



Wayne Hills High School
English Department
2013-2014

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ENG 11, ENG 12,
Introduction to Philosophy

Your Teacher's Responsibilities

Traditionally, in early September, when a new school year begins, teachers detail what they expect from their students. While this is important, in my opinion, it's also important that a good teacher fully understands his/her responsibilities. He/she also must clearly convey these responsibilities to his/her students. I want to be a great teacher - not a perfect teacher, a great teacher. I also want you to think that I'm a great teacher. Here's a list of goals that I will strive to achieve each day of the school year in order to become the best teacher I can be.

The following list is borrowed from a web based magazine titled **Faculty Focus** (<http://www.facultyfocus.com/articles/philosophy-of-teaching/nine-characteristics-of-a-great-teacher/>).

- 1. A great teacher respects students.** In a great teacher's classroom, each person's ideas and opinions are valued. Students feel safe to express their feelings and learn to respect and listen to others. This teacher creates a welcoming learning environment for all students.
- 2. A great teacher creates a sense of community and belonging in the classroom.** The mutual respect in this teacher's classroom provides a supportive, collaborative environment. In this small community, there are rules to follow and jobs to be done and each student is aware that he or she is an important, integral part of the group. A great teacher lets students know that they can depend not only on her, but also on the entire class.
- 3. A great teacher is warm, accessible, enthusiastic and caring. (*A great teacher has fun.*)** This person is approachable, not only to students, but to everyone on campus. This is the teacher to whom students know they can go with any problems or

concerns or even to share a funny story. Great teachers possess good listening skills and take time out of their way-too-busy schedules for anyone who needs them. If this teacher is having a bad day, no one ever knows—the teacher leaves personal baggage outside the school doors.

4. A great teacher sets high expectations for all students. This teacher realizes that the expectations she has for her students greatly affect their achievement; she knows that students generally give to teachers as much or as little as is expected of them.

5. A great teacher has his own love of learning and inspires students with his passion for education and for the course material. He constantly renews himself as a professional on his quest to provide students with the highest quality of education possible. This teacher has no fear of learning new teaching strategies or incorporating new technologies into lessons, and always seems to be the one who is willing to share what he's learned with colleagues.

6. A great teacher is a skilled leader. Different from administrative leaders, effective teachers focus on shared decision-making and teamwork, as well as on community building. This great teacher conveys this sense of leadership to students by providing opportunities for each of them to assume leadership roles.

7. A great teacher can “shift-gears” and is flexible when a lesson isn't working. This teacher assesses his teaching throughout the lessons and finds new ways to present material to make sure that every student understands the key concepts.

8. A great teacher collaborates with colleagues on an ongoing basis. Rather than thinking of herself as weak because she asks for suggestions or help, this teacher views collaboration as a way to learn from a fellow professional. A great teacher uses constructive criticism and advice as an opportunity to grow as an educator.

9. A great teacher maintains professionalism in all areas—from personal appearance to organizational skills and preparedness for each day. Her communication skills are exemplary, whether she is speaking with an administrator, one of her students or a colleague. The respect that the great teacher receives because of her professional manner is obvious to those around her.