

student #2

**If you had to write on the world I present to student teachers, what might you say?**

First and foremost I must say that it was an honor and a privilege to work with Bryan this semester. **His role in accordance with this class was “supervisor,” but he was much more than just that. Bryan stood as a mentor and a role model and without his support I’m not sure I would have made it through the semester.**

Bryan and I came to form a close bond before I had ever stepped foot into the field. After missing multiple classes at the beginning of the semester for personal reasons, Bryan e-mailed me and expressed his concern. This e-mail is provided below ...

*P---*,

*We missed you in class today. Our crew is so small that when someone is missing we really know it. When you are out in the field, be sure to have a plan of action for the days you miss (although I hope there will be none). While student teaching you will be responsible to your mentor teacher, your students and your school and every absence matters. Attendance, of course, is extremely important.*

*I have copies of the materials from the two classes you missed. I hope all is well. As you grow with the profession and transition from the undergraduate life to a post-graduate world, your responsibility to be present and accounted for will be a part of your evaluation. With this said, my cell phone is 315-383-9855. It might be a good idea to have it so if you need to call your school or think you will miss Kelly's class again, you can ring me up.*

*I wanted to send you a kind note to squash a potential problem while you're in the field. My experience shows that students who do not "call in sick" or "show up late" can be a source of tension for their mentor teachers and the evaluations they give.*

*Best,*

*Bryan*

Bryan demonstrated how important it was to develop a sincere and honest relationship. My relationship with him has been very genuine and Bryan has had my best interests in mind since day one. Not only has he helped me learn as a student in the classroom, but also as a student in life. **I remember him telling me the story of Sisyphus, a character in greek mythology who was condemned by the Gods to roll a huge boulder up a hill, only to watch it tumble down once it neared the top. Sisyphus repeated this process throughout eternity because he was never able to roll the boulder to the very top of the hill. This story taught me to persevere and to continue fighting through my struggles in life. It was just the motivation I needed to turn my life around. Having said that, I owe Bryan more than just this recommendation and someday I hope that I can repay him for all the support and advice he has given me.**

### **Was the feedback I gave you from observations and field notes worthwhile to you as fledgling teachers?**

The professional advice that Bryan gave from his observations and field notes were incredibly helpful. Bryan observed with open ears and open eyes and after every visit he provided anywhere from five to seven pages worth of notes based on what he examined. He also provided several strengths that I possessed and encouraged me to take advantage of those skills. Furthermore, Bryan provided suggestions that he thought I could benefit from as pre-service teacher. His suggestions proved to be the most valuable advice he gave because they were strategies and approaches that I was able to apply to my teaching for the benefit of my students.

### **What advice that I gave you was a flop or successful?**

- One of the assignments that I asked my students to complete was an “anger” poem, in which students wrote about something that truly upset them. This was an idea I took from Bryan and not only did it tie in great with the theme of my unit, which was adversity, but it was also very relevant and applicable to the lives of my students. Unfortunately, anger and adversity was something my students knew far too well. Some of them had been through more obstacles than what most people face in a lifetime. This writing prompt allowed my students a nonviolent way to release the anger they had bottled up inside. The majority of my students were eager to read their poems because it allowed them the opportunity to share what sort of struggles they were going through. Overall, this helped the students in my class connect on a similar level, as many of them were able to relate to one another and their difficulties in life.
- During one activity I asked students to read and paraphrase a poem that I had assigned to them. As students worked on this task I noticed that a few of them were struggling in their attempts to do so. Since I already knew that several of my students were very artistic and creative, I told those students that if they’d like, they could summarize their poem in pictures, rather than in words. This was an idea that I took from Bryan who had our class do a similar activity in SED 413.
- After his first visit to Corcoran Bryan realized that almost half my class would stroll in at least five to ten minutes late on a daily basis. This proved to be very frustrating simply because I’d have to start and stop my lesson every two minutes as students came in tardy. In response to this, Bryan suggested that I implement an agenda in which I posted on the overhead everyday before the start of class. Providing an agenda on the overhead saved me from reiterating myself over and over again and having to explain what we were doing every 30 seconds. The agenda worked like a checklist, which included each task and activity that I wanted to get through in that particular lesson. As we completed a specific task I

would check it off so that students knew exactly what we had accomplished, what we were currently working on, and what we needed to finish.

- Before I even began student teaching, Bryan suggested that I create an outline of my poetry unit. This outline included the essential question, the theme of my unit, a list of givens, the three major assignments, and an explanation as to how the students will be assessed. I provided this handout to students on the very first so that my kids could ask any questions, comments, or concerns that they had. Students were encouraged to look over this description of the unit so that they knew what to expect in the weeks to come. Students benefited from this outline because they were able to refer to this handout throughout the unit and they'd know what was planned ahead, what each assignment entailed, and how each assignment would be graded and assessed.