This Is How Students Say "Thanks for a Great Semester!"

Had to share this one. The back story: This semester, I used an online platform to receive and grade student papers. I was told it helped streamline the whole evaluation process, that it was easier for students to receive and implement feedback, and most importantly, that it would help me grade thousands of papers in less time. I used it, and still haven't decided whether I like it or not. But what you REALLY need to know is that it's incredibly easy and user-friendly for students. A knuckle-dragging Cro-Mag could submit an essay on it with no problems. Literally, it's a one-click submission process. And my students have been turning in work on the site for months.

The following email correspondence took place between me and a student last week, the day before the final assignment deadline.

Dear Professor,
Hey it's Jordan from your 9:30 class. I just wanted to let you know that I've been trying to upload my paper to turnitin.com but it's not working. I've tried everything, including reformatting the document as a different document but the document still won't go through. I just wanted to let you know, fyi.

Dear Jordan,
Thanks for checking in. Since you've successfully submitted all of your previous work this semester on the web site, I'd say go back and see what format you used for those earlier essays. Everything you've turned in so far has made it to me without any problems.

Dear Jordan,
The last time I turned something in to you it was a Word document and I know it was fine but it's not working now. Respectfully I think the problem is with the web site and not with me so you let me know when you fix it and I'll turn in my paper in after that.

Jordan,
I just checked online, and so far, two-thirds of your class has turned in their final essay without any problems. And again, since you've submitted your earlier assignments online without experiencing any difficulty, I'll leave it to you to go back and fix the issue. Remember that the deadline is tomorrow at 9 a.m.

(Two hours later)

Dear Professor,
I've tried everything. I don't know why it's not working, but I know it's not my fault. I strongly think you should
either fix the web site, or let me turn my paper in to your mailbox later this week. I don't have time to do so until Thursday because of my busy schedule. I know the deadline is Wed but I'm assuming you'll make an exception for me due to this difficulty which is out of my hands.

Jordan,
As of now, 85% of your class has turned in the final paper without incident. Are you using the same computer you used to submit past assignments? Are you sure you're online? I'm sure that sounds somewhat patronizing, but I really don't know what advice to give, since you've been able to turn in all previous work online without any problems. Since you live in the same dorm as several of your classmates, maybe you could ask a friend to help you troubleshoot. Beyond that, I'm not sure what to tell you. Do be aware that you're required to meet the same deadline as everyone else. This situation doesn't warrant an exception.

Dear Professor,
I think you should know that I'm deeply offended by your response. I'm just trying to do the right thing and turn my paper in on time. You are being incredibly unreasonable about your deadline and you've been that way all semester which I think is ridiculous!! You care more about turning essays in on time than about the content of the essays themselves. I consider that to be very irresponsible for a teacher! This paper is a big part of my final grade and the fact that you don't even care is incredible to me. Thanks a lot for nothing. I will remember your disrespect of me for the rest of my college career.

Dear Jordan,
I'm sorry you feel that way. After the holiday break, if you feel the need to register a formal complaint with my department, you can do so by contacting my department chair.

(Two more hours later)

Dear Professor,
Oops, sorry. I was trying to turn our paper in to a different class by mistake. My bad. Have a happy holiday break!

You might also like:
"I believe the children are our future... teach them well, and let them lead the way..."

Did you show him all the beauty he possesses inside? DID YOU???

Reply

Alicia December 19, 2011 at 9:15 AM
It is so comforting to see that I am not the only person who has these types of conversations with students for no good reason! In my case, it's SafeAssign...

Reply

Nicole December 19, 2011 at 9:26 AM
What an ass! I'm floored by the asshattery.

And the fact that you are totally inflexible about deadlines is ridiculous because you're obviously an unfeeling devil-spawn. YOU BASTARD!

Oops! I was trying to submit that comment using my toaster. Ma bad.

Reply

Ashley December 19, 2011 at 9:30 AM
Oh dear god. Mine tend to tell me they turned it in and I lost it. "I know I did it." "Did you check your back pack, locker, trash can." "Oh yeah it's in my notebook."

Love how quick they are to blame everyone but themselves.

Reply

Dr. Cynicism December 19, 2011 at 9:52 AM
LOVE. IT. Except that it rings so true and close to home that it slightly terrifies me. Okay, in all honesty, it *absolutely* terrifies me -- I'm having flashbacks from last week. I say at the end of this semester, we get together to drink it all away. And by drink, I mean slam our heads onto a desk repeatedly -- and then drink booze.

Great to see you post again man, please keep em coming. Or else I'll give all those students your telephone number and home address (somehow).

Reply

Homemaker Man December 19, 2011 at 10:18 AM
AHAHA AHHHHHAAAHAA ahhhhh.

Good to hear from you man

Reply

Dave December 19, 2011 at 10:35 AM
Glad to see a post!

And nowhere in that email stream did he attempt to prove that he'd done the paper by attaching the word doc? Interesting...

Reply

Mandy_Fish December 19, 2011 at 12:27 PM
I know. I was thinking the same thing — why didn't he just attach a word doc to the email to prove he wasn't trying to get an extra day or so to actually write the damn thing?

Reply
chksngr  December 19, 2011 at 12:37 PM
I haven't laughed that hard in a month. Thanks!!!! I love how he sent all those emails but never attached the paper...

Reply

Tim Riley  December 19, 2011 at 12:47 PM
Brilliant. Good to see a new post from you. Hope all is well-enjoy the holidays.

Reply

Vinny C  December 19, 2011 at 5:51 PM
I was wondering who this Jordan guy was I kept getting spam from. And I'm not even a member of that school's faculty... or have I ever been to that school... or California... or the US. And I'm not a teacher either.

Weird.

Reply

dbs  December 19, 2011 at 6:08 PM
Jordan seems kinda...aggressive-passive.

Happy to read your words again.

Reply

jillsmo  December 19, 2011 at 6:36 PM
Awwww. I remember when I used to be an arrogant, spoiled college asshole, too.

Seems like so long ago now...

Reply

Kristine  December 19, 2011 at 8:24 PM
Haha! Yes, what Jillsmo said :)

(Also, it's good to see you're posting as it suggests that you're still alive.)

Reply

Marty  December 19, 2011 at 9:00 PM
"giggle"

Reply

Cheryl  December 20, 2011 at 5:58 AM
Cut him a break. Mercury is retrograde. Nothing should matter at this point.

So nice to see you again.

Thanks for the belly laugh.

It's kinda terrifying that these idjits will one day be in charge of every damn thing.

Reply

Logical Libby  December 21, 2011 at 4:40 PM
Flunk him. He deserves it.
Leila  December 22, 2011 at 11:56 PM

I don't think you should be too harsh on him. College students are close to end of the hormonal age and finals week is just too stressful. As a freshman in college, I've had too many urges to bitch at my professor if something doesn't work out. Thankfully, I haven't, but I can understand why he blew up on you like that. It's not right or mature, but children will be children. When they are bombarded with stress, they lose even more of their capacity to think right. I'm sure he had fun in your class and the pressures just got to him.

By the way, in my opinion, you ARE unaccommodating. I've had issues where the website I bought my textbook from never sent it to me, but my TA's and professor were more than willing to give me the extension I needed. Well, maybe they didn't care about the extension because they were procrastinators in terms of grading... Either way, happy holidays!

Reply

J-Bird  December 23, 2011 at 2:18 PM

Priceless. I've been a college student since 2001 and never once have I not taken responsibility for late work. I've stayed up all night drawing pictures of myself then run like the wind to my art professor's mailbox at 5am just to make a "C".

I too am worried about our future but not enough for me to get a real job or anything. ProStud is good enough for me thank you very much.

Reply

Air Purifiers  December 27, 2011 at 1:51 PM

Wow, that kid has some balls. Even when I had professors I didn't like I never would have spoken to them in that way. He's lucky you don't flunk him for being a jerk! "Thanks a lot for nothing"?? I have a feeling I know which college you work at! Lol. A friend of mine is an English professor at Fullerton and some of the stories she tells me about her students are crazy, too. She should start a blog! :)

Reply

Cait  January 1, 2012 at 7:39 PM

As a college student, I find this hilarious. I have totally considered trying to pull a stunt like this before... "It's just not working! I have no idea why!" which is code for "PLEEEEEASE DON'T MAKE ME STAY UP ALL NIGHT WRITING THIS PAPER!"

Hahahaha. I love being in college. And I really love this story.

Reply

funny t-shirts  January 2, 2012 at 5:37 AM

hahahahar. very nice post. I really enjoy reading on it. thank you for sharing this wonderful post.

Reply

Jahm Ja Lee  January 2, 2012 at 3:28 PM

OMG! How about I apologize for being stupid and for calling your abilities into question? I had a student who claimed he kept sending me a paper and I kept telling him I didn't have it. Finally it came through but you know it's all my fault because I control how he sends the email and if it arrives in my box.

Reply

The Holmes  January 5, 2012 at 7:13 AM

The word "entitled" comes to mind, as do a few others.

Reply
SEO Services January 10, 2012 at 3:15 PM
Wow! All of that just due to a mistake on which site to turn in the paper on. Also I think that reading your blog makes me hold my former professors in higher regards.

Reply

OneZenMom January 17, 2012 at 9:41 AM
Ho. Ly. Cow.

What deadline Nazis you academicians are.

Don't worry, Jordan, when you get out in the "real world", I'm sure no one will hold you to these unreasonable expectations of personal responsibility. Or expect you to show a modicum of respect to the people you report too.

I *almost* pity the reality check that life has in store for kids like Jordan. Almost.

Reply

Vishesh January 24, 2012 at 8:37 PM
HAHAHA this is hilarious, and as a college kid myself, a little depressing. Out of curiosity, does anyone happen to know whether this is a universal phenomenon across time or if it's just my generation?

Reply

Gia February 5, 2012 at 7:15 PM
Hahahha what a jackass. I hope he felt like a moron. I mean, if he really was having a tech problem it's okay for him to be stressed, but saying "thanks a lot for nothing" is totally not acceptable to say to a professor - just like it won't be acceptable to say to a boss.

Reply

Vishesh March 3, 2012 at 2:29 PM
Didactic Pirate, I hope you come back soon. And also that everything in your real life is going ok. :)

Reply

Top seo forums March 9, 2012 at 2:25 AM
Great to make a visit to this site. Thanks for sharing.

Reply

busana muslim March 26, 2012 at 10:44 AM
This is a great posting I have read. I like your article.

Reply

Muskrat April 5, 2012 at 10:31 AM
This made me LOL. Am I allowed to say that without looking like a 15-year-old? I hope so.

Reply

Lauren April 6, 2013 at 3:05 PM
Could he not have just emailed it to you at this point?
I feel like such a creeper posting a comment so long after the OP, but this was one I just couldn't pass up asking.

I found your blog through one of your Dad Overboard posts that showed up in a reddit thread. I decided to go back and read the whole blog, and the whole time I was like "wh'en's he gonna come out, wh'en's he gonna get divorced?" At the start of reading each post my heart was racing and then I'd calm down when I realized "this isn't it." I'm excited to continue reading about your journey since the post that was finally "it." and am glad to know how
the story ends as of right now so that I don't get so stressed out reading! haha.

Enter your comment...

Comment as: [Google Account]

Publish  Preview

Awesome Inc. template. Powered by Blogger.