

January 20, 2009

To: Dean Stipek

From: Michele Kerr, STEP Teacher Candidate

## Non-Academic Grievances

### Issues

Dr. Lotan is continuing a policy of harassment that began back in April when she first tried to legally rescind my application. [DCP], who “strategized” with Dr. Lotan to come up with means to deny my admittance without acknowledging their goal, uses her role as clinical director to assist Dr. Lotan in this activity.

Dr. Lotan demanded that I meet with her to discuss a rejected paper, when no other student had to meet with her on similar grounds. The meeting revealed that all the problems were with my views, not with a failure to meet the rubric.

Dr. Lotan, [DCP], and Dean Callan have exacerbated and even encouraged my supervisor [Supervisor]’s hostile behavior towards me during the last weeks of the fall quarter.

Dr. Lotan and Dean Callan have initiated procedure to express concerns that I am “unsuited for the practice of teaching” using trivial criteria with no supporting data to prove I was substantially out of line with STEP student performance, even given the trivial standard.

Dean Callan has harassed me for unspecified “student confidentiality” violations without giving me a clear definition of the policy I have exceeded or indeed, without appearing to know themselves. In overreaching their bounds, they have interfered with my relationships at my placement school, demanded access to my password protected journal, and insisted that they have jurisdiction over any words I write while at Stanford.

### Remedy Sought

My primary remedy requested is simply to be held to the same standards of other students and otherwise to be left alone. I am filing this grievance primarily as a protective measure.

However, given the pending actions against me, I am



Then, on December 29<sup>th</sup>



## Grievance #1: Dr. Lotan's Attempt to Rescind My Admission

Dr. Lotan has often said earnestly that I should not doubt her good faith efforts to work with me, and believe her assurances that she has no ulterior motives. I am not revisiting the events of last spring to regurgitate dead history, but to demonstrate that I have good cause to doubt both Dr. Lotan's motives and her good will.

In March-April 2008, after Dr. Lotan learned from a staff member that I might not have acceptable views, she called me into a meeting that was ostensibly about my question regarding student teaching<sup>1</sup>. In fact, the meeting was clearly an attempt to discourage me from accepting STEP's admittance. Although Dr. Lotan did not ever say this directly, she warned me that I would have

Freedom<sup>5</sup>, because I needed to know whether Stanford could legally rescind an admission. FIRE staff suggested that I refuse the meeting politely and told me that all available evidence said that admissions were legally binding. I wrote back to Dr. Lotan, telling her that I disagreed with her memory of the events, and that I wasn't able to meet at this time, but would be happy to meet with her after classes started<sup>6</sup>. Dr. Lotan responded, insisting that I meet with her, which put me in a quandary. I was certain that Dr. Lotan was trying to meet with me to build a case to rescind my admission and that I was at risk for additional fictional accounts of our meeting. However, refusing to meet carried additional risks.

Fortunately, a misdirected email confirmed my reading of events. [DCP], head of clinical practice at STEP, accidentally emailed me her response to Dr. Lotan<sup>7</sup>, in which she made it clear that Dr. Lotan had already contacted Stanford legal counsel and that the two of them were "strategizing" to keep me out of the program. This email put an end to Dr. Lotan's covert attempts to build a case against me, as I had a phone call with Dr. Rasch and told him that I was contacting him before I contacted a lawyer myself.<sup>8</sup> Dr. Rasch suggested a meeting with Dr. Lotan, which I agreed to only on the condition that my Stanford attendance was an established fact. Dr. Rasch told me Dr. Lotan had agreed. In the meeting, Dr. Lotan made several comments:

She found it difficult to believe that someone with my views could have the goals I expressed in my Stanford application.

She was upset that I had expressed disagreement with [Teacher Blogger]<sup>9</sup>, a teacher at Downtown College Prep that often serves as a cooperating teacher. Dr. Lotan had been anonymously sent an email alerting her to a website I run, and found a link to [Teacher Blogger]'s blog and read the debate there.<sup>10</sup> She argued that she could not in good conscience place me with [Teacher Blogger], given our conflict, and seemed to think this was another reason why she should not be forced to accept me into the program.

At one point, she burst out in anger to ask me why I wanted to go to Stanford, "if I was such a good teacher. You can get a credential anywhere. Why go to Stanford?" I found this puzzling, as I had mentioned that I was a good teacher in my application. Surely the admissions review process should have highlighted this, if it was a concern?

Finally, she reneged on her agreement that was the basis for the meeting, saying that my attendance was not certain and that she would continue to seek legal advice to prevent my attendance. This statement surprised both me and Dr. Rasch.

I never heard from Dr. Lotan again prior to starting school. After the Foundation for Individual Rights in Education wrote a letter to Stanford's president recounting the events, the Provost's office confirmed that I was attending.

I had hoped that Dr. Lotan had changed her mind about me once I began attending classes and teaching. Indeed, in early August, Dr. Lotan told me that she was very pleased I was doing so well. However, this didn't last. In fact, I have only been trouble-free at Stanford when Dr. Lotan was away from STEP (on vacation in July and out on illness in October-November).

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<sup>5</sup> Document 5.

<sup>6</sup> Document 6.

<sup>7</sup> Document 7.

<sup>8</sup> I emailed my recollection of the meeting to Dr. Rasch immediately afterward See Document 9.

<sup>9</sup> [name omitted] and his blog are relevant to a later grievance.

<sup>10</sup> [name omitted] and his blog are of further relevance to this grievance.

Because of our troubled beginning, I have done my best to avoid any unnecessary interactions with Dr. Lotan, and to avoid asking for any consideration at STEP. I was happy when she temporarily seemed to have put off her animosity, but I have never forgotten how I first met her, and what she tried to do. Dr. Lotan has never apologized for the stress she caused me, and seems to think I have no reason to doubt her good faith.

## Grievance #2: Classroom Management Plan Rejection

In late September, my classroom management instructor, [name omitted], emailed me<sup>11</sup> about the major project for the Classroom Management course, the Classroom Management Plan<sup>12</sup>. She had “had a difficult time scoring it” and wanted me to meet with Dr. Lotan about it. I asked if I needed to resubmit it<sup>13</sup>, saying I would be happy to write a more “traditional“ plan, and she replied that I would “probably” need to resubmit. Dr. Lotan replied that I was not to change my views, that she would meet with me and we would discuss.

A few days later, everyone else received his or her classroom management plan. A number of students were told to resubmit; none of them were required to meet with Dr. Lotan first.

Dr. Lotan had health problems that precluded



I received far less time to redo the classroom management plan<sup>15</sup> than any other student, thanks to the additional requirement of meeting with Dr. Lotan.

I had no objection to redoing the classroom management plan once I understood that it was part of my teaching portfolio; in fact, I actively wanted to rewrite it. Had [Instructor] been concerned with providing effective instruction, she would have told me that my plan spent far too much time discussing what I wouldn't do, and too little time describing what I would do. That would have been a perfectly legitimate reason to give me a B, encourage me to rewrite, and would have avoided the questionable demand for an ideological whitewash. But at no point did [Instructor] or Dr. Lotan evaluate my plan from an instructional perspective; they both focused entirely on my unacceptable views.

I am not bringing up the classroom management issue as an academic grievance; my resubmit was deemed acceptable and I got an A- in the class. However, it reveals again the extraordinarily disparate treatment I have received at STEP. Moreover, the meeting I had to attend with Dr. Lotan was extremely stressful. It was in this meeting that I again believed that Dr. Lotan wanted me to leave the program, and was doing everything but ask me to do so. I also believe this meeting was when Dr. Lotan began her most recent campaign to remove me from the program. She introduced the threat of "professionalism" for the first time and went on in great detail about her concerns that I wouldn't be able to meet the demands of the program.

#### Evidence of Disparate Treatment/Harassment

- y All other students were given their plan back and asked to resubmit based on comments.
- y No students had to meet with Dr. Lotan to discuss their plan.
- y My plan was rejected for its viewpoint, not its failure to meet the rubric criteria.
- y I agreed in the very first email that I would redo the plan. There was no reason to meet and try to convince me to do so. Nonetheless, I was forced to wait six weeks and be forced to rush at a time when I had a heavy work load, all in order to hold a meeting to ask me to do what I'd already agreed to do.
- y Dr. Lotan caused me considerable distress in a meeting that was held expressly to pressure me about my views and tacitly threaten my standing in the STEP program.

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<sup>15</sup> Document 12 is the revised CMP.

### Grievance #3: Supervisor Treatment <sup>16</sup>

On November 19<sup>th</sup>, my supervisor, [Supervisor], shocked me by revealing that he was extremely unhappy with me. He had never mentioned this before. He had never indicated any problem at all. Suddenly, he was telling me that I was in danger of failing my professionalism rating, a threat I had just heard two days before from Dr. Lotan when

to hire anyone who caused so much trouble.

Dr. Lotan never directly mentioned either meeting to me and never met with me about my problems with [Supervisor] in any way. She included the 11/19 meeting and my behavior on a list of “concerns” she had that I was unsuited for teaching (see next section). In holding me responsible for the meeting of 11/19 without ever asking me for an account of the events, Dr. Lotan is violating the Guidelines for Reviewing Concerns Regarding the Suitability for Practice of Teaching (henceforth referred to as Guidelines), which state “If the concern can be explained or corrected in a mutually satisfactory manner, the matter need go no further.” I was given no chance to explain that I was extremely distressed, that [Supervisor] raised his voice to me several times, and that I was upset by the underhanded nature of my supervisor’s treatment.

As Dr. Lotan had held me responsible for the problems in my meeting of 11/19, I documented [Supervisor]’s charge of lying in a letter on December 3<sup>rd</sup>. Dr. Lotan never responded to that email. In our meeting of 12/10, I specifically brought up [Supervisor]’s treatment, as I was tremendously upset by it. Dr. Lotan and Dean Callan both indicated the following:

- y Neither of them saw anything inappropriate about my supervisor accusing me of lying. My supervisor has enormous power over me, and is one of the three people who must recommend me for a credential (as is Dr. Lotan).
- y Neither of them saw anything unusual about [Supervisor] meeting secretly with my cooperating teacher, or emailing him about concerns that no one had even mentioned to me.
- y Both of them told me that [Supervisor] had changed my secondary class because of his belief that I spent too much time tutoring and “well, maybe there was something about observations”. [Supervisor] himself, who told me exactly why he was switching my classes in front of my supervisory partner, [Supervisory Partner], flatly contradicts this. He never mentioned any

y The Guidelines<sup>19</sup>

not asked to reconsider their views. For example,



standard (he had not). She acknowledged that I had never been told that there was a problem. In fact, as I told her, I had canvassed other STEP students<sup>24</sup>, and many of them were unaware that reflections were to be turned in 48 hours after the observations--and many of them hadn't done so

Dr. Lotan said she was extremely upset about a meeting<sup>25</sup> she heard third hand about between me and my supervisor, in which I had "raised my voice". Dr. Lotan agreed that she had never discussed the meeting with me to hear what had happened and thus confirmed that she hadn't followed the Guidelines.

- y Dr. Lotan made vague reference to other "instructors' concerns", but was not specific.
- y Dr. Lotan told me that my fellow students found me "domineering and intimidating". When I pressed her for details, she came up with the following:
  - y One student anonymously wrote that I made section "intolerable".
  - y Several students asked not to sit next to me in practicum. Dr. Lotan explicitly said she had no idea why they had asked to be moved—in fact, she became quite angry when I assumed that they'd asked because I was domineering or intolerable. I asked Dr. Lotan why she was including these students, when she had no idea if they'd asked to move because I was domineering. Wasn't it not only possible, but likely, that the students asked to move because they didn't approve of my views? Dr. Lotan stared at me for close to twenty seconds before admitting that she didn't know.
  - y Dr. Lotan said that several students complained specifically about,

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to support them (which she didn't), they were insufficient grounds to declare me unsuited for the practice of teaching. I also told both Dr. Lotan and Dean Callan that I would not be meeting with either of them again about this without a lawyer present.

### **Letter to STEP Classmates**

The day after the meeting, I sent a letter<sup>27</sup> to my classmates, which also serves as a more detailed description of the 12/10 meeting. My letter had several purposes. First, rumors had been running around for a while, and I wanted to confirm them.

I also wanted to make sure that everyone knew about the situation. Dr. Lotan focuses on the students who complain about me, but had she surveyed the class for those who like and respect me, I believe she would have gotten a much larger response. I'm much older than all my other classmates and don't socialize with them much, but am still probably among the top five in name recognition--that is, far more students know who I am than I know who they are, and more of that recognition is positive than negative (again, this is my impression). Many students who didn't know about my troubles would be interested and in some cases dismayed to hear about what was going on. If I was to be expelled, I wanted to be sure that everyone knew about it.

Finally, I wanted to respond to those who had complained about me. I knew that complaints were occurring, but had never addressed it because no one did it to me directly.<sup>28</sup> I thought my tone was mildly reproachful but also understanding. Still, even if someone perceived it as more critical, it should be noted that these are students who have complained about me as being "domineering" (in class, not to them) and "intolerable" and demanded not to sit next to me. Surely, this constitutes significant criticism of me. I was only giving them my views of the criticism and the manner in which it had been delivered.

### **Warning Letter**

A week later, Dr. Lotan and Dean Callan sent me a second letter<sup>29</sup> that I didn't receive until December 29<sup>th</sup>. In that letter, they said that I was "hostile, argumentative, and insulting" in our 12/10 meeting. I was certainly not insulting. I did not unquestioningly accept their charges that I was "unsuited for the practice of teaching", which they undoubtedly perceived as both hostile and argumentative. I deny this. I did contest their assertions by asking for evidence, which time and again Dr. Lotan acknowledged didn't exist. If they'd wanted me not to contest their evidence, they



want to sit next to Michele in practicum. It has nothing to do with her views; she's just an domineering, overbearing bitch." DOB. We could print up cards or something. Don't Sit Me Next to the DOB!"

I can only assume that Dean Callan and Dr. Lotan missed the expressly humorous (albeit with a touch of the gallows) tone here. I am telling my classmates that Dr. Lotan had been frustrated by the hole in her evidence and so, if they want to help her get rid of me, they need to be more specific when they are complaining about me. I do not believe this can be reasonably construed as a serious instruction on how the class was to respond to me. In fact, I end the letter by making it clear that my classmates can decide for themselves how they can respond:

"I'll continue being me, and those of you who feel uncomfortable can maybe learn how to speak up. Or not. Your call."



students at every socio-economic level. I teach English composition to Asian immigrant and native-born high-school students, I have achieved extraordinary success at improving the test scores of low income African American and Hispanic students, and I want to teach in public schools so that I can broaden the range of students I can reach. I am a committed teacher and no one—not even Dr. Lotan—has denied that I have evidenced excellent teaching skills. That I can assert these facts about myself does not make me unwilling to learn, arrogant, closed to criticism or certain of my own perfection as a teacher.

Dr. Lotan's stated concerns rest entirely on issues that she perceives with me as a STEP student and with my views. She has made no effort to determine if these purported behaviors are carried through to my placement (which they have not). If in fact I get along well with my colleagues at my placement school, show up on time, and turn in all my paperwork and tasks in a timely manner at my placement, then surely this should be considerably more relevant to my suitability to teaching than whether or not I am tardy to class (assuming she can ever back up that charge) or my fellow students "don't like me".

#### Evidence of Disparate Treatment/Harassment:

- y Dr. Lotan has declared her concern that I am unfit for teaching using criteria that has not been consistently applied to all STEP candidates.
- y Dr. Lotan has not provided evidence to support her charges.
- y Dr. Lotan has rarely<sup>30</sup> invoked the guidelines in her ten years of running STEP. I request that a comparison be made of my case to the other times Dr. Lotan has expressed concerns that a candidate was unsuited for teaching.
- y Dr. Lotan gave me no warning, either written or verbal, about fairly routine behaviors that she apparently believes render someone unfit for the practice of teaching. Surely, all students who are ever late to class should expect a warning letter informing them that tardiness is a serious problem that will eventually lead to a "concerns regarding fitness for the practice of teaching" letter.
- y Dr. Lotan gave me the lowest possible grade for practicum, based on my supervisor's low professionalism rating. , yet left her purported concerns about my professionalism off the list of "suitability failings". This inconsistency suggests a larger plan or at the very least an incoherent approach to her designations of "suitability".
- y Dr. Lotan and Dean Callan have threatened me for communicating about these events with my fellow classmates, while at the same time saying that students (all except me) should be allowed to express their concerns in any manner.
- y Dr. Lotan and Dean Callan have given me a list of generic objectives, many of which had no relation to their original list of concerns, that they can use to move to the next step of Guidelines whenever they decide they are ready.

## Grievance #5: Harassment regarding my blog

### Background

#### My Professional Knowledge

I have been an active participant in the online teaching community since I began working as a

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<sup>30</sup> This fact is constantly mentioned in STEP's NCATE accreditation documents.

private tutor and instructor in 2003. I have a Master's in Information Science from UC Berkeley (2004), and did my final project on online communities. I know a great deal about blogging, discussion forums, and all major issues in online discourse. I am also well-versed in the type of discussions that go on in teacher and education school student weblogs. I am certain Dr. Lotan knew this, for the following reasons:

1. She had access to my application, which discussed my education.
2. She knew that I kept a website of my work at College Track concerning the raised test scores of disadvantaged minorities, as I referenced it in my application.
3. She received an anonymous email about my online discussion forum by someone who wanted her to be aware that I was discussing her attempts to be rid of me.
4. She saw from that scrutiny that I had engaged in a disagreement with [Teacher Blogger]e, a teacher who she respects as a Stanford cooperating teacher. She thought this alone was reason enough to want me to go elsewhere, as she felt our disagreement meant she couldn't place me with him and that this was an undue burden.

When I began my education at Stanford, I began a blog, separate from my online discussion forum. I called it "Surviving Stanford", a humorous reference to the troubles I had just getting permission to attend and my fears that I might not graduate. I am not much of a blogger. I like to write essays and stories about my students and experiences at school, and that's what my blog focused on. As an expert, I had my own opinions about what was acceptable information to reveal online. For example, I thought [Teacher Blogger] went well over the line of my comfort zone, as he used his own name, his school name, and discussed his students in often negative terms.

I used pseudonyms for all students and a pseudonym for myself. At first, I used real school names, primarily because my blog had no audience to speak of and I thought student pseudonyms sufficient. I never discussed students negatively.

These were my own rules, because Stanford has no blogging policy. I knew that FERPA referred to a school's responsibilities, not teachers, but I still felt that a teacher might be violating FERPA by mentioning an individual's grade issue by the teacher him or herself. As a student teacher, I have no access to official records, so any grades I discussed (infrequently) would be student reported and not due to my knowledge as a teacher.

In short, I was certain that my blog was well inside the boundaries of many teacher blogs, and to the extent that any student was able to identify themselves (something that was highly unlikely) they would not read anything that made them uncomfortable. I consider my stories to be much closer to that of a columnist or raconteur, as opposed to the professional assessment of a teacher.

None of these assertions mean that I might not be wrong. Perhaps there have already been test cases of blogs such as my own that I simply wasn't aware of. But if my blog violated any law, then there were thousands of others that were in far worse violation, and that I had made a strong good faith effort to keep student confidentiality safe by not revealing anything meaningful, using pseudonyms, and rarely telling stories that could be readily tracked to one student. Moreover, I was reasonably certain that there was no serious debate about this in the online teaching community.

I didn't spend hours mulling this when I opened my blog; I had already been working as a teacher for years and had my own code about what I would and wouldn't discuss online, whether it be in

comments sections, a blog, or my forum.

My blog was, if not common knowledge at STEP, something I referenced quite often in class. It wasn't a secret.

### **STEP Confidentiality Instruction**

The STEP website contains exactly five documents mentioning the term “confidentiality”<sup>31</sup>, eight mentioning the term “confidential”, and 7 mentioning the term “privacy”. The entries relevant to this issue:

A technology requirement document<sup>32</sup> for teaching credential, stating that a requirement is that the candidate “demonstrates knowledge of privacy, security, and safety issues (e.g. appropriate use of chatrooms, confidentiality of **records including graded student work, & publishing names and pictures of minors**)” (emphasis mine)

A handbook on the Elementary Graduation Portfolio instructions, telling candidates to “be aware of confidentiality needs”.

An identical comment in a document “Step Graduation Portfolio”

A “STEP Release Form”<sup>33</sup> for STEP students asking for permission to use their work—“ Unless I give express permission otherwise, **pseudonyms** will be used in any publications, presentations, websites or other education or research documents.” (emphasis mine)

The Parental Permission Form for Case Study: “The student will not be identified **by name** in any written document or oral report resulting from the study.” (emphasis mine)

Literacy (EDU 228) course description<sup>34</sup>: “Please also guard the privacy of students and teachers by using only **pseudonyms** for those who appear in your writing.” (emphasis mine)

To the extent the STEP website mentions privacy or confidentiality at all, the clear impression received is that changing the name of the student is deemed considerable privacy protection.

To my knowledge, the only time STEP secondary candidates have been told to change the name of a student for an assignment was for the Adolescent Case Study, which was entirely appropriate given that we discussed the student's official records. In our other papers, we often discuss students as examples; in our Equity Class we are required to select a student to evaluate for signs of equity issues. We were not told to keep the student's identity private.

Moreover, at no point in our STEP courses have we ever been forbidden from sharing our course work with anyone. We have never been told to refrain from sending it to our friends or family, or from putting it on our website as a homework assignme

**Dr. Lotan and Dean Callan “Discover” My Blog**

In early September, [Sequoia Principal], the principal at my placement school, asked to see me. When I met with her, she revealed that Dr. Lotan had informed her two days earlier about my blog. The principal wanted to know why I was writing a blog; she seemed to think I was interested in a

Two weeks later, Dr. Lotan asked me to remove my blog, per Dean Callan's announcement that he had found "egregious" violations. The egregious violation was a paper I had written for Equity and Democracy, describing a student "DeWayne"





Dr. Lotan sought to rescind my application because she disagreed with my views and felt they would interfere with her program's coherence. I submit that this is an improper criterion for a university dedicated to academic freedom.

Dr. Lotan and my instructor, [Instructor], used improper criteria for rejecting my Classroom Management Plan, focusing only on the stated views and not on whether the required components were all included.

Dr. Lotan did not ask for my version of the events surrounding my conflict with my supervisor, [Supervisor], despite that being a requirement for the Guidelines.

Dr. Lotan used trivial criteria to declare me unsuited for teaching.

Dean Callan did not use any legal definitions or school policies to declare my blog to have "violated confidentiality", and has not established any link between teacher ethics violations and my blog entries.

Dr. Lotan and Dean Callan have given me ambiguous and ill-defined criteria for resolving their "concerns" about my suitability for teaching.

Were improper or extraneous factors or criteria brought to bear that substantially affected the decision to the detriment of the grievant?

Dr. Lotan, [DCP], [Instructor], [Supervisor] and possibly Dean Callan reveal time and again that they are primarily objecting to my views on teaching, as opposed to my performance as a Stanford student.

Dr. Lotan is using fellow students' criticism of my classroom discourse as a reason to declare me unsuited for teaching.

Dr. Lotan and Dean Callan are allowing their personal bias against me to color their response to [Supervisor]'s behavior.

Dean Callan has offered no criteria, no policy, or anything other than his own feelings of discomfort, as justification for his demand that I close down my blog and communicate to the principal of my placement school directly rather than give me the option of doing so.

Were there any procedural irregularities that substantially affected the outcome of the matter to the detriment of the grievant?

[Instructor] required me to meet with Dr. Lotan about my assignment, which no other student was required to do. The meeting with Dr. Lotan was stressful, as she attacked my views and declared me dangerous to the Stanford brand, and her illness and the required delay meant that I only had three weeks to redo my plan. This added consid

unsuited for the practice of teaching. Had she expressed any concerns earlier, I would have been able to object or address them, depending on whether her concerns were accurate.

Many other students are late to class and have not been notified that they are unsuited for the practice of teaching, or even that this is a key element in Dr. Lotan's assessment of suitability.

The above item holds equally for the purported late assignments.

Dr. Lotan's "concerns about [my'] suitability for teaching" letter asserted that I consistently turned in "assignments" late, when in fact the only assignments that were late were reflections, a relatively minor piece of the STEP puzzle. By using the term "assignments", Dr. Lotan sought to make the charge sound more severe than it actually was.

My supervisor has made several serious charges against me, one involving my professionalism and one my honesty, that were never investigated.

Dr. Lotan and Dean Callan made accusations about me to the principal of my placement school, despite having no clear definition of wrongdoing.

Given the proper facts, criteria, and procedures, was the decision one which a person in the position of the decision maker might reasonably have made?

No one could reasonably argue that I am unsuited to the practice of teaching.

Given my ready agreement to rewrite my classroom management plan, a reasonable decision maker would not have demanded a meeting anyway, nor assured me that my views weren't the problem when they clearly were.

A dean of student affairs would not reasonable demand access to a password-protected private journal.

Dean Callan's response to my blog is neither reasonable nor informed. His lack of awareness of online discourse, the larger teacher blogging community, and his complete lack of interest in developing an online discourse policy for STEP is not one that a decision maker might reasonably have made. Moreover, the utter lack of STEP policies regarding the apparent confidentiality of our teaching assignments makes my reprimand unfair and inconsistent with stated STEP norms.

Neither a dean of student affairs nor a program director of a teacher education program can reasonably respond with equanimity to the news that a supervisor accused his student teacher of lying.