

**TEEL 673, Problems in Education I - The Good Teacher: Ethical Choices and Decisions**  
(Undergraduate Version)

Instructor of Record:

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COURSE CREDIT:

3 undergraduate credits

DATES, TIMES, NUMBERS OF SESSIONS

Organization dependent (26-40+ each fifty  
minute sessions each semester, annually.)

**COURSE DESCRIPTION:** This asynchronous seminar/workshop delivered course is designed to enable teachers to develop new knowledge to help them or others witnessing sexual misconduct by colleagues to make appropriate interventions. As a character in an interactive movie participants will maneuver through the complex, emotional, and often morally ambiguous world of teaching. Students will make decisions at strategic points in the interactive movie answering thought-provoking questions about seemingly insignificant yet pivotal situations that teachers, administrators, and others who interact with young people face throughout the year.

## **COURSE OUTLINE/CONTENT**

### **COURSE FORMAT**

This course will include a video presentation, an interactive video course with several decision trees, , the assigned book, and additional resources linked to this syllabus. Students will be evaluated through completion of the activities outlined in this syllabus.

Overall Course Objectives:

- Reflect knowledge from courses, movie, readings, and other sources
- Demonstrate implementation and application to classroom or organization
- Demonstrate writing skills and use of APA format

**COURSE OBJECTIVES:** The students will

1. Describe the lack of preparation teachers normally receive in pre-service training
2. Summarize the slippery slope of sexual misconduct
3. Compare and contrast what characteristics of a caring, holistic teacher lead to boundary violations

### **TEXTS, READINGS, AND INSTRUCTIONAL RESOURCES:**

TEXT: Lane, F. S. (2020). *Cybertraps for Educators 2.0*. Matham.  
[https://www.amazon.com/%20Cybertraps-Educators-2-0-Frederick%20Lane/dp/B08HRZ2JN/ref=tmm\\_pap\\_swatch\\_0?%20encoding=UTF8&qid=1602207438&sr=1-2-25b07e09-600a-4f0d-816e](https://www.amazon.com/%20Cybertraps-Educators-2-0-Frederick%20Lane/dp/B08HRZ2JN/ref=tmm_pap_swatch_0?%20encoding=UTF8&qid=1602207438&sr=1-2-25b07e09-600a-4f0d-816e)

Webinar/Seminar: *The Good Teacher (DVD left sidebar)*

### COURSE REQUIREMENTS:

- Each student will participate in a nationally recognized instructor seminar and workshop  
  
\*\*Note,\*\* Students attending a public access presentation (*any on-site lecture and training over a period of 40 hours+*) with Dr. Troy Hutchings or Dr. Glenn Lipson are eligible for a waiver of the online video and associated video activities. Submit a scanned participation certificate of any type, provided from the event as proof, along with your required academic paper(s) outlined in Graded Assignments in the Activity 1 and 2 Sections. The 40 hours must be documented by a conference schedule or agenda with time listed, as well as a certificate from the event when one is provided by the local sponsor.

Or:

- Students not participating in a on-site presentation mentioned above, must complete the online WILL INTERACTIVE, Inc. Video, *The Good Teacher* to receive credit, and all activities in 1 – 4, down below.

### REQUIRED VIDEO

*The Good Teacher (DVD left sidebar)*

“Mr. Holland’s Opus,” (watch or rewatch), You Tube video clip from the movie, “Mr. Holland’s Opus”  
[Someone to Watch Over Me.](#)

Retrieved from <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Tb0s4cnT3hM&feature=endscreen&NR=1>

REQUIRED [Tutorials](#) (see related Activities).

### Activity 1

Student Reading and Writing Assignments:

1. The Lack of and Need for Teacher Training and Guidelines in Teacher/student Relationships
  - a) Complete a two-page reflection paper on concepts presented during The Good Teacher Seminar/or Video and the reading assignment above. Include: Relate the reasons teachers pursue careers in education.
  - b) Reflect on pre-service training and discuss why teachers are so unprepared for the immersion in the complex world of teacher/student relationships.
  - c) Relate how the teacher/student relationship is a continual emotional and intellectual interchange.
2. In this Activity you will navigate through the associated The Good Teacher [Tutorial](#), view Mr. Holland’s Opus movie specifically noting this [video clip](#), refer to *Cybertraps for Educators 2.0*, and

construct a Venn diagram of similarities and differences, and write a Compare and Contrast Paper that covers the following points:

- a) Discuss the tension between the conflicting messages teachers receive and how teacher and student characteristics and circumstances can lead to dangerous relationships.
- b) Depict some of the conditions necessary for the “perfect storm” of an inappropriate relationship to form between a teacher and a student. Include the concept of “famine of the soul” and a portrayal of characteristics of vulnerable students.
- c) Consider the attributes that make a teacher successful and possibly “award-winning.” Discuss how those same attributes could lead to a teacher becoming overly involved with individual students.
- d) Consider the circumstances in Mr. Ken Lamberton’s life as well as Mr. Holland’s life and list at least five ways they parallel your description. Reflect how you may have watched Mr. Holland’s Opus without this information and missed what was happening, but now that you have some awareness you can see the potential for the possibility of an inappropriate relationship. Relate how this heightened awareness can help you and others to circumvent your peers from potentially dangerous relationships. Discuss anything similar in your own experience that happened to you or to a fellow teacher and explain how you (or the other teacher) avoided (or did not avoid) boundary violations.
- e) Attach to your paper a Venn diagram to show the diverging and overlapping characteristics of effective teachers who do not violate boundaries and those who do violate boundaries.

Length of Paper: 3 - 5 pages

Learning Objectives:

1. Describe the lack of preparation teachers normally receive in pre-service training
2. Compare and contrast what characteristics of a caring, holistic teacher lead to boundary violations

## Activity 2

“The Good Teacher” Interactive Video and *Cybertraps for Educators 2.0*.

**Pre-Activity:** Navigate through the Interactive Video “The Good Teacher” and participate in the decision tree making your choices, and then again making choices you know are poor to see what the ending could have been. Pay close attention to how those around the potential perpetrator (Clayton Jennings) and the perpetrator (Mike Roberts) did or could have intervened for a less destructive ending. refer to *Cybertraps for Educators 2.0*.

### Main Task

In this Activity you will complete the pre-activity requirements and write an Analysis and Integration Paper that:

- a) Describes the “slippery slope” and how over-involvement with students and a series of boundary violations can lead to sexual misconduct. Include risks involving social media and how they can be neutralized.
- b) Analyzes the continuum of behaviors (between 1 and 10) regarding interactions between teachers and students, with 1 being the most appropriate and 10 representing the most inappropriate, and documents one possible behavior for each point along the continuum (a total of 10 behaviors).

0      1      2      3      4      5      6      7      8      9      10  
*appropriate* *inappropriate*

- c) Provides an exploration of why trouble begins with crossing the first boundary.
- d) Discusses how bystanders (those around the perpetrator) did or could have intervened in at least five different points and helped to prevent the misconduct.

Length of Paper: 4 - 6 pages

Learning Objectives

- 2. Summarize the slippery slope of sexual misconduct

### Activity 3: Presentation

**Activity Resources:** “The Good Teacher” Interactive Video and *Cybertraps for Educators 2.0*.

#### Main Task

In this activity you will complete the pre-activity requirements and prepare a PowerPoint or Prezi presentation to brief city officials, parents, administrators, and other interested parties to describe how inappropriate relationships develop, the need for ethical guidelines and professional development and the major points you have learned thus far.

Length: 6-10 slides (with 2-4 references on a reference slide)

No more than 6 bullets per slide or 6 words per bullet

Notes Length: 150-200 words for each slide

Be sure to include citations for quotations and paraphrases with references in APA format and style. Save the file with the correct course code information.

Learning Objectives:

- 1. Describe the lack of preparation teachers normally receive in pre-service training
- 2. Summarize the slippery slope of sexual misconduct
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### Activity 4: Application Paper

#### Main Task

In this activity you will complete the pre-activity requirements and write an Application Paper. Review the discussion questions (*below*) posed for the course. Choose five of the questions that prompt your thinking and prepare a critical analysis of how you would handle the situations presented.

Length of Paper: 4-5 pages

Students have one full semester to complete the above activities. (*Students can complete their effort at a faster pace if their personal schedules permit.*)

Teacher

## **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:**

### Course Questions:

1. What can administration do to foster an environment where improper relationships are less likely to occur?
2. What are the possible cues or warning red flags that would cause you to intervene to protect a colleague or a student from a potential inappropriate relationship between a teacher and a student?
3. How does the use of social media and digital devices lead to boundary violations?
4. What are possible risk factors from a teacher's personal history that might compel him/her to try to rescue students?
5. What are some events that might be currently happening in a teacher's life (in the present) that might make him/her more vulnerable to inappropriate relationships with students?
6. What are the possible risk factors from a student's personal life that might result in that student seeking an inappropriate relationship with a teacher?
7. What are some preventative steps that will allow you to keep your balance in your role as a teacher?
8. How does being dedicated exclusively in your life to your role as a teacher expose you to becoming overly involved with a student?
9. Can a teacher be over dedicated?
10. What are the dangers or benefits of feeling a particular connection to one student?
11. What are possible actions that a teacher might use to mask from others an inappropriate relationship with a student?
12. How does a teacher justify to himself/herself the gradual decisions that lead to an inappropriate relationship with others?
13. What are possible signs that a teacher's relationship is progressing down the slippery slope?
14. How do you respond to a colleague who you feel might be in jeopardy?
15. When is it appropriate to go to a colleague about concerns? When is it no longer appropriate to go to a colleague about concerns, but rather instead directly fulfill your mandatory reporting duties so a student is not placed at further risk?
16. What are some of the possible effects for a student (male or female) that arise from an inappropriate relationship with a teacher?
17. What are some of the possible consequences to the teacher for being in an inappropriate relationship with a student?
18. What are some possible requests (either implicit or explicit) that either a parent or student may make of a teacher that will lead to a relationship that will end badly.
19. Describe the gradual steps that may eventually lead to a teacher becoming overly involved with a student that jeopardizing his/her career?

20. In order to be more fully aware of those vulnerabilities that you may possess, please answer the following:

a) If you were single and dating, what aspects of your background would cause a person to wonder whether or not they should be in a relationship with you?

b) What experiences have you had in your life that, if questioned by an attorney, might lead a jury to believe that your judgment may at times be clouded?

21. What do you need to recognize within yourself, based on your life history, which may result in feeling a unique connection with a student?

22. If a teacher has become consumed with the needs of a particular student because of his prior life experiences, how can that teacher step back and not act on those impulses?

23. In order to be more fully aware of your strengths in establishing boundaries, what experiences have you had in your life that will help you navigate the emotional needs of your students?

24. How does the relationship between a teacher and his/her colleagues change when a teacher becomes overly involved with his students?

25. What strategies can you apply to avoid missteps in your relationship with students?

26. When you find yourself concerned or confused about a relationship with a student, how should you go about making a correction?

27. What resources are available to assist you in making those corrections?

28. Out of a classroom of students, what would single out one particular student to be more at risk for an inappropriate relationship?

29. List possible signs that a teacher may have lost the ability to keep the appropriate emotional and professional separation between himself/herself and a student.

30. What are the signs that your desire to “rescue” a student may lead to disaster?

31. What are some societal myths, or implicit expectations of teachers, that make it easier for a teacher to justify having an inappropriate relationship with a student?

32. What is the difference between an opportunistic offender or a pre-meditated offender in terms of the progression and development of an improper relationship?

\*\*\* Use the template at this link: [Dr. Donna Rice - 6th Edition APA Template 2012](#). Follow the template, which includes a title page, introduction, main body, reflection, conclusion, and reference page. Follow the spacing guide provided in the template to ensure your paper is double spaced – no more, no less. Use a minimum of two levels of APA 6<sup>th</sup> Edition headings and include page numbers.

All homework will be emailed to your assigned university instructor: [drdonnausa@gmail.com](mailto:drdonnausa@gmail.com)

#### Course Grading:

Undergraduate Credit: three credits

Post Seminar/Video Reflection Paper: 20%

Integration Paper: 20%

Presentation: 20%

Application Paper: 30%

Other: Student Produced E-Journal: 10% (*Submitted electronically only upon request by their instructor.*)

Grade Distribution:

93%-100%	A
85%-92%	B
78%-84%	C
70%-77%	D
69% and below	F