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Dr. Prosl,

I am writing you directly to express my concern and frustration with recent events in Prof. Feyock's CS529 class, specifically with regard to the execution of the final exam. I have expressed other concerns regarding this class in my course evaluation, and I will not rehash those issues here. In addition to taking this class I am an alumni of William and Mary and a current staff member in the Department of Information Technology.

To begin, the syllabus for the course (still available as of this writing at <http://www.cs.wm.edu/~feyock/cs529/s03syll.txt>) indicated that the final would be provided to us April 14th. This date came and went with no mention of our final. On the last day of class, Wednesday, April 23rd, Prof. Feyock informed us that the final would be available no later than midnight Sunday April 27th but parts *might* be available earlier. The final would be due Thursday, May 1st at 5:30 pm. He also said he would be available during his normal office hours (MWF 11:00 – 12:00 and T 3:00 – 5:00).

This gave the class four days to complete the exam without the benefit of a weekend. I checked his website regularly over the next several days and found that an initial version of the exam was posted sometime around noon on Saturday the 26th.

Over the course of the next few days, additional clarifications were made to the exam. I have attached a copy of the file as it was on Prof. Feyock's website at the time the final was due. This shows the changes that were made to the final itself as well as indications of changes made to the supporting files. These changes provided some level of clarification to a very unclear assignment. It is my understanding that these changes were made as a result of queries made by some of my classmates.

As I was reviewing my answers on the morning of the 30th and executing the example runs as specified in the final, I realized that Prof. Feyock had neglected to include a key piece of information for problem 2. Specifically, he indicated in his question:

Load the rules from bartender.rules. Execute the statement

(diagnose)

to run the expert system, using the facts below.

If you look at the exam, there are no *facts below*. Realizing this, I emailed him immediately (at 9am). Having not heard from him by email and knowing that Wednesday was one of his posted office hours, I went to his office at 11am to get the

answer my question. On his door I found a note that he had changed his office hours for the week of the 28th alone to 3:30-5:30 pm Monday, Tuesday, and Thursday.

At this point I was at a loss of what to do. Given that I work a full time job, I would be unable to get to his office on Thursday at 3:30, get the answer to the question, return to finish the exam and have it turned in by 5:30 that same day. I decided to use the information provided in the first problem (which was applicable) and indicate this fact in my answers. I also hoped that he might still respond to my original emails.

However, as of this writing (after the due date and time for the final) I have received no response to my questions.

I also found the content of the exam to be inappropriate given the material taught during the course of the semester. The entire exam revolved around modifying and using an expert system written in LISP. During the semester, Prof. Feyock spent two days showing the basic syntax of LISP, and two days explaining the concepts of an expert system and showing snippets of code of expert systems in LISP. We saw no fully functional LISP programs and had no experience with LISP through assignments prior to receiving the final.

Personally I consider myself lucky that in addition to my school experience I have 4 years of professional software development under my belt. Even so, the information provided in class by Prof. Feyock was insufficient for me to complete the exam. I had to borrow a LISP book and teach myself the language in order to complete the exam. I realize that critical thinking and the ability to learn on one's own is requisite of graduate courses, but the situation with this class was unacceptable.

Unfortunately, these facts are indicative of the tone of the whole semester. I realize that my concerns and any actions that you may decide to take will not be able to change the experience I had, but I hope that they can help future students avoid the problems my classmates and I endured.

I appreciate you taking the time to hear my concerns and I look forward to your response. If you would like to discuss this matter further, I would be happy to do so.

Sincerely,

Jeremy Beker