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Ed. Psychology

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Classroom Observation

Over spring break, I observed a high school level engineering class in the technology department. Mr. Huss was a teacher of mine that pointed me in the direction of Stout. I lost the opportunity to take classes that I needed for college and in a couple weeks time, he got me ready for what I needed.

The classroom was set up with drafting boards, so all of the students start off there for lecture. As a little background information, they were on a four block system, so their classes were one and one half hours long. In the first part of the lecture, the teacher did a good job of letting the students know what was going on in the technology field of today. Announcements included several co-op and internship opportunities for students even in high school, and I think it increased interests among the students, because they have a direction and a goal to focus on. I was also introduced to the class, which was cool to hear that my name was well known for some of the extra curricular projects I have done in the past with the same software that they were using. I also gave the opportunity to bring students up for a tour of Stout. Looks like there were two students interested, but we'll see if they still are over the summer.

In the next part of his lecture, he went through new applications of the CAD software that the course was based around. It was easy for him to lose attention with some of these students because it seemed that a small group of the students knew what they were doing. Software came easy to them and they wanted to just get moving to the hands on aspect of the class. He only spent about twenty to twenty-five minutes on lecture, so things did get a little more productive at the computers.

He gave his students the opportunity to work on a vehicle that they were designing for the High Mileage Competition instead of doing the assignments, but the stipulation was that they also had to draw up the parts they were building and placing in the car. For something I had a hand in organizing, it was enjoyable to watch them at work. It is amazing to see how these students switch from school ground mode to the work force mode when they were in competition. If I didn't know any better, these students

imagined themselves as engineers on some new project design for a car with some major corporation.

They got into it and had the opportunity to be creative.

Some of the students that elected not to work on the projects and tend to choose the assignments. I think the computer faces should all face one direction because several times students were caught playing video games when they thought the teacher wasn't looking. Overall, I think it mostly has to do with the desire to be there. The students that enjoy it want to do above and beyond, where the students who do not want to be there tend to entertain themselves and get out of lifting a finger.

There were a few students who finished their assignments early and played with other programs and equipment. CNC milling is another exciting activity that the students have access to, but I don't know enough about. Computer animation wasn't as popular as I would have hoped, but maybe when it is my turn to get into the profession, it is something that I could cover. They may not have had the opportunities to play with it yet; I'll have to stop in again to find out.

The part of the class that impressed me the most was the excitement and enthusiasm to operate in a work force manner. If the students were challenged with a realistic problem to solve and treated like competent people with adult-like responsibilities, they will spend the time to solve it.

