Bad Teachers

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Not every class can be a cakewalk. From three-hour labs to brutal exams, there are a number of factors that can take a class from an "easy A" to a nightmare in no time. But sometimes, the class matters less than who’s teaching it. We asked Iowa State students to tell us about some of their worst experiences with instructors—with any luck, your MWF 8 a.m. won’t seem so bad in comparison.

Mikayla and Alix
Mikayla: “There were two TAs who would walk around just to make sure no one was talking or on their phone, but one TA was awful. If there was someone in the middle of the row on their phone, he would literally squeeze past everyone—everyone had to move their bag and shift their bodies so the TA could get through.”

“One time a girl was texting in the row in front of me and the TA couldn’t get to her for some reason, so he came to me and asked me to get her attention just so he could yell at her. At that point, that whole class could have been texting, and I’d be less distracted than I was by the TA making a big scene just to get someone off their phone. This happened every class.”

Alix: “On one of the review days right before we had a test the teacher was trying to tell us what would be on the test and he was yelling at people about their phones and we couldn’t hear. I sat at the back of the class and the TA was standing behind me and yelling right over my shoulder. I turned around and asked him to please stop yelling at people right over my head because I couldn’t hear the teacher and it was important that I knew what was on the test. He told me to ‘mind my own business’ and shot me a dirty look and kept doing it anyway.”

“At the end of the class he waited at the end of my row and let everyone out, but when it was my turn, he stepped in front of me, got in my way and as he ‘let me pass’ he shoved me with his shoulder/arm/hip and I fell into two other students that were passing by. Everyone kind of gasped and stopped and stared at him. Someone reported it and I was called into the office and asked to tell them what happened. I did, and he was removed from the class.”

Libby
“My TA is one of the people who knows he is smarter than everyone and likes to show off about it. He is a stand-up comedian, or so I’ve heard ... His teaching styles are awful. He belittles his students with what he says. He loses a lot of papers and makes the students redo them. He also loves to give us feedback on how we did our lab ‘wrong’ the week after. He doesn’t give us any feedback on how we are doing the experiment during the time we are doing it. My usual grade on my post-labs is below half because I can’t even ask enough questions to understand how to do it. I have had to give several reviews for him and I have made many, many suggestions as to how he can improve teaching the class. Going to this lab is the worst part of my week.”

Lindsey
“My friends in the dorm convinced me that Tinder was God’s gift to the world and that I needed to get one or else I wasn’t living. I made my profile and ended up having some shitty conversations with douchey guys and wasn’t convinced. I had always joked around with my friends that I’d just hook up with my TA in class like they do in movies.”

“A couple weeks later, I got bored in class and decided to swipe through Tinder, and to my surprise I came across my TA so I jokingly swiped right. That night, I was looking at my matches and he matched me. I then decided to delete my Tinder and never listen to my dorm friends again. This also made SI sessions extremely awkward from then on out.”