

A SAMPLE CLASSIFICATION ESSAY

COLLEGE TEACHERS

The positive teachers are by far the most agreeable teachers. A positive teacher is one who seems interested in his subject and his students. The first thing a positive teacher does is try to learn all of the student's names. This kind of teacher allows for questions and discussions in class and does not seem to mind if a student disagrees with him. A positive teacher shows his interest out of class as well. Not only is he available for conferences, but he encourages students to see him if they need help. The students tend to feel comfortable in the presence of this teacher. A good example of a positive teacher is my French teacher, Monsieur Poirrot. He always allows time during the class hour for some free discussion. Once, when some of the students in our class were having trouble with the pronunciation of the rolled "r" in French, he took several hours of his own time to work with us in very small groups in his office until we had mastered the sound. Unfortunately, teachers like monsieur Poirrot are relatively small in number.

Of the three types of teachers, the negative teachers are the least agreeable. These are the kind that every student dreads. Not only do they not learn the students' names, but they seem almost hostile both in class and out of class. In class, the negative teachers, like the neutral teachers, primarily lecture; they may want the students to learn, but unlike the neutral and positive teachers, the negative teachers allow virtually no questions and no discussion. The negative teachers also do not seem to favor the idea of having conferences and are almost never in their offices. Students avoid seeing them for conferences if at all possible. An excellent example of a negative teacher is Dr. Wollen, my physics professor. His classes are twice as boring as any class of a neutral teacher, and he is often intimidating in class. One day, for example, when one student asked him to repeat his explanation of the theory of relativity, he became quite angry and refused to repeat what he had just lectured on. The negative teacher is too often inflexible; in fact, he seems more like a machine than a human being. Fortunately, this group is in the minority.

Before I came to college, I was told not to expect my professors to care much about me or my work; indeed, I was told that I would be lucky if any of them even knew my name! But when I came to university, I soon learned that these generalizations were too broad. Not all the teachers are the same. In fact, I have found that most of the professors here at State fall into three categories: the positive teachers, the neutral teachers, and the negative teachers.

The type of teacher students get can directly affect how much they learn. Obviously, students learn more from a positive teacher; unfortunately, as we have seen, this type makes the minority. Since the mission of the university is to educate, administrators should try to get the neutral and negative teachers to improve their teaching methods and attitudes; otherwise, the administrators should consider dismissing at least the negative teachers and make every effort to hire those teachers who show promise of being positive ones.

Unlike the positive teachers, the neutral teachers are not very agreeable. In general, the neutral teachers just do not seem interested in either the subject or the student. These teachers usually do not learn all of the student's names, though they may learn a few. Their classes tend to be more boring than the positive teachers' classes because they allow less time for discussion. However, like the positive teacher, the neutral teacher allows for questions and some discussion, but he just does not seem to care if the students are interested enough to want to discuss the subject or not. Although the neutral teacher is available for conferences, he does not encourage students to come see him for help; as a result, most students feel slightly uncomfortable in his presence, especially during a conference. Professor Hilton, my economics professor, is typical of the neutral teacher. She comes into class, opens her notes, lectures, allows questions and some discussion, and then leaves class. When I had a problem understanding one of the concepts we had discussed in class one day, I went to her office for a conference. She was polite enough but did not make any special effort to see that I understood the concept during the conference. She more or less repeated what she had said in class. Very few students go to see her for a conference because they think she is simply not interested. From what I have gathered in my conversations with other students, the neutral teachers make up the largest category.