

## Graduating? Not yet!

By Colleen Fromknecht  
Collegian Staff

The closer I come to the end of my college career, the more stories I seem to hear about students who won't be graduating because they are short one or two credits. Sometimes the reason is because there is a snafu in the system, but I think it is mainly because students are irresponsible.

It really amazes me that a student spends thousands of dollars to obtain an education at Behrend, yet won't go to see his or her advisor. I've heard students say that their advisors have no clue about advising them in their choice of classes. No! Really? Could it be because it is hard for an advisor to do a good job when he or she has never seen the student?

I almost feel sorry for some advisors. They sit in their offices waiting (eagerly I am sure) for their advisees to visit only to be disappointed. Then, usually during the last semester a student is attending classes here, a half-crazed, incoherent, vaguely familiar person bursts into their silent domains and babbles that he or she won't be able to graduate because one credit is missing from the student's transcript. (I'm positive that the reason some advisors twitch at loud noises is directly due to the high incidence of poor souls who have wandered into their offices in this condition.)

Give the advisors a break. How can you expect them to do their jobs when they see you once for five minutes while you are having a nervous breakdown? One visit for an entire college career at Behrend will not help the advisor to look out for your concerns properly.

The success to good advising is to go and see your advisor often. That way,

you can become comfortable with each other and can form a relationship built on trust. This helps the advisor to give the student good advice.

Another good source for students to utilize is the Registrar's Office. All of the people working there will bend over backwards to help you. They even have nifty aids which can help the student plan a wise choice of classes.

I recently found out they will run a "what-if" audit for a student who is considering changing majors. This can be useful because it is better to find out you will need to complete 183 credits if you change your major from biology to history instead of being surprised by that fact after you actually change your major.

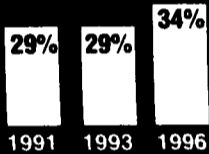
The Registrar's Office also guards the University's "Blue Book". Each student should receive a copy when he or she first comes to school at Behrend. It contains a list of classes currently offered at UP and also lists graduation requirements for all of the majors Penn State currently offers. I have found it to be a big help when I'm trying to decide which courses I should register for each semester. The Blue Book seems to be harder to track down on campus than Elvis in a shopping mall, so if you've lost your copy the Registrar's Office can help you if you need you see a copy.

The bottom line is that you are responsible for keeping track of your progress in school. The final decision rests on your shoulders. So go see your advisor for help instead of consulting your pals during Happy Hour at the Pub. After all, you're paying a hefty price to have these services. The least you can do is check them out.

### Homeless vets

A third of America's homeless men are veterans.

Percent of homeless men who served in the military:



SOURCE: International Union of Gospel Missions Survey of 10,400 men; research by BRENNIA SINK

pro and con

## Student Activities fee debate, part 3

by Mike De Santis  
Collegian Staff

Over the past two weeks there has been a clash of opinions in the *Collegian* opinion section about the Student Activities Fee. In the following paragraphs, I'll give you my opinion, based on the articles, about who I feel won the argument.

The first article was written by the opinion editor. The second was a rebuttal from the Dean of Student Affairs. The editor was saying how the students had the right to know where their money was going. She was right. They should. Whenever the students want, they should be able to go ask and find out what their money is being used for. Give one point to the editor(1).

The Dean says that he gave the *Collegian* a "two-page progress report" and that the *Collegian* didn't carry any story about the committee. Give him one point(1) since they didn't carry the story.

But, and it's a big BUT, the reason that the Dean gave a "two-page progress report" was because a reporter was not allowed into the meeting. Well, why not??? He said it is because the committee thought that the reporter might "misconstrue" what some of the members of the committee might say. In my opinion, letting a reporter into the meeting would give more of a neutral overview of what happened at the meeting. Then the reporter would be able to write a story, if there was one, about the committee and its work. Unfortunately, I think by giving a written report there are things that can be hidden, or what is in the report is only what the committee wants people to hear or know. Just think about it. One to the editor(2).

Now I admit that indirectly there was some things that were a bit much. For example, the "thinking like lunatics" part, so we should give the Dean a point(2). As for the "cheesy ethics" the Dean interpreted that totally wrong and implied that the members had this type of ethics. If you read the article the editor wrote it says, "(she) doesn't want anyone with cheesy ethics...playing with (her) money."

The editor didn't say any of the committee members had "cheesy ethics". I personally don't believe that any of those people would have been elected to the committee if they did. Give two points to the editor, one for the Dean's misinterpretation and the other for blowing it out of proportion(4).

As for the campus wide input and the hard working members, I don't think that this was needed. I have no doubt in my mind that the committee worked hard, because the job that they had to do was difficult. I also do give credit for the campus-wide input, but I think that the information collection could have been done better. No points here to anyone.

Written suggestions are nice, but isn't face to face input better? Why not hold a meeting somewhere that the students, even if they couldn't say anything, could watch...it is OUR money. Wait a minute, here is an idea, next year why not have a meeting after the written submissions are due. The meeting, headed by the committee, would ask the student body where they feel their money should go. After the meeting, the committee could go, and based on both their and the student's ideas, fully voiced, could decide how much money to allocate based on what the students think. That way the process would be more helpful for the students to feel content, because they would know, and have an idea of where their money is going.

Even though there has been a lot of publicity about the allocation of the now dreaded Student Activity Fee, I personally think that some of the places the money was put towards were well thought out. On the other hand some of the things were a bit ridiculous. I honestly don't think that this is a worthwhile use of our money. Wouldn't it be nice to have that \$400 dollars do something a bit more useful? For example, help the due van become cheaper, since I am a loyal rider, or help support the Women's Center.

So who won? The editor 4 to 2. I feel the students should know and have a better chance to give input, better than written suggestions that is, to a closed door meeting about THEIR money.

## Carl Rowan's commentary

Howard Kurtz, the Washington Post's media critic, writes that I am "unfair" in describing Rush Limbaugh and Howard Stern as hatemongers in my new book, "The Coming Race War in America."

Thus Kurtz seems to wish upon me timidity, even cowardice, in writing about these titans of talk who are demagoguing America toward its greatest social crisis.

"Stern...has made fun of blacks-along with Jews, Mexicans, Filipinos and other racial ethnic groups," Kurtz writes. "Some people can't stand this sort of satire."

I'll wager that in the 1930s, when the Nazis were stereotyping and scapegoating Jews, a lot of well-meaning Germans dismissed it as "satire." The "fun-making" in Germany quickly deteriorated into some of the worst atrocities in human history.

I can't believe that Kurtz would help Stern to hide behind the word "entertainment" in justifying his vulgar, utterly offensive broadcasts. I point out in my book that white Americans once painted their faces black and put on minstrel show "entertainment," but Americans stopped that in the knowledge

that such "entertainment" wounded other citizens.

Kurtz says "so what?" to my citation of Limbaugh's sssplenetic, sexist assaults on the women's movement. He says Limbaugh "mercilessly skewers liberals, feminists, journalists and those he views as Hollywood elitists and environmental wackos...But mostly his show is three hours a day of mainstream conservatism."

Yes, a conservatism that includes the mean-spirited delivery of piles of misinformation and surly innuendoes about the most divisive issues in American life. Kurtz doesn't seem to understand that the most effective hatemongers are those who are careful not

to throw around "the n-word" or other blatant racial insults.

Kurtz concludes his news-pages "editorial" against me with the assertion that "Folks who don't like Limbaugh or Stern, who has been relentlessly penalized by the Federal Communications Commission, have a clear option: Turn them off."

Just turn them off?

When the Nazis wer suffocating Jews in "satire", leaders in the Vatican just "tuned out." Government leaders in Great Britain and the United States just tuned them off, pretending not to hear anything about what Hitler's killers planned to do, or later, to know anything about the ghastly murders they were committing.

Kurtz writes that my book "misses the point of what (Limbaugh and Stern) do and why millions of loyal fans tune in each day." I write so critically of them because I know precisely what they do. And I have written about "The Coming Race War..." because I am disturbed that their sick hatemongering has "millions of loyal fans."



## Downsizing the curriculum

by John Amorose  
Collegian Staff

It's been said that college is an institution of learning, established to make students members of a better society, both mentally and emotionally, in preparation for post-graduation employment. Sounds like a cool place to go, huh? But in reality, college is an institution that utilizes a series of ridiculous requirements and a constant deluge of irrelevant outside information to mask the important material that would guarantee a lifestyle of wealth and fame. With that being said, let's look at the rocky road one must take to earn an English degree (maybe you can relate).

Being a newly declared English major, I was downright shocked to learn what types of classes make up the 124 credits of an English B.A. degree. Forty-six or 36% of these credits are summed up under the heading "General Education." If you've never sat down and figured out the math, that's roughly three semesters, or a year and a half spent on various non-major subjects. Included in these courses are nine credits of communication, nine credits of natural sciences, six credits of quantification (whatever that may be), six credits of arts, six credits of humanities, and the six credits of social/behavioral classes. And that's not all. An English major must also have compiled the four credits most essential to life, liberty and the pursuit of

happiness: Health and Esact (gym class). That's right, gym class! Basically what the University is telling me is that if I do not achieve the one credit of health education, and three credits of badminton and bowling, I cannot graduate. This doesn't seem right to me.

The madness doesn't end with the General Education requirements. Now one must face the twenty-four credit task of fulfilling "College Degree Requirements." Included in these requirements are twelve credits of a foreign language, three more credits of arts, three more credits of humanities, three more credits social/behavior classes, as well as three credits of a course about other cultures. For those of you scoring at home, that's seventy credits, or approximately five semesters thus far, and before we can finally start taking the final forty-five credits which are "Requirements for the major."

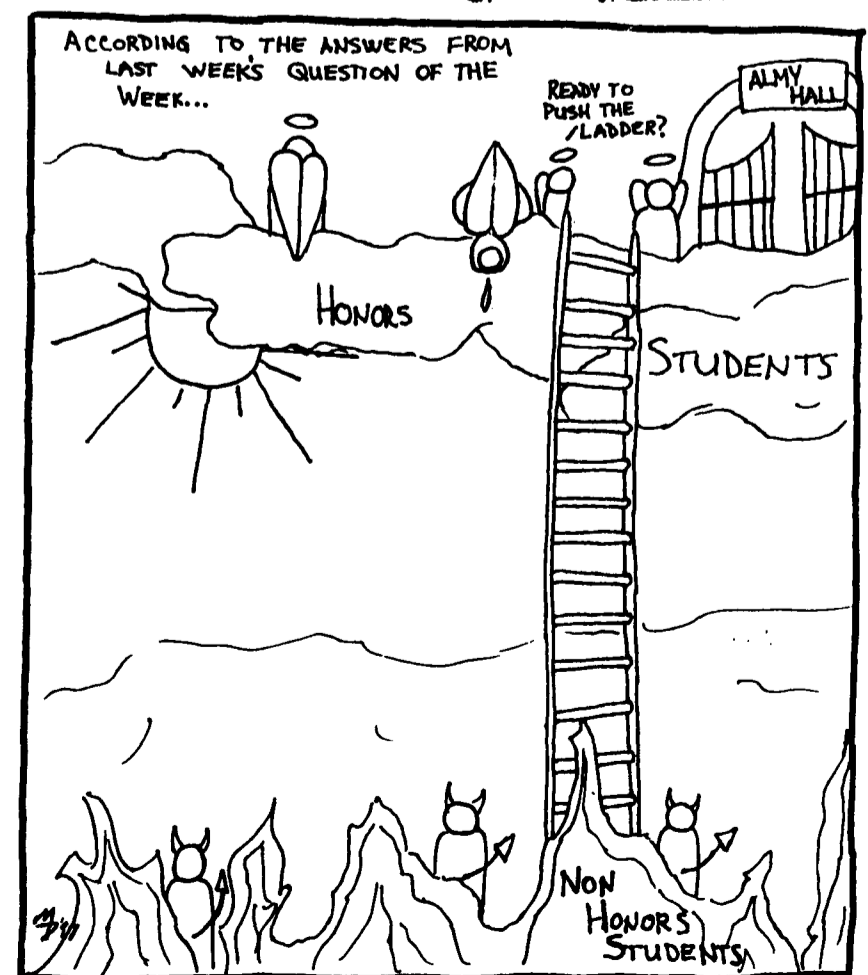
Don't get me wrong, I do understand the need for courses such as these; they broaden the mind by introducing students to fields and cultures that they may have never been exposed to before. But there's definitely some room for down-sizing in the current curriculum.

I think a curriculum that combines a traditional four-year college program, and a sixteen month program from a technical institute would be perfect. In these technical schools, students are taught only what they need to know to perform the occupation they attend the

school for, and very little else. Technical school graduates, in turn, leave school after sixteen to eighteen months and enter the workforce. Sure they might not know much about the music of the Baroque period, but they do have good jobs, which a lot of University students don't have. They also spend much less money on their education than the average college student does.

My suggestion is this: cut the general education requirements in half, leaving only twenty-three credits of non credit classes, which takes up less than two semesters. Also eliminate some of the "college degree requirements", so students will be able to jump directly into, and stayed focused on their major. I believe this will boost graduation rates. If students only have to attend school for three years, instead of four or five, that's less money they have to spend (or borrow from Uncle Sam). Also, if at least the majority of classes you must take have something to do with your desired major, better grades will be obtained because you can picture what you're learning being applied to your future employment.

There's a vote being called from the Faculty Senate concerning the cutting or reshaping of the current curriculum. I urge those responsible for this vote to put any and all egos aside, and vote for these cuts. In the long run, it will benefit the students, who are the most important part of a college campus.



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