

To the delight of students and the dismay of professors, taking notes is not what it used to be

By Chad Brooks
Campus Correspondent
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Many students are so busy at college; they don't have time to go to class, much less to worry about having notes to study when exams roll around.

They don't seem too stressed either - especially when they're on campuses where prepared lecture notes are for sale.

Much to the dismay of many professors and school officials, the note-taking business is big and getting bigger. Students at Indiana, Ohio State and Pennsylvania State universities; the universities of Florida, Illinois, Iowa, Michigan, Texas, Wisconsin and schools throughout the University of California's system can buy page after page of their professor's musings for as little as \$30 for an entire semester. And they certainly aren't the only ones. Note-taking franchises are popping up on campuses faster than students can ditch class.

"I got caught in the rut as a freshman," said Scott Hayman, now a senior at Indiana University. "I realized how easy it was not to go to class in the first place. And with notes I could buy, it just made it that much easier" to skip.

Although the notes are sometimes inaccurate, Hayman said they have, more often than not, helped him get the job done.

"Usually I do quite well considering I have never even been to the class that I am studying for," he said.

Talk like that sends shivers down the spines of many professors, who say note-taking services cheat the students who use them. Tension among professors at the University of Illinois and two popular services have risen so high that many instructors are copyrighting their lectures to prevent their contents from being sold. (The services say they're not about to cease and desist because they aren't selling lectures verbatim, merely a student's interpretation of them.)

"(Note-taking services) con students into thinking that they can miss and still know what happened (in class)," said Marjorie Hershey, a political science professor at Indiana University. "I think we all know what it's like to try and understand some-

one else's notes. It's just not an adequate substitute for being present and taking part in discussions."

Class discussion - including the tangents that can put an important concept into a clearer context - is invaluable, said Indiana journalism professor Andrew Rojecki.

And then there were the times when a note-taker referred to Carmichael's lecture on rocks at the equator as "rocks at the center of the earth," and to sediments on the sea floor as "settlements."

"Not going to class gives you no opportunity to ask questions and really understand the material," he said.

Allison Desatnik, a senior at Indiana, knows about that all too well. She said she used a note-taking service only once, and it had a negative affect on her grade.

"When you are used to going to class and taking your own notes and studying things on your terms it is hard to just start studying someone else's interpretation of a class," she said. "It is not even close to what it is like to go to class and take your own notes."

Mark Jones, co-owner of The Note Network, a popular service at Indiana, agrees that his business isn't a substitute for going to class. To help students understand that, The Note Network makes them sign a waiver every time they make a purchase. It says: "The Note Network provides a service which is to be used as a supplement to tests and lectures, NOT a substitute. The Note Network is not responsible or liable for students attendance or nonattendance of related lectures."

Yeah, yeah, yeah. Even students and professors agree that few customers care about that disclaimer when they can get important details from classes ranging from biology and business to geography and journalism. And yes, even physics. The Note Network only charges \$2.50 a day for such heady stuff.

Which begs an important question: Who are these note-takers in whom students place so much trust? Typically, other students. The Note Network requires that its note-takers have at least a 3.2 grade-point average and be registered in the class they're covering.

"Given that the campus wide GPA (at Indiana) is a 3.0, that doesn't give me much confidence in the skill of the people they hire," Hershey said. "Students who purchase these notes are in effect taking a correspondence course, except that they have no idea who they're corresponding with. That's not my idea of learning."

Tracy Ore, a sociology professor at the University of Illinois, told the student newspaper, the "Daily Illini," that notes taken from her classes by a service called I-Notes are "of incredibly poor quality."

"They do a bad job," she added. "It's amusing mostly."

Robert Carmichael, a geology professor at the University of Iowa, has even been known to announce mistakes note-takers have made to the rest of the class. For example, when he lectured about Crater Lake, Ore., the student note-taker wrote down "Creator" Lake "as if it was somehow divinely inspired," he said.

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Jones, the note-taking service owner, said some people will always complain about the wares he peddles. He insists his business will benefit students who use it properly - and even instructors who want to critique their own teaching by looking at what student note-takers actually take away from their classes.

Meanwhile, students like Indiana University senior Jason Snow will quietly pick up their \$12.50 exam packs and leave the heated debates to everyone else.

"The good far outweighs the bad in my eyes," he said. "I guess it could be considered laziness, but most of the classes I use them for I'm not really interested in anyway."

Ricks College keeps its traditional values alive

Dan Egan
Tribune Media Services

REXBURG, Idaho - The decades don't seem to fly by fast at Mormon-owned Ricks College, a school with about 8,000 students built on a hillside at the edge of eastern Idaho's dinner-plate-flat Snake River Plain.

You won't find college kids with little barbells punched through their tongues or Dayglo green hair. Heck, even shorts are prohibited - including those funky knee-length dungarees so popular at the school's big brother, Brigham Young University, also owned by The Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints.

What you will find at America's largest private junior college is students in church on Sunday and in bed early Saturday night - alone.

Visitors of the opposite sex are prohibited in unmarried students' off-campus apartments after 10 p.m., midnight on weekends.

Beer bashes? Try dry dances, where students might hone moves studied in logging class.

It's like a time warp. Two generations ago, most American college campuses were rigidly ruled environments designed to safely mold a kid into an adult. Today most campuses are socially lax atmospheres where students are free, if not encouraged, to recreate on their own.

But Ricks is different. A student's experience at the 109-year-old school likely would mirror that of a student

three decades ago, and that is by design.

"There has always been a little bit more of a parental feeling in the way the college has related to its students," says Elder Henry B. Eyring, a past Ricks president who is now education commissioner for the Mormon Church and a member of its Quorum of the Twelve Apostles.

The student body, which is 99 percent Mormon, doesn't seem to have a bad reaction to the heavy dose of authority.

"I like the structured environment. It helps keep me on task," says 21-year-old Aaron Paugh, a returned missionary. "Ricks gives you the opportunity to have fun. Clean fun... I feel safe here."

Ricks' cloistered history dates back to 1888, when Idaho law prohibited Mormons from voting despite their dense concentration in the eastern Idaho communities that dot the banks of the Snake River.

"Parents did not want their children educated in a system in which parents had no voice or control," says David L. Crowder in his recently published history, "The Spirit of Ricks." So local Mormons started an academy that, in the words of historian Merrill D. Beal, was "designed as a shield for (Mormon) children against gentile (non-Mormon) taunts and reproaches." Mormons eventually won back the vote and by the 1960s, the school had evolved into an easy-to-get-into regional Mormon junior col-

lege, a place a student could move away to and still go home for Sunday dinner. It also served as a safety net for students who could not get into school anywhere else.

"Ricks has always had a feeling as a place you could come when you perhaps hadn't had very much academic success. You could find yourself and raise yourself to academic achievement," says Eyring. "The teachers, rather than trying to simply test the students, have always tried to lift the students."

But Ricks is again being redefined. The number of students has exploded from 1,800 in the mid-1960s to 8,300 today. It draws students from all 50 states and dozens of countries. This year it will turn away more than 1,000 qualified applicants.

Church leaders recently gave administrators permission to bump student numbers to 8,600, but that still isn't enough to accommodate everyone who wants to attend.

Because the pool of potential students continues to deepen due to phenomenal church growth, Ricks will continue to turn away an increasing number of applicants. It's clear that administrators are not entirely comfortable with their newfound status as a competitive school, especially since admission to BYU is exceptionally tough.

"It's awkward in the church when you have a highly selective university and then a two-year school that is also highly selective," says Ricks admis-

Ohio State University student makes up a story good enough for The Jenny Jones Show

By Gretchen Jeffries
College Press Service
The Lantern (Ohio State University)

Don't believe everything you see on television.

A 21-year-old Ohio State University journalism major, along with his roommate, scammed an all-expense paid trip to Chicago to appear on the "Jenny Jones" show.

Nathan Collins and his roommate, Frank Munyon, made up a story after watching an episode of the show that requested viewers to call if they had bullied someone during grade school but wished to apologize for it.

Collins made the initial call and told the operator he had tormented Munyon and had lived to regret it.

To be considered for the show, Collins spun an interesting yarn.

"I told them that I held him down and shaved his nipples, 'de-pantsed' him and threw food at him," he said.

To really lay it on thick, Collins told the operator he had picked on Munyon because Munyon had a

chipped tooth. Collins said he empathized with Munyon years later because he also had wound up losing one his front teeth.

"I also told them that Frank dropped out of school and that I thought it might be because I was so cruel to him," he said.

The ruse worked. Collins and Munyon were the first set of guests booked for the show.

Collins took notes on what he had told the show's producers so he and Munyon could keep their stories straight. It was a smart move. Collins said, because the producers called both men several times to corroborate their stories.

Collins said the producers intentionally antagonized him. He said they repeatedly called and asked him why he wanted to apologize. Collins said the producers referred to him in derogatory terms when they called Munyon. Collins also said the producers told Munyon he didn't have to accept Collins' apology.

On March 4, the roommates were flown to separate Chicago airports and had limousines waiting for them when they arrived. Collins said they were driven to separate four-star hotels and given \$40-a-day bar and restaurant tabs. The taping was March 6. While in Chicago, Collins said he and Munyon went out together and called each other regularly.

The day of the taping, Collins said he and Munyon were escorted to separate green rooms where they were prepped for the show.

"They told us 'This is what Jenny has on her blue card; this is what you've said, and this is how it's supposed to go,'" Collins said.

A spokeswoman from the "Jenny Jones" show was unable to answer questions regarding how guests are chosen, how stories are validated and who pays for guests' travel costs.

Collins and Munyon don't know when the show will air, but they said producers told them it would be two to four weeks after taping.

Spring Break may have mellowed out somewhat in Florida

By Todd Pack
Knight-Ridder Newspapers

DAYTONA BEACH - Poolside at the Holiday Inn SunSpree Resort, near a giant balloon painted to resemble a condom package, Meghan Tally sits on a deck chair and writes a postcard to her mother:

"You wouldn't believe how crazy Daytona Beach is," she writes. "I don't think you would like it."

The Emory University freshman is probably right about that, but Daytona Beach police say spring break isn't as crazy at it was a few years ago.

In the first week of spring break this year, the number of arrests was down slightly from the same period in 1997, police spokesman Rob Brinkerhoff said Monday.

Police arrested 400 people on felony and misdemeanor charges in the week ended Sunday, Brinkerhoff said.

That compares with 413 during opening week of spring break in 1997, Spring Break '97, he said.

Police don't know how many of those were spring breakers.

But Brinkerhoff said this year's total is noteworthy because police have changed how they count arrests during spring break.

Last year's number includes only those people charged by Daytona Beach authorities, he said.

This year's includes people arrested by police in other east Volusia County cities including Holly Hill and South Daytona, he said.

That means the number of people arrested by Daytona Beach police is probably well below 400, Brinkerhoff said.

Why are students less rowdy?

One reason might be last week's chilly weather, Brinkerhoff said. The temperature dipped into the 40s at night.

"It might've been too cold for them to go out and get into trouble," he said.

A list of charges filed last week was not available Monday, but most of those arrested during the first week of spring break last year had been drinking, Brinkerhoff said.

Despite last week's arrests, he said, spring breakers are generally well behaved.

Tourism officials estimate tens of thousands of students, most of them

from schools in the Northeast or Midwest, checked into the city's beachside hotels last week.

Ormond Beach tourism consultant Evelyn Fine said 140,000 to 150,000 students would vacation in Daytona Beach during the three-week spring break season.

On average, they'll spend less than

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\$500 each, she said.

If that figure is correct, spring breakers will put \$70 million to \$75 million in Daytona Beach coffers this month.

That is down considerably from the \$120 million students spent in 1989, when a record 400,000 college students visited the town.

They picked fights, urinated and vomited in the street and slept in their cars in residential neighborhoods.

The city has since cracked down on the unruly behavior and curbed efforts to promote Daytona Beach as a spring break destination.

In 1993, MTV stopped covering spring break events in Daytona Beach after officials complained its raucous programs were hurting the city's image.

But while police and merchants say this year's spring breakers stay close to the tourist strip, people who live nearby say they can still be plenty rowdy.

Judy Howe, 47, who lives on Grandview Avenue, says she can't sleep at night because of drunken students yelling obscenities from the nearby Desert Inn, a spring break hub.

"It's just unreal," she said Monday. "I take Tylenol P.M. and wear earplugs, and they still wake me up."

Daytona Beach might rank behind other cities, such as Panama City Beach, as a spring break destination, she said, "but the party isn't over."