September 2nd, 2014

Dear CSI Student,

Welcome to the 2014-2015 school year. We’re now midway through the second decade of the 21st century. In your lifetime, many of you will be considered unique because you were born in the previous century – or during the first year of this century. I look forward to working with you and getting to know you better during this second year of your CSI experience.

The purpose of this letter is for you to get to know me so we can be a little more comfortable with each other. So… here it goes: I’m 38 years old. I was married eleven years ago in Colorado to my dream girl, and now we’ve got four kids (one of them is a dog, but we still consider him our “first born”). Aside from the dog, we have two daughters and a son. The oldest is eight and starting third grade, the next is seven and starting second grade, and the youngest is nearly four and starting preschool. Sometimes, he sleeps… ☺

Before this year, I taught at Madison High School for five years, at UCAL for one year, and at Utica High School for six years; this will be my sixteenth year teaching. Before I started a career, I graduated from Troy High School and then attended Miami University (Ohio) and graduated from Alma College. I also received a Masters Degree in Education from Marygrove College.

A little more on the personal side, I love outdoor activities. I love to camp, hike, backpack, mountain bike, snowboard, kayak, fly fish, etc. I’ve traveled all over the country, and I’ve hiked all over the mountains out west. I’ve climbed three mountains over fourteen-thousand feet, and I’ve run the Chicago Marathon. I’ve traveled to 46 states, six countries in Europe, and I’ve snorkeled in Tahiti.

But I’m not just an outdoor guy. I’ve been playing and recording my own music since I was in high school. I play guitar, bass, drums, and anything else I can find that makes noise. I’ve been in a few bands, but the one that stands out the most in my memory is my heavy metal band from high school called “The Cannibalistic Vegetarians.” Our motto was, “we only eat the hair.” But those were different days. I recently played in a groovy rock n roll band called Half-Brewed, but I now mostly play silly songs for my kids.

And finally, I’m an English teacher. I definitely do a bunch of reading. I plan on sharing books with you over the course of the semester that I think would interest you, and I plan on trying to get you interested in going to the monthly CSI book club.

Okay, now it’s your turn. Your job is to write a letter to me that is all about you. You can get some paper from the bin at the front of the classroom and begin your writing now. This letter is due tomorrow at the beginning of class, and it must be at least one full page. Again, welcome to the 2014-2015 school year. And remember, it’s okay to make mistakes as long as you learn from those mistakes.

All the best,

Mr. Feldkamp