor whether the course is appropriate for him/

her) and 45 professor behaviors (e.g., professor warns student that the course is very difficult) on the Professor-Student Questionnaire. The questionnaire presented a variety of situations which were organized under headings such as class activities, time issues, and grading. For each situation (e.g., In a class where a student has difficulty taking notes) a number of student and professor behaviors were listed [e.g., (a) student asks to use professor's notes, (b) professor refuses to lend his/her notes, (c) professor agrees to lend his/her notes, (d) student asks professor's permission to tape lectures, (e) professor refuses to let the student tape his/her lectures, (f) professor agrees to let the student tape his/her lectures]. All student and professor participants rated the appropriateness of each behavior and estimated its frequency on 10-point scales. Cronbach's alpha coefficients for the Professor-Student Questionnaire indicate reasonable internal consistency for this measure both for student (.756) and professor (.813) behaviors. In addition, students indicated how comfortable they were with their professors and how satisfied they were with the treatment they received from professors on 10-point scales.

Results

Results indicate that, generally, students were moderately comfortable with their professors ($M = 7.06$) and moderately satisfied with treatment received from professors ($M = 6.90$).

Relationship Between Frequency and Appropriateness Ratings

There were few significant differences between students' and professors' frequency ratings; because these were also highly correlated, only the means of professors' and students' frequency ratings were used. Correlations between students' and professors' appropriateness ratings are pre-

sented in Table 1. These indicate that students' and professors' scores are highly and significantly correlated. Table 1 also presents the correlations between frequency and appropriateness scores; Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients indicate that, with the exception of student behaviors concerning teaching/learning adjustments, ratings are highly and positively related. The single exception indicates that both students' and professors' ratings of the appropriateness of student behaviors concerning teaching/learning adjustments are negatively, although not significantly, related to frequency ratings.

Comparison of Students' and Professors' Appropriateness Ratings

Appropriateness ratings of students and professors differed significantly ($p < .05$) on 10 and differed marginally significantly ($p < .10$) on an additional 3 student behaviors (i.e., 13/32). On professor behaviors, differences were found on 12 and 8 items, respectively (i.e., 20/45).

Student behaviors. *t*-test comparisons of students' and professors' responses concerning student behaviors are detailed in Table 2. Results indicate that students felt that it was more acceptable to ask for spe-

Table 1
Correlations Between Mean Appropriateness and Mean Frequency Ratings

Behaviors	Relationships Between Appropriateness Ratings of Students and Professors		Relationships Between Frequency and Appropriateness Ratings Made By:	
	<i>df</i>	<i>r</i>	Students <i>r</i>	Professors <i>r</i>
Student Behaviors				
Grading	5	.906**	.837*	.823*
Teaching/Learning	18	.968***	-.343	-.303
Personal Issues/Advice	3	.985**	.896*	.879*
Professor Behaviors				
Grading	8	.719*	.685*	.921**
Teaching/Learning	16	.906***	.804***	.771***
Personal Issues/Advice	15	.940***	.793***	.711***

Note: Values are Pearson product-moment correlation coefficients.

* $p < .05$

** $p < .01$

*** $p < .001$

cial consideration when it came to grading than did professors (e.g., ask for a make-up exam or extra assignments when the final grade is a failure). When it came to personal issues and advice, professors felt that these behaviors are more appropriate (e.g.,

ask the professor whether the course is appropriate). On special considerations which deal with teaching and learning, *t*-test results indicate no overwhelming trends. It is in this area, however, that frequency and appropriateness ratings

were negatively correlated. Inspection of the scattergram shows that the negative relationship is due to two clusters of behaviors. Five behaviors which are frequent but inappropriate include failure to seek out needed special teaching/learning considerations and frequent lateness. Six behaviors which are appropriate but infrequent include asking the professor to modify his/her presentation style and requesting permission to audiotape when it is difficult to take notes.

Professor behaviors. As the results in Table 3 show, students were also generally more approving than were professors of being granted special grading considerations (e.g., allowing a student to write extra assignments and make-up exams to help improve grades if the course requirements are difficult to meet) while professors were more approving of singling out a student for special attention (e.g., suggesting that a student go to a learning assistance center or to a tutorial service for extra help). Again, on teaching/learning adjustments no dominant trend emerged.

Discussion

Each of the three major areas of concern showed some important and consistent differences between professors' and students' views about appropriate behavior. First, professors felt that it is more appropriate to discuss personal issues with students when these have a bearing on academic performance and for students to seek the professor's counsel about personal and educational issues. Also, professors felt that it is not acceptable to avoid dealing directly with students about personal and academic problems; this is consistent with recommendations commonly made to faculty (Whitman, Spindlove and Clark, 1986). Yet, students seem unaware of the availability of their professors and are hesitant to seek them out to discuss problems.

In the area of teaching/learning adjustments, high frequencies paired with low appropriateness scores signal some instances where students fail to seek out needed course adjustments. These include having students request either clarification of class material or an adjustment in the professor's presentation style. It seems that professors are more willing to make adjustments during the term than students realize.

This discrepancy between students' and professors' views is understandable. To professors, requests during the term are often interpreted as showing an interest in the course material and the learning process. But students are often shy about asking for needed clarifications during class, feeling that this is a declaration of their inabilities (Davies, 1983). Also, there are few appropriate role models and the norms and demand characteristics of most classrooms do not encourage this type of behavior. Students may also sense some rigidity in teaching style and assume that adjustments have not been made because the professor is unwilling to make them or that requests will result in negative repercussions. Instead of seeking out necessary adjustments and clarifications, some students engage in inappropriate behaviors such as taping lectures without requesting the professor's permission or asking to borrow the professor's lecture notes.

Professors may deny permission to tape lectures because they are shy, because they fear being quoted out of context, or because they feel unprepared for a particular class. When students take the liberty of taping without permission, a professor may feel resentful and a confrontational situation could result.

Students are also likely to be unaware of the professor's perspective when they ask to borrow the professor's lecture notes. They may make the request imagining the

Table 2
Comparison of Students' and Professors' Appropriateness Ratings Concerning Student Behavior

Student Behaviors	Mean Appropriateness Ratings by:		df	t	Mean Frequency
	Students	Professors			
GRADING					
<i>Students Believe it is MORE Appropriate than do Professors for a Student to SEEK OUT Special Consideration</i>					
ask for a make-up exam or extra assignments when the final grade is a failure	6.21	4.40	150	3.98***	5.25
ask the professor for a pass when the final grade is a failure	2.74	1.65	151	3.44***	3.99
tell professor that he/she is expecting too much when requirements are difficult to meet	5.00	3.97	152	2.44*	3.90
<i>Students and Professors Do Not Differ Significantly</i>					
ask for extensions on assignments when course requirements are difficult to meet	6.95	7.23	152	.69	6.00
not ask professor for any special adjustments when requirements are difficult to meet	5.61	6.26	151	1.40	5.55
ask for a reduction in workload when course requirements are difficult to meet	4.00	3.49	151	1.20	3.52
ask for exemptions from certain course requirements when these are difficult to meet	3.66	3.02	152	1.50	2.89
TEACHING/LEARNING					
<i>Students Believe it is MORE Appropriate than do Professors for a Student to SEEK OUT Special Consideration</i>					
*be frequently late for class	3.11	2.38	154	1.83†	5.30
approach the professor before the course starts if student foresees problems	7.52	6.32	152	2.45*	4.71
use equipment in class without having consulted the professor	4.54	3.06	152	2.79**	3.23
ask to use the professor's notes	4.76	3.09	150	3.53***	2.39
<i>Students Believe it is LESS Appropriate than do Professors for a Student to SEEK OUT Special Consideration</i>					
frequently ask the professor for needed clarifications	8.31	8.88	153	1.98*	5.48
*ask professor to modify speaking style if problems understanding (audibility/accents)	7.55	8.30	151	1.88†	3.41
<i>Students Believe it is MORE Appropriate than do Professors for a Student to FAIL TO SEEK OUT Special Consideration</i>					
not ask for needed clarifications during class	2.97	2.14	153	2.26	6.41
*not tell professor if student has difficulty understanding due to audibility or accent	3.66	2.42	151	3.11**	5.88
<i>Students and Professor Do Not Differ Significantly</i>					
*not approach the professor about course concerns	3.11	2.98	152	.30	6.24
*do nothing if student can not hear classmates' comments in class	3.55	3.14	150	.88	5.73
ask professor for the course outline and requirements before the start of classes	8.42	8.07	155	.82	4.92
ask professor to read all writing on the blackboard if student has problems reading this	7.61	8.13	151	1.23	4.43
*ask professor to repeat classmates' comments in class if student cannot hear these	7.08	7.31	153	.48	3.93
ask professor for further explanations after almost every class	5.87	5.31	153	1.17	3.54

(table 2 continues)

(table 2 continued)

Student Behaviors	Mean Appropriateness Ratings by:		df	t	Mean Frequency
	Students	Professors			
ask professor to repeat if student has difficulty understanding (audibility/accents)	6.15	5.91	150	.50	3.53
ask professor for permission to tape lectures if it is difficult to take notes	7.89	7.72	152	.38	3.20
ask professor not to require a student to read aloud in class	5.18	4.84	145	.66	3.20
ask professor to paraphrase key points if student cannot understand (audibility/accents)	7.18	7.12	150	.12	2.97
ask professor to write when possible (blackboard) if problems with audibility or accents	6.56	6.91	150	.78	2.63
ask for a regular weekly appointment to see the professor concerning course material	4.79	4.71	154	.17	2.07
PERSONAL ISSUES/ADVICE					
<i>Student Believe it is LESS Appropriate than do Professors for a Student to SEEK OUT Special Consideration</i>					
periodically ask the professor how one is doing in the course	6.67	7.49	153	1.89†	4.17
ask the professor whether the course is appropriate	7.18	8.19	155	2.52*	3.56
<i>Students and Professors Do Not Differ Significantly</i>					
explain early in the term that one must frequently be late or leave early	6.56	6.71	154	.27	3.60
see professor about personal problems	3.95	4.45	153	1.12	2.67
ask the professor for help with class participation and social contacts	3.77	4.24	150	1.00	1.82

Note: Values are means. 10 = very appropriate, 1 = very inappropriate.
 †Indicates relatively frequent inappropriate behaviors.
 ‡Indicates relatively appropriate infrequent behaviors.
 †p < .10
 *p < .05
 **p < .01
 ***p < .001

notes to be extremely thorough when, in fact, lecture notes are often bare outlines and are intelligible only to the professor. However, most professors refuse such requests without adequate explanation.

When needed adjustments during the semester are not sought, students may approach the professor toward the end of the term to request grading adjustments. Passing the course is of the utmost importance to most students. For example, it was found that avoiding failure was the most likely reason for students to violate aca-

ademic integrity - to cheat - for 48% of students surveyed by Nuss (1984). Given the importance of grades to students, it is hardly surprising that in the present study students felt that it is more appropriate to request and be granted special considerations when experiencing difficulties with grades than professors believed was the case.

Of course, professors would prefer that contact occur when problems are happening rather than when the student is already failing. By the time a student approaches

Professor Behaviors	Mean Appropriateness Ratings by:		df	t	Mean Frequency
	Students	Professors			
GRADING					
<i>Professors Believe it is LESS Appropriate than do Students for Professors to GRANT Special Consideration</i>					
allow a student extra assignments/exams to improve grades if requirements are difficult	7.39	5.84	152	3.31***	4.72
change weights of exams/assignments when requirements are difficult for a student to meet	5.58	3.79	152	3.96***	3.62
offer extra assignments/exams when a student fails if this is not typical for professor	5.66	4.47	150	2.48*	3.29
reduce amount of work required from a student when course requirements are difficult	4.47	3.70	152	1.76†	2.74
<i>Professors Believe it is MORE Appropriate than do Students for Professors to FAIL TO GRANT Special Consideration</i>					
refuse request for extra assignments/exams when a student's grade is a failure	5.10	6.57	150	3.17**	5.51
<i>Students and Professors Do Not Differ Significantly</i>					
give a student extensions when course requirements are difficult to meet	7.08	7.47	152	.99	6.12
take motivation and effort into consideration before finalizing a student's failing grade	6.25	6.03	151	.43	5.10
refuse a request for special adjustments when course requirements are difficult to meet	4.94	4.49	151	.91	4.41
make no special adjustments if course requirements are difficult for a student to meet	5.02	4.27	151	1.57	4.36
give a student exemptions when course requirements are difficult to meet	3.84	3.57	151	.57	2.37
TEACHING/LEARNING					
<i>Professors Believe it is MORE Appropriate than do Students for Professors to GRANT Special Consideration</i>					
ask a student if he/she can hear the professor	8.28	8.99	153	2.06*	5.47
tell a student to interrupt if he/she doesn't understand prof. in class (audibility/accents)	6.45	7.30	154	1.74†	4.04
tell a student to interrupt if he/she doesn't understand the professor (audibility/accents)	7.02	7.90	152	1.91†	3.98
<i>Professors Believe it is LESS Appropriate than do Students for Professors to GRANT Special Consideration</i>					
announce that if anyone needs special help to speak to the professor	8.05	6.79	155	2.50*	4.90
<i>Professors Believe it is MORE Appropriate than do Students for Professors to FAIL TO GRANT Special Consideration</i>					
refuse to lend one's lecture notes to a student	4.85	6.90	150	4.02***	4.70
refuse to allow a student to tape lectures	3.40	4.34	152	1.82†	2.30
<i>Students and Professors Do Not Differ Significantly</i>					
tell as student that he/she may see the professor after class for further explanations	8.41	8.89	154	1.40	6.32

(table 3 continues)

Table 3

Comparison of Students' and Professors' Appropriateness Ratings Concerning Professor Behaviors

Professor Behaviors	Mean Appropriateness Ratings by:		df	t	Mean Frequency
	Students	Professors			
repeat classmates' comments if a student cannot hear these	7.73	7.19	153	1.16	5.97
agree to allow a student to tape lectures	8.02	7.55	151	1.02	5.64
frequently ask a student to repeat when professor doesn't understand (audibility/accnt)	7.52	7.55	150	.09	5.23
tell a student that professor doesn't understand him/her because of audibility or accent	7.66	7.87	152	.50	5.16
schedule a regular weekly appointment to see the professor concerning course material	6.39	6.52	153	.23	3.94
ask a student to summarize comments when professor doesn't understand (audibility/accnt)	6.53	6.83	147	.67	3.80
ask a student to paraphrase when professor doesn't understand because of audibility/accnt	5.92	6.32	146	.82	3.64
fail to repeat classmates' comments in class when these are not audible to a student	3.15	3.48	151	.72	3.40
lend lecture notes to a student	5.82	5.13	148	1.30	3.10
not tell student that professor doesn't understand due to problems with audibility/accnt	3.06	2.70	149	.86	3.00
restructure the class to facilitate participation by a student	5.90	6.18	152	.56	2.83

PERSONAL ISSUES/ADVICE

Professors Believe it is MORE Appropriate than do Students for Professors to GRANT Special Consideration

suggest that a student go to a learning assistance service for help with course problems	7.69	8.40	151	1.95f	4.78
talk to a student about problems with inappropriate social behavior	6.37	8.12	153	4.28***	4.34
speak to a student about frequent absences when this is not the professor's usual practice	7.10	7.91	152	1.82f	4.03
explain to a student why the course is inappropriate for him/her	5.82	6.95	155	2.23*	2.87
tell a student, in private, to ask fewer questions in class	2.82	3.66	151	1.74f	1.81

Professors Believe it is LESS Appropriate than do Students for Professors to AVOID DEALING DIRECTLY WITH A STUDENT

not inform a student if the professor notices problems with inappropriate behavior	4.34	2.66	152	4.07***	4.49
tell a student that all is well and to keep on trying when student is doing very poorly	3.35	2.96	152	4.59***	2.96
ask someone else to speak to a student who has problems with inappropriate class behavior	3.40	2.08	151	3.24***	1.70
without consulting the student, speak to the class about encouraging him/her to participate	2.41	1.80	150	1.77f	1.84
warn a student that the course is very difficult	6.32	6.04	155	.60	4.42
speak to a student about non-participation if this is not the professor's usual practice	7.35	7.23	151	.27	3.74
periodically ask a student how he/she finds the course	6.81	6.21	150	1.31	3.41

(Table 3 continues)

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Table 3

Comparison of Students' and Professors' Appropriateness Ratings Concerning Professor Behaviors

Professor Behaviors	Mean Appropriateness Ratings by:		df	t	Mean Frequency
	Students	Professors			
single out a student for periodic performance feedback	6.19	6.21	151	.03	3.20
ask a student to get help from others because he/she is taking up too much time	3.73	3.35	153	.86	2.82
offer help with class participation and social contacts after consulting the student, speak to the class about encouraging him/her to participate	4.31	4.24	149	.15	2.14
speak to the class, when the student is absent, about encouraging a student to participate	4.02	3.52	153	1.05	1.90
	2.68	2.18	153	1.28	1.81

Note: Values are means. 10 = very appropriate, 1 = very inappropriate.

f p < .10

* p < .05

** p < .01

*** p < .001

the professor about evaluation concerns, it is often "too late" from the professor's perspective.

When a student approaches the professor only at the end of the semester, professors frequently wonder, "Where have you been all term?" Professors assume that the student has not been working or that he/she was unmotivated or uninterested in learning and is concerned only with grades. While certainly true in some cases, often this is the result of an ongoing problem which has never been properly addressed.

In a number of postsecondary educational institutions, professors are not allowed to change grades or to give make-up exams to individual students; to do so could foster favoritism or provide opportunities for "success" to students who are more forthcoming. Such concerns exist even when professors are allowed to make special grading concessions. Often, however, students are unaware of these constraints on professors' actions.

Another area of ignorance for students involves demands on the professor's time. Preparing and grading extra assignments are very time consuming and compiling a

make-up exam which is "equivalent" to the original test is extremely difficult and occupies as much, if not more, time than the original exam. Students are frequently unaware of these factors and feel that the professor is unsympathetic and rigid when their requests for special grading considerations are denied.

The foregoing summary indicates that more interaction between students and professors is needed during the term and less interaction is needed after grades have been calculated. It is the challenge for student development professionals to sensitize both faculty and students to the other's point of view and to foster appropriate student-professor interaction.

Appropriate Behaviors in Different Contexts

Another important aspect of the present findings is a description of appropriate ways of handling concerns in different situations by both groups. The synopsis which follows details special considerations deemed appropriate by both students and professors in a variety of situations. It should be noted that the findings reflect the views of a non-random sample composed,

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primarily, of arts students and faculty. Nevertheless, because the sample was obtained from six postsecondary educational institutions which have widely differing academic characteristics and goals, the findings are likely to be generalizable to many educational contexts.

Teaching/learning issues. Before classes start, it is appropriate for a student to approach the professor to ask for a course outline and requirements. It is also acceptable to talk to the professor before the first class if the student foresees problems with the course.

It is appropriate for the professor to announce during the first few days of classes that if anyone needs special arrangements or consideration to see the professor. Warning a student that the course is likely to be difficult is considered appropriate by both students and professors as are explanations by the professor concerning why the course may not be suitable for a particular student.

If the student has concerns about the course, he/she should approach the professor during the first few days of classes to discuss these. It is also considered acceptable to ask the professor whether the course is appropriate for the student. If the student knows that there may be an ongoing problem with being late for class or having to leave early, he/she should discuss this with the professor at this time. Of course, frequent tardiness is not considered acceptable.

If the professor notices that a student is frequently absent, it is appropriate to approach the student to discuss the absences. Should the professor notice that a particular student is not participating in class activities, it is acceptable for him/her to speak to the student about this or to restructure the class to facilitate participation by the student (e.g., small groups, working in pairs). Speaking to other class members

concerning this issue is not considered desirable.

It is appropriate for a student to periodically ask for feedback about his/her performance during the term. It is also appropriate for the professor to occasionally check with individual students concerning how they find the course and to single out students for feedback concerning their performance.

When clarifications are needed, students should ask for these either during or after the class. It is not considered appropriate to ask for a regular appointment each week to see the professor about course material although it is acceptable for the professor to offer this. It is considered desirable for the professor to encourage students to request needed clarifications and changes in the professor's presenting style. If help with course material is needed, it is appropriate for the professor to tell the student to see him/her after class for further explanations. Telling a student to ask fewer questions in class or sending a student to get help from other students because he/she is occupying too much of the professor's time are not considered appropriate by either students or professors.

It is appropriate for a student who has difficulty taking notes to request permission to audiotape lectures and for the professor to agree to this. Asking for the professor's notes is not considered appropriate nor is using recording equipment in class without the professor's permission. If a student has difficulty seeing the front of the class, it is appropriate to request that the professor read everything he/she writes on the blackboard or overhead projector.

If a student does not understand other students' comments in class, it is appropriate to ask the professor to repeat these and for professors to comply with this request. If a student doesn't understand the professor because of audibility or accent, it is

appropriate to request that the professor repeat what was said or to modify his/her lecture style (e.g., speak louder, more clearly and slowly, face the class, use the blackboard or overhead projector, give handouts). It is also acceptable in this case to ask the professor to paraphrase key lecture points. It is not considered appropriate to simply ignore the problem, although both students and professors feel that this occurs frequently.

In classes where the professor "calls on" students to speak or read in class, it is only marginally appropriate for a student to request an exemption from this activity. Should the professor not understand a student's speech because of problems with audibility or accent, it is not appropriate to pretend to understand. Instead, the professor should ask the student to repeat what was said or ask the student to summarize or paraphrase his/her comments.

Grading and evaluation. Where course requirements are difficult to meet, it is appropriate for the student to ask for extensions on assignments. Requests for reduction in work load or for exemption from certain requirements are not considered appropriate. Nor is it appropriate to tell the professor that he/she is expecting too much. Should a student request an extension, it is appropriate for the professor to grant this if course requirements are difficult to meet. It is also appropriate for a professor to allow a student to write extra assignments or make-up exams to help improve grades, especially according to the students. It is not, however, considered appropriate to reduce the amount of work required or to exempt certain students from course requirements, or, according to professors, to change the weights of exams and assignments for the final grade.

If the student is experiencing difficulty, it is appropriate for the professor to recommend that the student go to a tutorial serv-

ice or a learning assistance center for extra help. If the student is doing poorly in the course, it is not appropriate for the professor to tell him/her that everything is fine and to just keep trying.

Should the student obtain a failing grade, it is considered appropriate by students, but not by professors, for the student to request a make-up exam or additional assignments. It is optional whether the professor accedes to this request. A mere request for a pass is not considered appropriate by either students or professors. Nevertheless, it is also considered appropriate for a professor to take into account motivation and effort before finalizing a failing student's grade.

Personal issues. It is not considered appropriate for a student to discuss personal issues with the professor or to ask for help with social contacts when these concerns do not affect performance in the course. Should the professor notice that the student has problems with inappropriate social behavior (e.g., continually interrupting others) he/she should discuss this with the student directly and not count on someone else to do so.

Implications and Conclusions

Results from the present investigation suggest that key areas of disagreement between students and professors center on grading concessions, the role of advice by professors, and on failure by students to request modifications in the professor's teaching style which would facilitate comprehension and learning. Sensitizing students and professors to the other's viewpoint should facilitate communication between these two groups and improve the teaching/learning process. College professionals charged with the important task of advising students and professors about these matters need to be sensitive to differences in vantagepoints and should advise

students and professors about what each group considers to be acceptable behavior. In this regard, self-help brochures, considered "an inexpensive and cost-effective means of reaching students and of providing them with accurate information and positive strategies for personal change" (Yamamuchi, 1987, p. 185) may be of particular benefit. Information provided in Tables 2 and 3 and data from Brozo and Schmelzer's (1985) and Williams and Winkworth's (1974) studies are likely to be particularly beneficial in providing student services professionals with concrete suggestions.

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The American Association of University Students

The American Association of University Students (AAUS), whose national office is located on the University of Pennsylvania campus in Philadelphia, was founded by a coalition of Ivy League universities, Stanford University, and the University of Chicago in 1978 to serve as the nation's only 'think tank' for student government leaders to share ideas and resources in an effort to improve the quality of higher education and student life. Annually, AAUS hold a national conference for student leaders.

According to Scott Affleck, executive director of AAUS, "these conferences give student leaders from across the country a chance to interact and share ideas. Communication is the key ingredient in initiating change and our conferences create an opportunity for interaction."

Since its inception, AAUS has extended its membership to 4-year colleges across the United States and Canada, and serves as an umbrella organization for over 200 student governments from universities in all 50 states. The AAUS Intercollegiate Conference is the largest annual gathering of students in the country.

AAUS is divided into five geographical regions, each of which has its own regional conference during the year's fall semester. All regions then come together in the spring semester for the annual national intercollegiate conference.

In addition to national and regional conferences, AAUS offers a variety of services to its member schools.

AAUS has created an increasing large library of research reports, developed a computer network that links student governments throughout the country, puts on a newsletter to keep its members school informed of what's happening on other college campuses on an ongoing basis, and, thanks to a grant from the Exxon Foundation, conducts National Issues Forums to educate college students through open discussion of issues about national concern.

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