

Letters to the editor

First, I would like to commend Alicia Hartman on her article reporting on the importance of SRTEs.

I had become used to reading a newspaper with little more than sports, Greek info and an ongoing dialogue a Christian demagogue and the rest of the campus. I was surprised by both the choice of subject and by the extent of the article.

An accurate evaluation of any faculty member is a difficult and time-consuming process.

It appears that the administration on our campus has found a way to avoid the effort that a detailed evaluation would entail; they simply check to see how popular the faculty member is with the students.

By placing too much importance on the evaluation that students give, Behrend risks losing some of its finest professors.

CITE was formed by faculty members concerned about this problem. No committee can hope to change the process though if Dr. Lilley continues to ignore his own advice to "use them in their limited mean."

It's good to see that the newspaper is making an effort

to inform the students of the important role that SRTEs play in the tenure process at Behrend.

Most students do not realize the power that they have when they fill out their SRTEs, and many do not take the evaluation seriously.

Perhaps the information in the article will cause the students to take a different attitude the next time they are asked to fill out an evaluation, or perhaps it will only result in more pizza parties.

Sheila Baldwin
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As the debate over SRTEs goes on, the continued use of these ratings will fuel the downward spiral in the quality of education at Behrend.

The situation is analogous to allowing newly hired blue collar employees to demand the removal of managers that have successfully led a profitable business.

As students we must entrust professors to provide us with the knowledge necessary to carry us to the next level.

Only as we participate in that

next level will we be able to evaluate accurately what was taught.

There is some validity to allowing the student to rate the instructors' teaching ability but those evaluations are often extremely biased, moreover the limited sample size in most classes further inhibits the statistical value of the data.

In short, institutions of higher learning have capitalized on the human being's desire to pursue the path of least resistance.

What were once institutions of higher learning have evolved into big businesses. Revenue has replaced knowledge as the ultimate goal of most schools.

As students we are simultaneously consumers and products of education. The resulting confusion over what we should demand as good service and what the school wants us to be when we graduate has led the school to let us decide, providing, of course, that they are paid as we travel through the system.

The SRTE debate revolves around some professors' realization that falling educational standards are gradually eroding the quality of life in the United States, while

other professors selfishly hold on to a system that no longer puts any demands on them but still pays them.

The business school faculty interviewed in the recent article provided little more than lip service to this problem, one that is slowly devouring the School of Business. There is a hole in the school through which any semi-literate individual could fall through and receive a degree. That individual would be practically worthless in today's economy, but her/his diploma wouldn't look much different than yours and that's where I object.

By graduating under educated individuals, the school is compromising every degree it confers. If an employer hires a Behrend graduate and that individual fails to produce, the result will eventually reflect adversely on other Behrend graduate.

Interviewed individuals mentioned pessimism, fear, the feeling that one's job is on the line. These emotions are not conducive to a positive job outlook.

In many cases I feel that the inflated importance the administration applies to SRTEs is its way of replacing gutless insecurity with gutless false security.

Tenure lasts only as long as the institution, and just as the big three automakers crash caused tremendous changes in our society, the repercussions in the education system caused by

ignoring quality control will also be devastating.

Then what of "CITE" (or is it site; no, I think it's sight; yes that's it, SIGHT, a committee led by a blind man, put in place to make outsiders think the school is trying to change something)?

You can't expect anyone who is more than satisfied with the status quo to be a change agent.

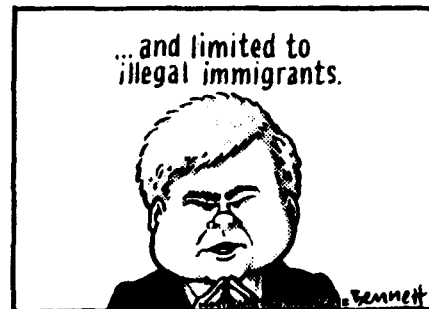
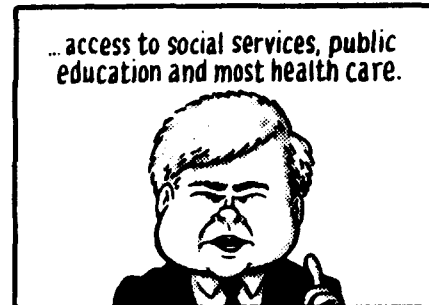
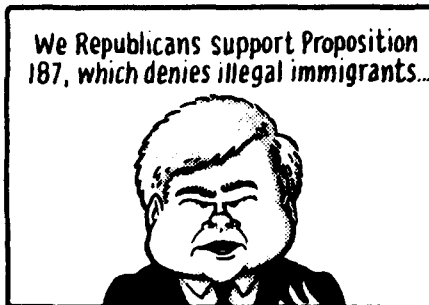
The committee's chairman is a legend in this school's administrators' minds. They love him, he loves them. They like things the way they are and vice versa.

Listen instead to those who recognize that our current path is an avenue of destruction. Yes, they are already here; I only echo their warnings, warnings often simply dismissed as cynical or belligerent.

But put the cynical in charge and I predict that the School of Business will graduate job makers, not job takers. Anything less constitutes lazy white men pandering to special interests to maintain their own employment at the expense of ours.

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Do you have an opinion? If you do, then send us a letter. Letters to the editor should be dropped off at the Collegian office in the Reed building.



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