



Dr. Leone

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Dr. Leone is teaching a sociology class. At the course outset she emphasizes that attending lecture and reading the assigned textbook chapter are both necessary for success on her exams. In designing her exams, she includes an equal ratio of questions derived from lecture material and questions based on the textbook readings. At the first class, she notes that new (\$160.00) and used copies (\$90.00) of the textbook are available in the student bookstore.

After the first exam, Dr. Leone conducts an item analysis on the exam questions and notices that on average students performed more poorly on textbook questions. She assumes that this is because students are simply not reading the assigned chapters.

During her office hours, a student named Melissa comes to discuss her low score. She is concerned because if she receives a grade below a C in the course, she may lose her scholarship. In reviewing her exam, Dr. Leone notices that Melissa answered the majority of lecture-based questions correctly, but gave the wrong answer to many of the textbook questions. Dr. Leone reiterates the importance of reading the textbook for exam success.

Melissa looks down and quietly says “ummm, I actually didn’t have the money for the textbook. I was going to buy it before the exam, but my car broke down and I had to put all the repairs on my credit card and maxed it out.” Dr. Leone suggested that she find a classmate to share the textbook with and Melissa replied, “Well, I’m in class from 8-12 everyday and then work from 1-9 after that. I’m not sure I’d be able to coordinate sharing with someone.” She says more quietly, “Also, I think I’d feel weird saying...I don’t know, that I don’t have the money for the book.” Dr. Leone said “Let’s see about getting you a used copy.” Melissa said, “well, the used copies are still \$90.00, but don’t worry about it. I’ll figure out something.”

The following week Dr. Leone noticed that Melissa had dropped the class.



Questions about Dr. Leone's Case

- 1) Melissa obviously wants to solve her own problems, so how much help could Dr. Leone provide without causing Melissa further embarrassment or insult?
- 2) What, if anything, could Dr. Leone do in the future to anticipate the needs of students with no other sources of income other than financial aid/scholarship and work?
- 3) How might Dr. Leone communicate to first generation college students and low SES students that she will help or direct them to others who can help meet their needs?