

LAWSON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Department of Health Professions



To: Mrs. Shelia P. Marable, RN, DSN
Associate Dean and Assoc. Degree Nursing Chair

Dear Dr. Marable, I [redacted] am currently a student in the Lawson State Community College Nursing Program. It is my unfortunate experience to have to file an official grievance against my instructor, Mrs. Dorothy Leonard for the following reasons: Well first of all I may need to start off by affording you with an introduction of what my experience has been like as a student at Lawson State, starting back to when I officially started the program in August of 2005. When I first started the program that fall, I was given three standard introductory courses and they were as follows: Intro to pharm., Health assessment, and Fundamentals of Nursing. I was assigned as an instructor in that time, Mrs. Rose for Fundamentals and Mrs. Leonard for the remaining two classes. While I had had a wonderful experience with Mrs. Rose, my experience with Mrs. Leonard got off to what I would describe as some-what of a disturbing beginning. What I mean is that in the first day of class with Mrs. Leonard she assigned her students the usual task of introducing ourselves in which we all did. She also asked the students if any of us were married as well. I raised my hand at the time and she proceeded to ask me several questions about my spouse that in that time which all seemed quite normal. But then shortly after that, her questions began to become somewhat inappropriate and insulting as

well. Not only that the insulting nature of her questioning became more frequent and she seemed to have made it her business to ask them in front of the whole class-room in an effort to either prove me to be a liar about my marriage or to make my marriage seem to be less than harmonious. She began to ask me things like "where did you meet this guy" ? and I gave her my response. So soon after that she began to ask me in front of the entire class-room where he was? I told her that he was currently in Europe. She asked me what kind of work does he do? I gave her my response to that as well. But the strange thing that I found in her questioning began when she started to ask me the same thing every other day during class time, "where is your husband, have you heard from him?" I would tell her no some time partly because it was not her business and partly because I did not feel that the questioning was at all appropriate on such a regular basis. When I say regular basis, I mean like, she would ask me the same question which seemed to be several times a week between each class with a different group of people. You see, I had her for two different classes, which meant at least two different opportunities for her to accost me about my private affairs. She even asked me had I heard from my husband at the beginning of this very semester as well. So I told her that he was back in the states and she wanted to know for how long had he been back in the states and exactly when he had returned. In fact it was the very first thing that she asked me when I got back to her class in the beginning of med-surg. I just did not see the need for her to be so inquisitive into my private affairs all of the time. But out of feeling intimidated, I never asked her why she was so inquisitive about my private affairs, even though I know that I should have. The questioning began to become more and more inappropriate at times in their frequency and she also started to make nasty and inappropriate comments of her own to

me about my husband as well. Here is a list of some of the things that she would say to me in front of the entire class from time to time: "your husband does not want you [REDACTED] [REDACTED], "You do not even know where he is", "That man is not thinking about you". She would also make comments referring to her own husband as a comparison to me so as to try to humiliate me in front of class. Some times she would say stuff like, "Don't hate on me because I get to go home to my husband every night and you do not know where yours is". I would just sat there and take that from her while the whole class watched on and giggled at her nasty and inappropriate comments to me. Just recently, I was speaking with another student about having to put my car in the shop because it needed some work done. So she over-heard the conversation and asked me what kind of car did I drive? Well, in light of all of her other nasty comments I told her that "I drive the same one that I have always driven". And she made the following statement, "you should not be ashamed of the kind of car that you drive, I'm not ashamed of the car that I drive". So I told her, Mrs. Leonard I'm not ashamed of the kind of car that I drive and, of course you should not be ashamed of the one that you drive either". I never once told her or implied that I was ashamed of my car. She conjured up that theory all by herself. I actually felt in that time that she was just trying to humiliate me once again in front of my peers by poking fun at my automobile. So I personally feel that somewhere along the way, she breeched the student-teacher relationship that is expected of all professionals in the academic arena. This is what I think has also led up to what happened between her and I on the day that I walked out of her Med-Surg class crying and humiliated once again in front of the entire class. I tried very hard to over-look how nasty she had been to me that day. But nothing could console or control all of the anger, sadness, and humiliation that

had built up between her and myself. She made me so upset that day because, she started off the lecture by asking the class had anyone ever experienced a barium enema? So I raised my hand to offer my experience. She then said, "I changed my mind, I don't want to hear your experience [REDACTED] so the entire class began to laugh at her nasty behavior towards me. I didn't say anything after that. So I just sat there for a few minutes longer because I had a question. I needed an answer to something pertaining to the lecture. So I said, "Mrs. Leonard, I hate to bother you however....." so before I could even get the rest of the question out, she said to me, "Then don't". but her tone was very very nasty and harsh. She also said to me "cant you see how busy I am. But that was not at all the case. So the next thing that happened was, that I asked her if I had said or asked her anything in an inappropriate manner and she told no. So she also asked me the same question and I told her "yes, Mrs. Leonard, I feel that the way that you have spoken to me was very nasty". She then became what seemed to me to be mildly belligerent because even when I sat there trying to remain quiet, she just kept on and on with her nasty comments that I just tuned out the rest of what she was saying because I just felt helpless and I also just did not know what to do about her behavior at that point as well. So finally, I said "this is just awful" (meaning how she was publicly treating me in front of the class) She was allowing the other students to talk to her and make comments as well. She even allowed another student to give their detailed account of their experience with the barium enema. Now all of that may seem a bit petty and immature but I felt sad because she had just humiliated me in front of the entire class by saying that she had changed her mind about wanting to hear of any barium experience when it was I who was willing to make the comments. Again, she just didn't want to hear about any of my

experience with the barium enema. As a matter of fact, she just did not want to hear anything from me at all. She didn't mind hearing it from anyone else other than me. She made that point very clear to me as well. I did not have any problems with that either. But the way that she went about keeping me from sharing my experience was just humiliating. She just did not want to allow me to speak in class at all. She has often done things like that to me in front of the class from time to time. But I just never fought back with her at all. The point that she just didn't want to allow me to speak was made very obvious by the fact that other students were allowed to speak while she had completely shunned me just minutes earlier. So I just sat there debating in my mind on what I was going to do. We had even had a quiz the earlier part of the morning and no one had done very well on it. So she even decided to single me out that time because she picked up my quiz paper and she said to me, "██████████ you said that you read and studied right?" I said, "yes ma'am". That's when she began to call out several of my INCORRECT answers from my quiz paper in front of the entire class in another effort to try to humiliate me. I asked her "Mrs. Leonard, why do you try to constantly put me on front street?" In other words, I was asking her why was she constantly trying to humiliate me in front of the entire class? Her response was "because you put me on front street". I do not know what she meant by that statement and nor did I care. I just felt sad and embarrassed because she was out of line as a professional. So out of frustration and feeling completely helpless against her, I just sat there and cried in front of the entire class for a few minutes longer. Then, that's also when I decided to get up and just walk out of class during the rest of the lecture, because I just had had enough of her abuses at that point. I also just felt so helpless and defeated as well. At that moment, I decided that

I was going to speak with Dr. Marable about how badly I was being abused in her class. So some of the other students came out of class and began to ask me what was going on between her and myself and they also several other questions about what was going on between me and Mrs. Leonard? I just didn't want to discuss it with any of them at the time because, I was feeling just too humiliated and emotional to speak about it at that time. There have also been times when I would give correct responses to her questions in class and so the students would ask her if my answers were indeed correct and she would say "as much as I hate to admit it, but [REDACTED] is correct". Its also situations such as that which has caused me to feel that Mrs. Leonard just did not like me for reasons that only God Knows of. She would ask me where did I come up with the answer and I would tell her that I knew from my own mind what should be done in the scenario that she had given to us. At one point, I even tried to go to Dr. Ephraim about Mrs. Leonard. I told her that several of the students were upset at her for one thing or another. I confided in her several times as a matter of fact and I also asked her why Mrs. Leonard did not like me. She told me that I was wrong about feeling that way about Mrs. Leonard but I am not a small child. I know just as well as any other adult does when someone does not like me. I just could not understand what Mrs. Leonard's problem with me was though because back when her sister died of breast cancer, I personally went to the supermarket and purchased condolence cards for the entire class to sign back then. However, I never told her that it was I who had in fact initiated that effort for her. So I was even more sad because I knew that I had actually made a concerted effort to try to be nice to her especially in her time of grief and sorrow. But so far, I have come up with nothing to try to make things work out better between her and myself. All I know is that based upon my

previous experience with her that it was not going to go over well for me to be in her class once again. I even told one of the students about how things had gone between her and myself in my other classes with her and that I just felt doomed from having to sit in her class for another semester. As a result, I personally feel that Mrs. Leonard has created a hostile environment that has not at all been conducive to my progress and learning in this nursing program at Lawson State. In fact, I feel that I have done poorly on my final exam as a result of all of her jeering and public humiliation during class. This point is what brings me to speak out about her in class. Because, I have averaged up all of my exam grades for her class. I came up with a 76 GPA for her class. That is not the best grade to have however it is still a passing grade none the less. But I stand to fail the class because I did poorly on her final exam. I feel that I only did so poorly because of her constant efforts to make a public mockery of me in front of her entire class. There would be times when I would go home crying due to stress and sadness. I think that that is what has happened with my final grade. There is no other reason that I should have done so poorly on the final because half of it was on the musculo-skeletal system and the other half was on stuff that I already knew from class as the other half of the test was based entirely on previous exams. So I feel that there is no way that I should have done so poorly on that exam other than due to the fact that she was constantly harassing and embarrassing me. I even told Dr. Marable that I have stomach ulcers. That's because, I am very easily stressed out and I take medication for my ulcers but Mrs. Leonard has constantly made it her personal business to torment me in class and the end result has been that I did not do well on the final exam because of all of the stress that she has constantly placed me under. I do not feel that I should have to repeat this class at all

because, I know and feel that Mrs. Leonard set out to cause me to fail at this program. I had already had to repeat pharmacology because of her teaching practices. In the time that I took that course, she taught the class from other than the book that we were assigned to purchase on the class syllabus and I told her that I did not understand the method of teaching that she was using to teach the class by. Because she was using a different book that only she had access to, there was nothing for me to refer back to as a reference when I got back home from class. Now to be fair and honest, I will acknowledge that I have always had some problems understanding mathematics. But it just did not help me that she was teaching the class from a book that only she had access to as well. I however did understand the book that we were assigned to use but we only used that book maybe once during the entire semester. So I wound up making a 73 as my final grade in pharmacology with her. As a result I had to retake it on the Bessemer campus which resulted in me making the highly improved grade of a B from the Bessemer Campus. By the time I had gone to Dr. Marable I was just at my whits end with Mrs. Leonard, I told her that my mother had just recommended that I just transfer to Jeff State because things between Mrs. Leonard and myself had just gotten so bad and out of control. Dr Marable even asked me if I wanted to try to have a meeting with Mrs. Leonard and I told her no because I just do not feel that she is just not going to be honest and admit that she doesn't like me. And so I felt that a meeting with her would be just be rendered useless. When the issue of my final exam grade came up again, Dr. Marable asked me if I had gone to Mrs. Leonard and I told her no because I feel that that was her (Mrs. Leonard's) initial goal for me in the first place. I feel that she had just truly wanted to see me fail. I did not discuss it with Dr. Ephraim because it was only after I

spoke with her that Mrs. Leonard had gone off on me with one of the worst of all mad spells with me in front of the entire class on the day that we did the abdominal quiz. That fact may very well be coincidental, however since I do not know what actually caused her to act like that with me that day, I just felt that it was safer for me to just to try to keep my mouth shut from either of them from now on. So this grievance report is just my absolute last resort. I just feel that I was wrongly treated by Mrs. Leonard and as a result, my med-surg grade has suffered because of it. I personally just do not feel that I should fail that class. The only thing of it that I failed was the final exam and that was a result of her constant public humiliations. This very same thing happened to me with her once before. I was in her Health Assessment course and we were having an exam on the abdominal system and that day and she told me that "your husband does not want you anymore [REDACTED] [REDACTED]". I had been making pretty decent grades, but that day, I watched my grade plummet because of her saying such a nasty thing to me in front of the entire class. Not only that, because of her constant nasty comments, even some of the other students make similar nasty statements to me as well. I feel that they would not have been doing so if it was not for her doing it to me as well. I do not speak to my classmates about my personal life so they only comment about such things due to what they have heard from her (Mrs. Leonard). In other words, I have found of pattern of my peers disrespecting me as a result of her (Mrs. Leonard) doing the same exact thing. She has done all that she could to try to publicly humiliate me in front of my peers, and as a result my med-surg grade has suffered because of it.



Memo

To: Dr. Shelia Marable
From: Dorothy Leonard
CC: Dr. Davis
Date: 10/16/2006
Re: Complaint from [redacted]

I am very sorry [redacted] was unsuccessful in Nursing 105. This memo is to address the complaints relayed to me from you.

Firstly, my professional demeanor is a very relaxed one intentionally so that students do not feel intimidated by my stature or position. Students volunteer personal information, there are times when I refer to what they say to simply let them know I do listen. On an occasion [redacted] told me her husband was a missionary somewhere in the Middle East. I recall asking how he was doing or when was the last time he was home. I shared with her the fact I had done missionary work in Venezuela. My intent was to show concern for her situation.

[redacted] was unsuccessful in Pharmacology last year. I recall on two occasions tutoring [redacted] in my office; trying to give her the attention she needed. After one of the sessions [redacted] admitted having some type of phobia that prevented her from comprehending math. She later told me she was able to get pass her phobia and was able to pass math on the Bessemer Campus.

There were seven tests given in Nur: 105. [redacted] passed four. Of that four, I presented the material on three of the test. Her lowest grade was on content that I did not present and was not in the class during the lectures. [redacted] scored very poorly on the final exam. One half of that content was presented by another instructor and the other half was from tests one through seven. She was allowed to review her final exam; other students were not afforded this opportunity.

I am told [redacted] feels the students laugh at her. They may do this but not because I encourage them in any way.

Again, I am sorry [redacted] was unsuccessful. I do feel anxiety is an issue [redacted] must learn to control. The anxiety followed her to the clinical setting as well. Mrs. Carter, her clinical instructor informed me she had trouble taking vital signs, and performing other skills under her supervision.

LAWSON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Department of Health Professions

COUNSELING FORM

STUDENT: Ms [REDACTED] DATE: 10/23/06
COURSE: NUR 105

A conference was held with [REDACTED] / Dr. March
regarding final grade in NUR 105

He/She was advised that as a result of allegations made regarding an instructor's attitude toward her and the investigation ensued, the decision was made to allow her to retake the final exam for NUR 105. [REDACTED] was initially passing the course with a 76.45% on the work papers and consequently made a 62 on the final exam resulting in a grade of "D". On Thursday October 19, 2006, [REDACTED] was offered the option to retake the final on Monday, October 23, 2006. On Monday October 23, 2006, [REDACTED] retake the same final examination and scored 70.68. As a result her final grade is 74.7 which results to 75%. As a result of passing the course [REDACTED] was also offered to take NUR 106 Material Health on the Banner Campus, Spring 07 and then return to the Banner campus on the RN program to remain with the NUR 106 course this contract is to be the same instructor.

Dr. Patricia P. March
Instructor's Signature
[REDACTED]
Student's Signature

LAWSON STATE COMMUNITY COLLEGE
Department of Health Professions

INFORMAL GRIEVANCE REPORT - FORM B

PART II. REPORT OF CHAIRPERSON

TO: Dr. Marable

HOME ADDRESS: 1676 11th Place South

HOME PHONE NUMBER: 705-328-8636

FROM: [REDACTED] DATE: 10-16-06

Response to Grievance: (Attach additional pages or document, if necessary.)

Findings and conclusions: *Investigation completed, students probed in class were asked to come in to see me in groups of 5-7. Some student stated that there was some truth to [REDACTED] allegations (Students were not given any names but were asked to relay any adverse interactions that may have been observed between the faculty and any student in the class). Other students felt that what she asked about they considered to be inappropriate questions that the faculty responded in kind. Mrs. Leonard indicated that they (she + student) did check the student's home page, not only to show that she was concerned and listening.*

Proposed actions by Department in response to the grievance: *Student was offered the opportunity to retake the final exam (she was successfully passing the course prior to the final exam and alleged that it was the department's action which Mrs. Leonard did cause her to fail). Upon passing the final and therefore passing the course, [REDACTED] was allowed to transfer to the Business Campus and thereby return to the RN program on the B'ham campus if desired.*

Signature of Chairperson: [Signature] 10/23/06

cc: Associate Dean Career/Technical Health Professions

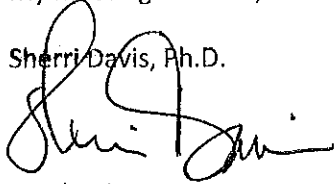
Dr. Crawford,

Please find attached the documentation on [REDACTED]. This student's initial complaint took place in 2006. However, in June of 2007, she issued a new complaint against the instructor and the Department of Health Professions.

She felt that the matter was still left unresolved (from her perspective). As a result, I initiated an investigation of the complaint.

My meeting minutes, notes and letters are attached.

Sherril Davis, Ph.D.

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Sherril Davis".

Academic Dean



Lawson State Community College
3060 Wilson Road Birmingham, Alabama 35221
Office (205) 929-6357 Fax (205) 929-6324

August 3, 2007

Dear Mrs. Leonard,

This letter serves to confirm that a meeting was held on Wednesday, August 1, 2007 with Mrs. Dorothy Leonard regarding numerous complaints received regarding her treatment of students within the nursing division at Lawson State Community College. The meeting served in large part to provide Mrs. Leonard with an opportunity to respond to a specific accusation levied against her from [REDACTED] a former nursing student, and to determine, after such a response, whether or not an Improvement Plan was needed.

Specific concerns were addressed to include the following: (1) verbal attacks towards students inside and outside of the class; (2) discussion of personal information related to students in class; (3) violation of FERPA laws designed to protect student information (i.e., the discussion of student performance (or lack thereof) in front of other students; (4) use of sarcasm and harsh criticism towards students in class; and (5) general lack of concern for the emotional well being of students.

Lawson State Community College is dedicated to the overall emotional and psychological health of its students, and strongly discourages inappropriate language, treatment, gestures or overtures that could ultimately damage the self-esteem of our students and negatively impact the student psychologically.

In reviewing your evaluations from 2004 through 2007, all evaluations note this same concern. Thus, as we discussed in our meeting, you are hereby placed on a Faculty Improvement Plan to address these most serious issues.

Please work with your direct supervisor to construct an Improvement Plan and begin the working on the plan beginning in the fall 2007. The plan should include (but is not limited to) the following: (1) Review of FERPA laws and regulations pertaining to student records, grades and release of such information; (2) external sensitivity training; (3) professional development training geared towards working with students to form positive relationships; (4) mediation training or conflict resolution training; (5) review of current literature as it relates to improving student relationships; (5) routine classroom observations conducted by your direct supervisor (at least 4 per school year); and (6) review of student survey results by Academic Dean and direct supervisor.

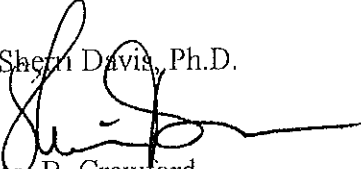
In constructing the Improvement Plan, be sure to put a timeline associated with each task or objective to be completed. The Improvement Plan should be reviewed every 4 to 6 weeks (or sooner, if needed).

Please be assured that an Improvement Plan is being put into place because the college believes strongly that you can improve in this area and wants to provide you with every opportunity to do so. In other words, we want you to be successful in this endeavor and are committed to providing with the support to do just that.

For documentation and tracking purposes, a copy of this letter will be placed in your personnel file. You can also respond to these charges in writing and a copy of the letter will be placed in your personnel file as well. If interested in doing so, please submit a response letter no later than 10 business days from receipt of this letter.

If you have any questions as it relates to this decision or the construction of your plan, please do not hesitate to contact me.

Sincerely,

Sherrin Davis, Ph.D.

cc. B. Crawford
S. Marable
V. Spears

Lawson State Community College
3060 Wilson Road Birmingham, Alabama 35221
Office (205) 929-6357 Fax (205) 929-6324

August 6, 2007

CONFIDENTIAL

Dr. Bruce Crawford:

Here are the findings from the [REDACTED] complaint filed against Dorothy Leonard, nursing instructor.

[REDACTED] Findings:

After two meetings with [REDACTED] (one June 3rd and the other on September 12th), a review of Dorothy Leonard's evaluations, a review of student letters as it relates to the situation in the class (back in 2006), a review of Dr. Shelia Marable's written notes during her initial investigation, a review of the student's transcripts, and well as meeting with Dr. Marable and Ms. Leonard (regarding [REDACTED] initial complaint in October of 2006), the following findings were made:

1. In reviewing how the first complaint was handled, it was determined that Dr. Marable did investigate the complaint and resolved the matter in a reasonable way. In reviewing what took place, Dr. Marable met privately with Ms. Leonard (who responded and denied the allegations in writing) and with the students in Ms. Leonard's class. Some students agreed that there was some truth to the allegations and others disagreed. Five students wrote letters confirming that "there were no inappropriate actions between faculty and students." ACTIONS TAKEN (following the initial complaint): Dr. Marable allowed [REDACTED] to retake the final exam in NUR105. [REDACTED] made a 70.6% and passed the class. Dr. Marable authorized [REDACTED] to move to the Bessemer campus and considered the matter resolved. [REDACTED] was asked if this was a satisfactory resolution to the reported problem, and she agreed.
2. After [REDACTED] was unsuccessful in NUR106 on the Bessemer campus, she contacted Dr. Sherri Davis (Academic Dean) about her initial complaint.
3. A review of [REDACTED] transcripts revealed that she has struggled academically, prior to enrolling in the nursing program and is inconsistent academically.
4. Dr. Davis initially met with [REDACTED] Darren Allen, and Sheila Marable on June 5, 2007 at 2:00 p.m. to 4:00 p.m. to discuss her concerns as they related to Ms. Leonard (her previous complaint) and met again on September 12th to discuss the findings of the ending investigation from 10:00 a.m. until roughly 12:00 p.m.. The original findings meeting was scheduled on August 3rd, 2007, but [REDACTED] did not show-up for that meeting.

5. In speaking with Ms. Leonard, she did not confirm that she had treated the student with a lack of sensitivity, but did acknowledge that she has a loud voice and is tall in size and feels that that can be intimidating to students.

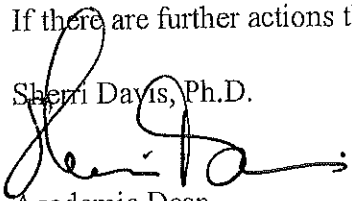
6. In reference to the mentioning of personal information in class, Mrs. Leonard acknowledged that sometimes personal issues come up in general (in her class) but did not acknowledge that she verbally attacked or criticized the student.

7. Although the student and the instructor contradict each other, it was decided by Dr. Sherri Davis (Academic Dean) and Dr. Shelia Marable (Associate Dean), that Mrs. Leonard would benefit from being placed on an Improvement Plan that would focus on sensitivity and conflict resolution. This decision was reached because we felt that (in Ms. Polk's mind) she had been treated in an insensitive way, and even though Ms. Leonard did not have the intent to be insensitive or acknowledged this treatment towards a student, sensitivity training and conflict/mediation training could prevent such events from reoccurring in the future.

8. It was also determined (by the Academic Dean) that all nursing instructors would benefit from such training as well.

If there are further actions that need to take place, please advise.

Sherri Davis, Ph.D.



Academic Dean

cc: Sheila Marable
Darren Allen

Notes from [REDACTED] meeting held on September 12, 2007

1. I asked student why she did not show up for prior meeting scheduled August 3rd at 11:00 p.m. She said she was sick.
2. Student reviewed initial complaint.
3. She reminded me of her initial complaint filed with Dr. Marable. I reminded her that the college responded to her concerns and transferred her to Bessemer campus.
4. I also revealed to the student that my investigation found that Ms. Leonard had taught her two classes during that fall term [REDACTED] received a "C" in one class and a "D" in another class, so this represented to me, that the claims that Ms. Leonard was targeting the student were unsubstantiated, in terms of grade penalty.
5. I told the student that we had completed our investigation and that I met with Dr. Marable and Ms. Leonard.
6. I shared with the student that all accusations that she had levied against Mrs. Leonard were discussed and considered.
7. I shared with the student that the Office of Academic Affairs did take action to resolve the matter with the faculty member (in terms of the students perspective of what had taken place in class)..
8. The last part of the meeting focused on advising issues as it related to her new program of study. I informed the student that she was close to graduating.

9-26-07

Dear Dr. Davis,

I hope that this letter finds you in the best of health. I am writing to you at this time because I have had some time to reflect upon the consequences of the situation regarding the issues and problems that I have incurred during my time as a student in Lawson State Community College Nursing program. Per our last meeting a few weeks back, you addressed the parameters regarding the grievance that I filed against Mrs. Leonard. You also stated that there would be disciplinary action taken against her for all of the problems that I had encountered during the time that I was her student. Well after receiving some advice from several entities, I have discovered that it is my right as a student to request that the school provide me with an official document stating that the school (Lawson State) that covers full details regarding the parameters with which the school has found Mrs. Leonard guilty of causing me harm or problems as her student.

I fully understand that the school reserves the right to protect the privacy of the said instructor. However I am asking that the school provide me with an "official statement" that shows to the extent of harm that I have endured from the said instructor. I have sense received advice from one Dr. Elizabeth French from one of your current accrediting agencies. I have been advised by Dr. French that I have every right as a student to request such a statement from the school. I was also advised by Mrs. Michelle McAdeu of the United States Department of Justice, Educational Civil Rights Division of similar affirmations. I have been informed that because of the Executive Order 13160, that Federal Law Prohibits that students should endure any form of discriminations based upon: RACE, SEX, COLOR, NATIONAL ORIGIN, DISABILITY, RELIGION, AGE, SEXUAL ORIENTATION, and STATUS AS A PARENT. This law also states that all students have protected status under this order or law.

According to this Order, all students are protected from Disparate Treatment, Hostile environment, Disparate Impact, and Retaliation. Please refer to specific principles and examples discriminatory conduct related to each of the nine protected bases covered by Executive Order 13160. Individuals involved in a federally conducted education program may not be subjected to a "hostile environment" in the form of "Religiously-Based" discriminatory intimidation, pervasive, severe religious abuse, ridicule, or insult, whether by instructors or fellow participants. A hostile environment is not created, however, simply by virtue of religious expression with which some participants might disagree. Please refer to "Examples of prohibited conduct of Executive order # 13160. Refusal to comply with any of the nine protected status violates the Executive Order. Please refer to Equal Employment Opportunity Commission Guidelines on Discrimination, 29CFR 1605.1.

Executive Order 13160 prohibits federal agencies from engaging in a "Pattern or Practice" of Unlawful discrimination. Also the Executive Order prohibits individual instances of "Unjustifiable" disparate treatment. Please refer to "Memorandum for General Councils or Agency Heads/Civil Rights Directors. In addition, Executive Order


13160 contains a "Mandatory Reporting Requirement". Pursuant to §6-601 of the Executive Order, summarizing the number, nature, and disposition of Executive Order 13160 complaints.

From: Ralph F. Boyd, Jr. /s/
Assistant Attorney General
Civil Rights Division 4-12-2002

For further Questions Please contact Coordination and Review Section Chief or Staff Attorney at 202-307-2222 or you may Contact Mrs. Michelle McAdeu at 202-307-2222 or by writing to her at:
U.S. Dept. of Justice
Civil Rights Division
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Educational Opportunities, Section PHS
Washington, D.C. 20530.

In addition, I'm writing this letter because I feel that I have been systematically excluded and refused fair treatment in the Lawson Nursing Program Simply based upon religious and other discrimination. I have come to this conclusion because I have been thus treated impartially without ANY PROVOCATION or JUST CAUSE. I also feel that the school failed to protect me and my rights during the first time that I filed a grievance against the said instructors.

Cordially Yours,

 (Former LSCC Nursing Student)

Cc Dr. Sheila Marable (Associate Dean of Health Professions)
Cc Mr. Darren Allen (Assistant Dean of Admissions and Records)

Kerwin Fordren
NOTARY PUBLIC
My commission expires 5-22-2011



Lawson State Community College
3060 Wilson Road Birmingham, Alabama 35221
Office (205) 929-6357 Fax (205) 929-6324

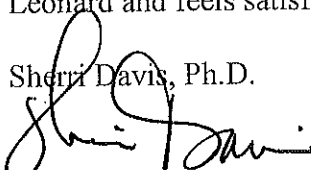
October 1, 2007

[REDACTED]
1676 11th Place South
Birmingham, AL 35205

Dear [REDACTED],

This notice serves to confirm that I am in receipt of your letter dated September 26, 2007 and delivered to my office on Thursday, September 29th.

Please know that the College has followed all policies and procedures as it relates to our thorough investigation of your initial and secondary complaints against Ms. Dorothy Leonard and feels satisfied the matter was handled appropriately.

Sherril Davis, Ph.D.

Academic Dean

cc: B. Crawford, Vice President for Instructional Services
S. Marable

Lawson State Community College
3060 Wilson Road Birmingham, Alabama 35221
Office (205) 929-6357 Fax (205) 929-6324

October 16, 2007

Dr. Bruce Crawford
Vice President for Instructional Services
3060 Wilson Road
Birmingham, AL 35221

Dr. Crawford:

It has come to my understanding that [REDACTED] is still dissatisfied with the outcome of her grievance.

As a result, I am writing this letter in hopes to clarify any and all questions as it relates to the handling of [REDACTED] complaint and the resolution of the matter. It is my hope that this letter will help to provide you with a review of the matter and ultimately provide her with some closure as well.

On October 16, 2006, [REDACTED] filed an informal grievance in writing to Dr. Shelia Marable, Associate Dean of Health Professions, against Dorothy Leonard, a nursing instructor.

On that same day, October 16, 2006, the instructor was notified and spoken to directly regarding the complaint. Further, on October 16, 2006, a letter from Ms. Leonard, denying the accusation was received in Dr. Marable's office.

From October 16 through October 23rd, 2006, the informal grievance was formally investigated by Dr. Marable. She interviewed students from [REDACTED] class. Some students said that there had been some altercations between Ms. Leonard and students but no one named [REDACTED] specifically. Other student disagreed with the charge altogether. Equally important, five students put their comments in writing, all supporting Ms. Leonard's contention that nothing unusual had taken place in class. These letters were dated October 18th and October 25th.

Dr. Marable, having heard [REDACTED] concerns and wishing to handle the matter fairly and objectively, proposed actions to assist [REDACTED] in her efforts to pass the class. The proposed actions were submitted on October 23rd and accepted, in full, by [REDACTED] as to an appropriate resolution to the problem. She proposed that the student ([REDACTED]), although the investigation was not undetermined, be allowed to retake the final exam and be allowed to transfer to the Bessemer campus for future classes.

As a result, [REDACTED] was asked to sign an agreement to these conditions, and she did so. Within days, [REDACTED] was permitted to retake her final exam (as was outlined in the proposed resolution), and she subsequently passed the class.

As proof that [REDACTED] did understand and agree to the conditions of the resolution of the grievance, she did register for her next nursing course NUR 106 on the Bessemer campus, and she does freely admit to being allowed to take her final exam over.

In June of 2006, after failing NUR 106 (from a different instructor) on the Bessemer campus, [REDACTED] reissued the same complaint against Ms. Leonard. Please note that during the time [REDACTED] was enrolled on the Bessemer campus taking NUR 106, she did not have any complaints. However, after failing NUR106 she renewed her original complaint.

Concerned that the student was still not satisfied with the resolution in October of 2006, Dr. Sherri Davis, Academic Dean, formed a committee (composed of Dr. Shelia Marable, Mr. Darren Allen and herself) to review the original complaint and to determine if the college handled the matter properly.

The committee met with [REDACTED] on June 5, 2007 to revisit her original complaint. Following the meeting with [REDACTED], it was determined the original handling of the complaint should be reviewed and investigated to make sure it had been dealt with properly. The committee also recommended that the employee be placed on an improvement plan at the start of the new school year for 2007-2008 for safe measure and to prevent future occurrences or conflicts with students.

An extensive review of the following took place from June 5th to August 1, 2007: (1) reviewed [REDACTED] transcripts; (2) reviewed letters submitted by fellow classmates; (3) reviewed resolution of findings in October of 2006; (4) met with Dr. Marable to discuss findings; (5) reviewed letter submitted by Ms. Leonard denying accusation; (6) requested and reviewed NUR106 grades; (7) met with Mrs. Leonard and Dr. Marable regarding the original complaint and its handling; (8) discussed with Ms. Leonard and Dr. Marable the decision to place Ms. Leonard on an Improvement Plan.

Dr. Sherri Davis and Amicka Williams, Dr. Davis's assistant, made several attempts to contact [REDACTED] via phone to arrange for a meeting. [REDACTED] did not have an answering service, so it made communications difficult. On or about July 16th, a second meeting was scheduled with [REDACTED] for August 3, 2007.

[REDACTED] did not come to the meeting nor did she call to cancel. As a result, there was a delay in the process. Later, a make-up meeting was scheduled for September 12th.

At this meeting, [REDACTED] was informed that the college had investigated the matter, met with the instructor and had resolved the matter completely with the instructor. [REDACTED] was asked what would resolve the matter, and she said, "She did not want another student to have to go through this." Dr. Davis assured the student that the college took the matter seriously and had dealt with the matter. When [REDACTED] left the two-hour meeting with Dr. Davis, she made no indication that she was dissatisfied with the outcome. In fact, the student left the meeting happy and crying tears of joy, for Dr. Davis took the time to reveal to the student that she was closer to graduating than she had known.

On September 29th, 17 days after the final meeting with [REDACTED], Dr. Davis received a letter from [REDACTED] requesting additional information. In particular, [REDACTED] was requesting that the college affirm the "guilt" of the faculty meeting. Since the word

“guilt” was never discussed, only the confirmation that the matter had been resolved, the college did not comply with her written request to use such language.

Instead, on October 1st, Dr. Davis responded to [redacted] reaffirming that the college had addressed and resolved the matter appropriately.

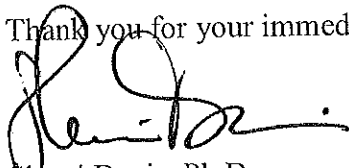
Since that time, [redacted] has issued several email notices requesting information and accusing the college of being non-responsive.

It is my hope that such an outline of events and actions will satisfy her requests, in particular that the instructor has been placed on an improvement plan for 2007-2008 school year that will and is being currently monitored by the Associate Dean and Academic Dean.

The Department of Health Professions as well as the Academic Affairs division feels comfortable in the attention we have made in resolving this matter with [redacted]

It is our hope in revealing even further details, that this matter will be resolved.

Thank you for your immediate attention,



Sherri Davis, Ph.D.
Academic Dean



Lawson State Community College
3060 Wilson Road Birmingham, Alabama 35221
Office (205) 929-6357
Fax (205) 929-6324

October 16,
2007

[REDACTED]
1676 11th Place South
Birmingham, AL 35205

Dear [REDACTED]

I have been presented by Dr. Sherri Davis with a letter from you to her dated September 26, 2007, in which you refer back to the grievance that you filed against Nursing Instructor Dorothy Leonard in October of 2006 and request "an official document...that covers full details regarding the parameters with which the school has found Mrs. Leonard guilty of causing me harm or problems as her student," as well as an "official statement' that shows the extent of harm that [you] have endured from said instructor."

You state in your letter that you have been informed that under Executive Order 13160, students are not to be discriminated against on the basis of race, sex, color, national origin, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation, or status as a parent.

As a result of your September 26th letter, I have personally reviewed the matter of your October 21, 2006 grievance against Ms. Leonard, and made the following findings:

1. The grievance that you filed on October 16, 2006 made no mention of any alleged discrimination based on race, sex, color, national origin, disability, religion, age, sexual orientation, or status as a parent.
2. The College's investigation of your grievance did not disclose any evidence of any such discrimination.
3. Our College followed all applicable policies and procedures in its response to your grievance.
4. According to our written documents and a written resolution signed by you, the matter was handled to your satisfaction and resolved on October 23, 2006 (seven days after receipt of your informal grievance). I have attached a copy of the resolution you signed outlining the actions the College took to resolve the matter.

5. In the written grievance resolution that you signed on October 23, 2006, you agreed that in order to resolve your grievance, a "decision was made to allow [you] to retake the final exam in NUR105. As a result, you were re-administered the final exam (on the 23rd of October, 2006) and passed it and subsequently received a passing grade for the course. Further, you agreed to be transferred to the Bessemer campus for NUR106. The College complied with the agreement and ~~allowed~~ you to take NUR106 on the Bessemer campus. According to our internal records, you registered for NUR106 on the Bessemer campus and took that class during the following term (Spring 2007). Those actions demonstrate that you were fully aware of, and concurred with, the proposed resolution of the grievance that you filed against Ms. Leonard.
6. There was no finding of any harm done to you by Ms. Leonard.
7. From October 23rd (the date you signed that you were in support of how the College was proposing to resolve your grievance) until June 5, 2007, you did not indicate to the College that you were appealing the decision reached, nor did you indicate to Dr. Shelia Marable, Associate Dean of Health Professions, or Dr. Sherri Davis, Academic Dean, that you were dissatisfied with the resolution of the grievance.
8. It was not until June 2007 (8 months later and after you failed NUR106 from a different instructor on our Bessemer campus) that you contacted the Academic Dean with the same grievance (dating back to 2006). Initially, that office assumed that they were dealing with a new grievance and proceeded accordingly. However, upon further investigation, it was apparent that you were attempting to revisit a grievance that had already been resolved.

In their re-examination of your original complaint, College officials did not treat your complaint as a new grievance because, according to all accounts and our records, the matter had been fully and finally resolved in October 2006. In other words, you attempted to file the same grievance twice although you had already signed that you were in support of the resolution of your original grievance. Further, you had already benefited from the outcome of the grievance by being allowed to retake your final exam (in NUR105) and by being allowed to take NUR106 on the Bessemer campus.

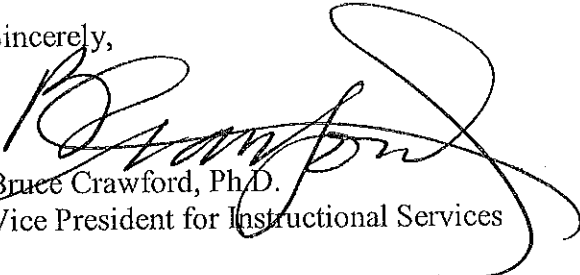
Regardless of the fact that your grievance had already been resolved per your written agreement, the College did take additional action to improve Ms. Leonard's classroom skills. In August 2007, Ms. Leonard was placed under an internal supervised Improvement Plan for one year because, even though we had seen no evidence of discriminatory conduct on her part, we felt that the instructor could improve on her conflict resolution, mediation, and customer service skills. It is common practice at Lawson State for Improvement Plans to be developed in situations where the administration has identified areas in need of improvement regarding a given employee.

With that in mind, please know that Ms. Leonard has always denied the allegations made in your grievance, and other students have provided us with written support of her position. Nevertheless, out of an abundance of caution, the College has taken preventive actions to avoid future misunderstandings between this particular faculty member and other students. You may recall that this is what you said you wanted from the College.

It is my conclusion that the matter of your grievance against Ms. Leonard was properly handled and that there is no further action to be taken regarding the grievance. As a matter of fact, it is clear that the College went even beyond the bounds of the written resolution to which you agreed.

I am hopeful that this letter satisfactorily explains why no further action will be taken on the matter of your October 2006 complaint against Ms. Leonard. I wish you only the best of success in your future educational pursuits, and our College's officials will always be available to you in the event that you need any assistance with your studies at Lawson State.

Sincerely,



Bruce Crawford, Ph.D.
Vice President for Instructional Services

cc: Dr. Perry W. Ward, President
Mrs. Sharon Crews, Vice President, Administrative and Student Services
Dr. Sherri Davis, Academic Dean
Dr. Cynthia Anthony, Dean of Student Services
Dr. Sheila Marable, Associate Dean, Health Professions
Mr. Darren Allen, Assistant Dean of Students Services