To Whom It May Concern,

   My name is [Name]. My fiancee, [Name], and I moved here from Virginia at the beginning of the year and are currently enrolled for the spring semester. I am taking several courses: US and Texas Gov., interpersonal communications, history II, advanced aerobics training, and career training. [Name] is enrolled in both history and Gov. with me and is also taking English and golf. Overall, our experiences at Amarillo College have been very good. However, our experiences with our history professor, [Name], have proved to be a disappointing and discouraging addition to our experiences at AC.

Each of us are top students in our classes and for the most part our professors have made our experience at AC fun and educational. Ted Wood is our instructor for US and Texas government. His lectures are very informative and although the subjects covered are detailed we appreciate the time he has taken to explain each topic. He conducts his class in a way that gives students the desire to learn more about our government. I am also very impressed with my interpersonal communications professor, Laura Vartabedian. She has made the class enjoyable and educational; I often come home and share what I’ve learned with [Name]. She is very enthusiastic in her teaching and because of her class I have thought of including interpersonal communications in my education major. I have also enjoyed my aerobics class with Andrea. She always comes up with new moves to share with the class and I am interested in taking her aerobics certification class in the fall. Although [Name] is dissatisfied with his English professor, [Name], he is impressed with her knowledge and has recently begun one on one tutoring sessions with her. He is amazed at the tutoring ability of his golf instructors, Roland and Ken, and is happy with the results he is gaining from the class.

We regret that our experiences with [Name] have not been educational or enjoyable. Since the first week we have considered whether or not to continue the class. At the beginning of the semester the class started out with about twenty-five people and at this point about eleven remain. His conduct in class has been very unprofessional since the beginning and the only reason we decided to complete the semester is because we both have the highest grades in the class. Each of us has maintained an A average throughout the semester.

One of his policies in class is that a student can miss no more than three classes without being penalized five points for each additional absence. This seems rather absurd since each test is worth 25pts, which means a student can loose a fifth of a test grade for an absence. It is also frustrating to be forced to waist our learning time looking at pictures and listening to stories of his personal life. Often times statements he has made regarding events in history are contradictory to things stated in our text. In addition, the class has often been subject to spend the entire fifty minutes listening to one of his pet peeves. On a number of occasions a student has made the mistake of addressing him as “Mr.” instead of “Professor or Doctor”. On each of these incidents we have spent the entire period being aggressively lectured on his credentials and the proper way of addressing him. On a daily basis he finds some way of humiliating a student, either for not being in class, for not “paying attention” to his web page or syllabus, or for asking questions he feels are not worth explaining. One of his favorite sayings is, “Do it the AC student way and do nothing.”
The main point I would like to address is the events that occurred during other student debates and after I got the grade for mine. Giving a speech in front of a class is not easy for any student and the last person to show anything but neutrality should be the professor. This was certainly not the case with [name redacted]. During the first debate I repeatedly observed [name redacted] rolling his eyes, biting his nails, and putting his hand over his head as if he were disgusted by what this student had to say. This behavior is completely unacceptable and so I decided to report his behavior because I did not want the same thing happening to me. Unfortunately, I was not able to contact anyone and the next class I gave my debate. When I received my grade back there were several things that I had questions about and so I asked to see my paper, which [name redacted] said was fine.

I had questions regarding my: new information, organization, and bibliography. I approached the desk and [name redacted] explained my mistakes on the bibliography, the entire time saying how I should have come to his "optional" meeting. He said that I used the state instead of the city for place of publication. The example on his bibliography was New York, which is a poor choice for distinguishing between state and city. The next thing I attempted to address was my new information. At this point he got very agitated by my questioning. When I asked him to explain what exactly my paper was lacking he was unable to do so. The only thing he mentioned was that I did not use an author he wanted me to, there was no list of required authors. I asked why he would take points off for this since there was no list of authors we had to use. He was very frustrated by this and preceded to start yelling and literally foaming at the mouth. He insisted that I should have come to his "optional" meeting and said he was very generous about my score for the annotation. I told him that I was not questioning those points and realized that my annotation was not very strong. I also made the mistake of addressing him as "Mr." instead of "Professor". He proceeded to yell about how he was to be addressed as "Professor" and he kept screaming "What do you want [name redacted]? Do you want me to give you an A?" I told him that all I wanted was to see how he had graded my paper and told him I wasn't asking him to change anything. I also said that if he did not feel he could address my concerns in a manor I felt was appropriate I could take them somewhere else. He just kept yelling and asking what I wanted so I said never mind and got my things to leave. At this point he completely overstepped his boundaries and even broke Federal law by stepping in front of the door to block my exit. I turned around and walked to the door in the back of the room. He came after me shouting "What do you want? We're going to solve this now." I told him that all I wanted was to ask a few simple questions and that I was treating him with respect and he should treat me that way. I also told him that I could address these problems with someone else since he seemed incapable of speaking in a reasonable manor. He then grabbed my grading sheet from my hand and changed the grade to an A and said, "Is this what you want?" I said no, that wasn't good enough and walked out of the room.

Even the idea that this sort of thing could happen and there is a possibility that it will go unpunished, or with a little slap on the wrist, is outrageous to me. There are a lot of good teachers at Amarillo College and unfortunately there reputations can be ruined by one bad seed. Both [name redacted] and I are concerned that our grades will suffer because of this incident and so we are providing documentation of our grades this far.
Even with the B on my debate I still have a high A in the class. [Redacted] has since given his debate and received a C. We definitely feel this had something to do with my confrontation and are worried our exam grades may suffer as well. Even with the C [Redacted] still has an A as well. I hope this matter is addressed with [Redacted] so this type of thing will not occur again. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

[Redacted]
On April 23, 1998, I received a call from Bobbie Glasscock. She said that two students were in her office concerning a complaint they had in a history class. I told Bobbie to send them to my office.

and arrived in my office and stated their complaint was in Hist 3383-003 with . I told them I would be happy to visit with them but that I would need a written complaint as soon as possible. indicated she would be happy to comply with my request.

and had numerous complaints:
• Absence policy
• Lectures are contradictory to textbook
• humiliates students
• favorite saying is “Do it the AC student way and do nothing.”
• Student debates - humiliates students and doesn’t give reasonable explanations concerning grading procedures

met after class concerning her debate grade. The details of the incident are included in the attached letter. and were concerned that this incident would negatively impact their grades. I asked them to provide me with written documentation of their grades presently, both “A’s”(attached). I informed them I would monitor the situation and Amarillo College would not allow any type of reprisal to be taken against them. At the conclusion of the Spring semester I checked their grades and both had earned an “A” in Hist 3383.

I also asked them about other classes they had taken at AC. They indicated their overall experience at AC had been very good and gave most of the other AC instructors outstanding ratings.

At the completion of Spring semester and during Summer I term I contacted other instructors of classes in which and were enrolled. Ted Wood was quite complimentary of both. Ted indicated that he would write a letter of recommendation for if he continued to aspire to go to law school. Dr. Vartabedian explained that was an outstanding student and she was going to recommend her for the honors program.

and spent over an hour in my office. I was very impressed with their ability to articulate and communicate. I apologized to them and assured them that I would meet with to discuss their complaints.