

Ethical and Professional Dilemmas for Educators



Professional Responsibility for Educators

I. Situations Involving Cadets

Scenario 1

Electronic Communications with Cadets

SFC Keene is a veteran teacher who is very popular with her students. She frequently offers students extra help after school, so it's not uncommon to see students visiting her classroom after school. She has tutored one of her students, Melissa, in a variety of subjects over a two-year period. During that time, SFC Keene has emailed and texted Melissa's cell phone using her personal number and email address. At first, the exchanges were very general; sometimes unrelated to school work (e.g., asking Melissa about a sick family member, or how she was getting along with friends). Recently, the student began to text her teacher about more personal feelings.

Discussion Questions:

- *What possible issues / concerns might this scenario raise?*
- *How could this situation become a violation of the law, the "Code" or other school / district policies?*
- *In this situation, what are some potential negative consequences for the Instructor, for the Cadets and the school community?*
- *What responses/actions will result in a more positive outcome and/or what proactive measures*

(a) RESPONSIBILITY TO THE CADET:

(1) *The professional Instructor, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the Cadet, shall:*

(A) *Remain steadfast in guaranteeing equal opportunity for quality education for all children, and not unlawfully discriminate.*

(b) RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PROFESSION:

(1) *The professional Instructor, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the profession of teaching shall:*

(A) *Conduct himself or herself as a professional realizing that his or her actions reflect directly upon the status and substance of the profession.*

UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

(c) *The professional Instructor, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the Cadet, shall not:*

(A) *Engage in any misconduct which would put Cadets at risk.*

I. Situations Involving Cadets

Scenario 2
Transporting Cadets

MAJ Zales is a veteran teacher and a popular Instructor for several sports. She is well known for her concern for the welfare of her Cadets. Since the high school has limited resources to accommodate practices and games for some of its teams, Cadets are responsible for their own transportation to other sports venues. Consequently, it is not uncommon for MAJ Zales to provide personal transportation for one or more Cadets to athletic events and back home after events.

Discussion Questions:

- *What possible issues/concerns might this scenario raise?*
- *How could this situation become a violation of the law, the “Code” or other school /district policies?*
- *In this situation, what are some potential negative consequences for the Instructor, for the Cadets and the school community?*
- *What responses/actions will result in a more positive outcome and/or what proactive measures might be considered?*

(a) *RESPONSIBILITY TO THE CADET:*

(1) The professional Instructor, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the Cadet, shall:

- (A) Remain steadfast in guaranteeing equal opportunity for quality education for all children, and not unlawfully discriminate.***

(b) *RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PROFESSION:*

(1) The professional Instructor, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the profession of teaching, shall:

- (A) Conduct himself or herself as a professional realizing that his or her actions reflect directly upon the status and substance of the profession.***

(c) *UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT*

(1) The professional Instructor, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the Cadet, shall not:

- (A) Engage in any misconduct which would put Cadets at risk.***

I. Situations Involving Cadets

Scenario 3 *Contact with Cadets*

SGM Rogers is very popular with the students. He often converses and jokes with the students in the halls between classes. It is common for him to greet female students and staff with a hug and male students and staff with a pat on the back. One student has complained to the administration that SGM Rogers' hugs or physical contact makes him uncomfortable. SGM Rogers has been advised by the principal to stop all physical contact with students and staff. He agrees to try, but he can't promise anything because that is the way he is and he isn't doing anything wrong.

Discussion Questions:

- *What possible issues/concerns might this scenario raise?*
- *How could this situation become a violation of the law, the "Code" or other school /district policies?*
- *In this situation, what are some potential negative consequences for the Instructor, for the Cadets and the school community?*
- *What responses/actions will result in a more positive outcome and/or what proactive measures might be considered?*

(a) RESPONSIBILITY TO THE CADET:

(1) *The professional Instructor, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the Cadet, shall:*

- (A) *Recognize, respect and uphold the dignity and worth of Cadets as individual human beings, and, therefore, deal justly and considerately with Cadets.***

(b) RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PROFESSION:

(1) *The professional Instructor, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the profession of teaching, shall:*

- (A) *Conduct himself or herself as a professional realizing that his or her actions reflect directly upon the status and substance of the profession.***
- (B) *Strive to exercise the highest level of professional judgment.***

(c) UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

(1) *The professional educator, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the Cadet, shall not:*

- (A) *Sexually or physically harass or abuse Cadets.***

II. Situations Involving Professional Ethics

Scenario 4

Use of Social Networks

LTC Charles is a new teacher in his first 90 days of employment in his district. He has made friends with many staff members and invited them to visit his social network page. On his page, LTC Charles has listed quite a bit of personal information. One of his colleagues “friended” him on the site and became very concerned because the site included a statement that LTC Charles was attracted to young girls, stating “the younger the better.”

The colleague notified the principal of this information.

Discussion Questions:

- *What possible issues/concerns might this scenario raise?*
- *How could this situation become a violation of the law, the “Code” or other school /district policies?*
- *In this situation, what are some potential negative consequences for the Instructor, for the Cadets and the school community?*
- *What responses/actions will result in a more positive outcome and/or what proactive measures might be*

(a) **RESPONSIBILITY TO THE CADET:**

(1) ***The professional Instructor, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the Cadet, shall:***

- (A) *Nurture in Cadets lifelong respect and compassion for themselves and other human beings regardless of race, ethnic origin, gender, social class, disability, religion or sexual orientation.*

(b) **RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PROFESSION:**

(1) ***The professional Instructor, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the profession of Instructor, shall:***

- (A) *Conduct himself or herself as a professional realizing that his or her actions reflect directly upon the status and substance of the profession.*

(c) **UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT**

(1) ***The professional Instructor, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the Cadet, shall not:***

- (A) *Sexually or physically harass or abuse Cadets.*
(B) *Engage in any misconduct that would put Cadets at risk.*

(i) ***The professional Instructor, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the profession of teaching, shall not:***

- (A) *Engage in any misconduct which would impair his or her ability to teach.*

II. *Situations Involving Professional Ethics*

Scenario 5 *DUI Convictions*

MSG Boynton is an educator with 20 years of service in the public schools and seven years of service within her current district. Recently, MSG Boynton, along with several other colleagues from her school, attended a wedding reception for another staff member. During the evening, she consumed several alcoholic beverages and, on her way home, was arrested and charged with driving under the influence (DUI). On two prior occasions within the past three years, MSG Boynton had been convicted of DUI offenses. This most recent event was reported by the local news.

Discussion Questions:

- *What possible issues/concerns might this scenario raise?*
- *How could this situation become a violation of the law, the “Code” or other school /district policies?*
- *In this situation, what are some potential negative consequences for the Instructor, for the Cadets and the school community?*

(a) *RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PROFESSION:*

- (1) ***The professional Instructor, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the profession of teaching, shall:***
- (A) *Conduct himself or herself as a professional realizing that his or her action reflects directly upon the status and substance of the profession.*
 - (B) *Strive to exercise the highest level of professional judgment.*

(b) *RESPONSIBILITY TO THE COMMUNITY*

- (1) ***The professional Instructor, in full recognition of the public trust vested in the teaching profession, shall:***
- (A) *Be cognizant of the influence of educators upon the community-at-large; obey local, state and national laws.*

(c) *UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT*

- (1) ***The professional Instructor, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the profession of teaching, shall not:***
- (A) *Engage in any misconduct which would impair his or her ability to teach*
- (2) ***The professional Instructor, in full recognition of the public trust vested in the teaching profession, shall not:***
- (A) *Be convicted in a court of law of a crime involving moral turpitude or of any crime of*

II. *Situations Involving Professional Ethics*

Scenario 6

Instructor Documentation

COL Riley had the opportunity to coach the boys' track team, provided he receives a coaching certificate prior to the first day of the season. Two weeks prior to the start of the season, after being questioned by the school's athletic director, COL Riley submitted his application for a coaching permit. During the application process he noticed that his CPR card had expired, so he immediately registered for the next available workshop. However, in order to "expedite" the application process, he changed the dates on his old card to make it appear valid, figuring that he would eventually meet this requirement.

Discussion Questions:

- *What possible issues/concerns might this scenario raise?*
- *How could this situation become a violation of the law, the "Code" or other school /district policies?*
- *In this situation, what are some potential negative consequences for the Instructor, for the Cadets and the school community?*
- *What responses/actions will result in a more positive outcome and/or what proactive measures might*

(a) *RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PROFESSION:*

(1) *The professional Instructor, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the profession of teaching, shall:*

- (A) *Conduct himself or herself as a professional realizing that his or her action reflects directly upon the status and substance of the profession.*
- (B) *Strive to exercise the highest level of professional judgment.*

(b) *RESPONSIBILITY TO THE COMMUNITY*

(1) *The professional Instructor, in full recognition of the public trust vested in the profession, shall:*

- (A) *Be cognizant of the influence of Instructors upon the community-at-large, and, therefore, shall not knowingly misrepresent facts or make false statements.*

(c) *UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT*

(1) *The professional Instructor, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the profession of teaching, shall not:*

- (A) *Obtain licensure or employment by misrepresentation or fraud.*
- (B) *Misrepresent his, her or another's professional qualifications or competencies.*

II. *Situations Involving Community and Family*

Scenario 7

Instructor Public Behavior

CPT. Ramos, a single male Instructor, plays baseball on a local sports team. One Saturday evening, he was with team-mates socializing and having a few drinks at a post-game barbecue at a local park. Later in the evening, several male and female Cadets from his LET 4 class arrived at the barbecue by car. They had all been drinking and continued to drink at the barbecue. As the evening progressed, a very friendly rapport developed between the Instructor and the Cadets.

Discussion Questions:

- *What possible issues/concerns might this scenario raise?*
- *How could this situation become a violation of the law, the “Code” or other school/district policies?*
- *In this situation, what are some potential negative consequences for the Instructor, for the Cadets and the school community?*
- *What responses/actions will result in a more positive outcome and/or what proactive measures might be considered?*

(a) *RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PROFESSION:*

(1) *The professional Instructor, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the profession of teaching, shall:*

- (A) *Conduct himself or herself as a professional realizing that his or her action reflects directly upon the status and substance of the profession.*
- (B) *Strive to exercise the highest level of professional judgment.*

(b) *RESPONSIBILITY TO THE COMMUNITY*

(1) *The professional Instructor, in full recognition of the public trust vested in the teaching profession, shall:*

- (A) *Be cognizant of the influence of educators upon the community-at-large, and, therefore, shall not knowingly misrepresent facts or make false statements*

(c) *UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT*

(1) *The professional Instructor in full recognition of his or her obligation to the Cadet, shall not:*

- A) *Sexually or physically harass or abuse Cadets.*
- B) *Emotionally abuse Cadets.*
- C) *Engage in any misconduct which would put Cadets at risk.*

III. Situations Involving Community and Family

Scenario 8

Cadet Confidentiality

SSG Dixon, a third year 7th grade math teacher, complains to her next door neighbor about a difficult student in her class, identifying the child by name and providing specific details about the student's academic record. SSG Dixon says that the neighbor doesn't know the student personally, so there should be no problem discussing the student and the situation.

Discussion Questions:

- *What possible issues/concerns might this scenario raise?*
- *How could this situation become a violation of the law, the "Code" or other school /district policies?*
- *In this situation, what are some potential negative consequences for the Instructor, for the Cadets and the school community?*
- *What responses/actions will result in a more positive outcome and/or what proactive measures might be considered?*

(a) RESPONSIBILITY TO THE CADET:

(1) *The professional Instructor in full recognition of his or her obligation to the Cadet, shall:*

- (A) *Maintain the confidentiality of all information concerning Cadets obtained in the proper course of the educational process, and dispense such information only when prescribed or directed by federal or state law or professional practice.***

(b) RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PROFESSION:

(1) *The professional Instructor, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the profession of teaching, shall:*

- (A) *Conduct himself or herself as a professional realizing that his or her actions reflect directly upon the status and substance of the profession.***
- (B) *Strive to exercise the highest level of professional judgment.***

(c) UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

(1) *The professional Instructor in full recognition of his or her obligation to the Cadet, shall not:*

- (A) *Engage in any misconduct which would put Cadets at risk.***

III. Situations Involving Community and Family

Scenario 9

Instructor Using Position for Personal Gain

CSM Williams contacts parents using the school’s email, notifying them that she is available on weekends and after school to tutor Cadets in drill and marksmanship, at a reasonable hourly rate. Several of her Cadets have been struggling with these lessons. CSM Williams feels that the extra time out of school will assist her Cadets in mastering their course work and naturally benefit her Cadets.

Discussion Questions:

- *What possible issues/concerns might this scenario raise?*
- *How could this situation become a violation of the law, the “Code” or other school /district policies?*
- *In this situation, what are some potential negative consequences for the Instructor, for the Cadets and the school community?*
- *What responses/actions will result in a more positive outcome and/or what proactive measures might*

Consider the following sections of the Code of Professional Responsibility for Educators: Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies Section 10-145d-400a

(a) RESPONSIBILITY TO THE COMMUNITY

1. The professional Instructor in full recognition of the public trust vested in the teaching profession, shall:

(A) *Endeavor to secure equal educational opportunities for all children.*

UNPROFESSIONAL CONDUCT

(b) The professional Instructor, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the Cadet, shall not:

1. Abuse his or her position as a professional with Cadets for private advantage.

2. The professional Instructor, in full recognition of the public trust vested in the teaching profession, shall not:

(A) *Exploit the educational institution for personal gain.*

III. Situations Involving Bullying

Scenario 10 Emotional Bullying

COL Holland instructs LET 1 Cadets. She gives the class directions for a writing assignment that is to be completed by the end of the period. Cadet Johnson isn't paying attention and missed the directions. He frequently bothers his classmates by humming, tapping his pen, reminding them of the rules or speaking out of turn. He asks for the directions to be repeated. The other Cadets in the class begin to make fun of Cadet Johnson and ridicule him for not paying attention once again. COL Holland, feeling frustrated because she is asked to repeat the instructions once again, continues passing out materials and ignores Cadet Johnson and the other students.

Discussion Questions:

- *What possible issues/concerns might this scenario raise?*
- *How could this situation become a violation of the law, the "Code" or other school /district policies?*
- *In this situation, what are some potential negative consequences for the Instructor, for the Cadets and the school community?*
- *What responses/actions will result in a more positive outcome and/or what proactive measures might be considered?*

Consider the following sections of the Code of Professional Responsibility for Instructors Regulations of Connecticut State Agencies Section 10-145d-400a

(a) RESPONSIBILITY TO THE CADET:

1. *The professional Instructor, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the Cadet, shall:*
 - (A) Recognize, respect and uphold the dignity and worth of Cadets as individual human beings, and, therefore, deal justly and considerately with Cadets.
 - (B) Nurture in Cadets lifelong respect and compassion for themselves and other human beings regardless of race, ethnic origin, gender, social class, disability, religion, or sexual orientation.
 - (C) Create an emotionally and physically safe and healthy learning environment for all Cadets.

(b) RESPONSIBILITY TO THE PROFESSION:

1. *The professional Instructor, in full recognition of his or her obligation to the profession of teaching, shall:*
 - (A) Strive to exercise the highest level of professional judgment.

**This Code of Ethics for Educators was developed
by the distinguished AAE Advisory Board and
by the Executive Committee of AAE.**