**Stat 597C: Class Jan 29, 2015**

**Case 1:** Every week “Mr. Excuse” shows up unprepared for lab. Sometimes he seems to have no clue what is going in class or where to find the lab handouts. Other times he shows up late and gets upset when he cannot finish the lab on time. He does not want to work with any other students because he claims they don’t pay any attention to him. He is more focused on trying to suck up to Susan, his TA, so that he can try to get her to answer most of the questions on the lab handout. Other students in the lab become frustrated because “Mr. Excuse” is monopolizing Susan’s time. He also tries to befriend Susan on Facebook.

Susan debated how to handle this situation. She did not want to make it seem personal, but his behavior was extremely frustrating. Finally, Susan got fed up and took Mr. Excuse into the hall and let him have it. “These excuses are not sufficient. Things happen. It is part of life. You are in college now. It is your responsibility to show up on time and be prepared for lab. I want to make it clear, this is not personal. It is for your benefit both now and in the future.” Mr. Excuse tells the course instructor that Susan does not want to help him during lab.

1. What are the issues involved?

2. What are some appropriate courses of action?

3. What are the implications of these actions?

4. How could the situation have been prevented or muted?

**Case 2:** Michael, a student in Emma’s lab section, never knew what to do in lab. He didn’t care. He just had to pass the course to keep his academic eligibility. He did not write anything on his lab handout and did not use Minitab to complete any of the data analyses. He spent most of his time texting and playing on his cell phone during lab. Emma warned him several times to quiet down and work on the lab, but Michael said his partner could finish the lab for him. He seemed to think that all he had to do to pass was show up. He even bragged that was true for some of his other courses.

Two weeks later, Michael’s lab partner Andrew came to Emma and told her, “I do not want to do work with Michael anymore because he does not do anything and, as a result, I do the entire lab by myself.” In response, Emma told Andrew to find a new group. Meanwhile Michael spent the rest of the semester trying to copy answers from the other students in the lab despite repeated attempts by Emma to have Michael work on the lab activity.

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**Case 3:** TA Joe normally graded and returned his homework’s on time, with notes for the students to help them improve on what they did wrong. Despite Joe’s conscientious efforts, there was one very bright student, Tina, who frequently came to him during office hours after a graded homework assignment was returned so as to point out exceptions and inconsistencies. Tina made Joe uneasy because she sometimes knew the material better than he did. Her air of superiority really bothered Joe.

One week, Joe swamped with his own tests and papers, was unable to grade the homework’s as well as usual. This time he only graded some of the problems. For efficiency, he entirely graded one student’s homework before going on to the next homework.

Tina came to office hours and bombarded him with issues about her graded homework. Joe was less prepared than usual and took a while to answer some questions, and was unable to answer others on the spot. Joe also realized that he did not correctly grade one of the problems. Tina became more vehement after each answer. In exasperation, in the presence of several graduate students, she said, “You know, you’re really dumb. How did you ever get into grad school?”

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**Case 4:** John, who does not like that a statistics class is required for his major, often does not complete his homework. One day, John was sick and missed the lab where he was to turn in his project. The next week, feeling better, John brought a doctor’s note with him to lab. His TA, Abigail, gave him one week to submit his project and told him to e-mail her if he had questions. She even arranged a meeting with John, but he didn’t show up. John came to next lab class without his project. When Abigail asked where his project was, John’s abrupt response was, “I have other much more important classes besides this class to worry about. I’ll email you my project tonight.” The project did not appear.

Two days later, John emailed Abigail, asking her to meet him to talk about the project. Frustrated, Abigail ignored his e-mail. A couple of days later, John went to see Abigail during her office hours to turn in his project. “Too late,” she said. “You have a zero for that project.” John was furious and started yelling and swearing at Abigail.

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Case 5: Near the end of his shift with the 7-9 PM evening office hours, two of Matt’s students (brothers) walked in with homework problems due the next day. By the time Matt helped the brother’s work through several questions on the problem set, the clock approached 9:30 PM. As Matt’s frustration level rose, his replies became shorter, while attempting his best to not give away any answers. The brothers, after realizing that Matt would not just give them the answers, gathered their belongings and left at 10:00 PM. Matt graded the homework problem set over the weekend. The brothers were not happy with the low scores they got when the homework was returned in lecture. Later that week at the close of the TA meeting, the course professor asked Matt a peculiar question. “Harry and Lloyd wanted me to re-grade their homework because they thought their answers were right. They said they did the homework just like you told them to get the right answers. What did you tell them?”

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Case 6: Alice is a first-year graduate student who is assigned to conduct labs. It is her first time as both a student and teaching assistant in the United States. At the first few labs, students were too quiet. When Alice asked a question, nobody answered and they all looked at her quietly. However after a few more labs where they had gained familiarity with each other, the class changed from “never talking” to “couldn’t stop talking”. When Alice tried to explain a statistical concept to the entire class, they didn’t pay attention. Instead they asked her certain questions again and again that showed they hadn’t paid attention. Although Alice reminded them to pay attention, they merely apologized and went back to chatting after a few minutes. They treated Alice differently from their professor. They would ask, “Can you just tell us the answer?” or “Can we skip the quiz?” Alice felt she had lost control. A week later, the professor of the called Alice in and told her that he had received some complaints from her students where they indicated that they could not understand Alice’s explanations because of her accent.

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