

A View From The Lighthouse

The pains of scheduling

So it's time to start scheduling for the spring semester, what fun! Stop by the RUB desk, pick up the handy scheduling book, and get started. It is that simple! Well, yes, it seems simple, but after an hour or two of looking at that book, you start getting a headache right behind the eyes that can only be brought on by the frustration of Penn State making something that should be really easy, terribly hard.

Let's start with the obvious. The whole scheduling system is a mess! Is everyone on campus confused about the whole thing? Going to see an advisor, who's your advisor, calling on the phone or going online to get a class, does this class fill the requirement? Whoa, what a headache. Is it any wonder that so many people are grumpy this time of year?

The advisor situation is a great place to start, because these are the people that students are supposed to turn to for all their scheduling needs. Terrific idea, well, in theory anyway. The problem with this one is that no one can seem to figure out just who their advisor is, and where they can find them. Isn't it convenient that the enigmatic list of advisors appeared just last week? Did you actually know what that huge sheet of white paper hanging in the hall of Reed was before someone told you?

And let's just say that you can find your advisor. You should be praised and given the proverbial gold star. Oh wait, there's just one problem, your advisor doesn't know what the heck you should be taking! Sure you've got your check sheet ready, you have a goal in mind of what classes you think you should be taking, but sorry, no cigar. For the most part, the poor advisors are as confused as you are! So, whom should you turn to then?

Finding a tenth or eleventh standing senior might be helpful. But maybe not because they couldn't make it through school in the usual eight semesters because they didn't know that they needed to take more than one diversity focused class either!

To call or compute, that's a valid question. The advisors and the handy-dandy scheduling book say that there are two ways in which one can schedule. You can either call on the phone (a toll call, nonetheless) or you can do it over the E-Lion system. Sounds simple, but no. The phone system is only good if you have a perfect record here at the college.

Ever forget to pay for a library book or are you still waiting for PHEAA to release your loan to the



college? If your answer was yes, then sorry, you can't schedule. You have to call the Registrar's office, then financial aid, then the Registrar's office again and then if you're really lucky you get to call PHEAA. Sigh, at least you still have the trusty computer. Hold on there, not so fast. Sure the E-Lion is a valuable tool, but hey, it's great when the schedule of classes is a big jumbled mess of HTML text. Technology scores one again.

And is anyone more confused about this than the poor freshmen and sophomores? We all see them wandering the hallways looking for a professor to guide them the right direction, with their little scheduling book in hand. Don't you just want to take them by the hand and tell them that everything is going to be okay, but just remember that you now need three ESACT courses? Do we really expect them to understand what they are doing when all they have is that book?

Has everyone discovered the joys of trying to fill the requirement of the 'other cultures' classes? Yes, those are the ones with the little 'GI' after them, not to be confused by the myriad of classes with 'DI' next to them. Beware of this faux pas! You may end up with two of one or two of the other, or none at all. And let's just, for fun, say that you understand the difference between these classes. You have a whopping four classes to choose from! Explain this to all of us please, if most on campus has to take these classes, why only offer four? There have been students that cannot graduate because there were only four to choose from. And if these classes must be fulfilled, please explain to the advisors how to fill them, so they can advise us, the meager students as how to pick a class for them!

In a perfect world, at a perfect university, scheduling for classes would be easy. But why make things easy around here? It's not like we all don't have a thousand other things to do.



LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Pointing out ignorance in the *Beacon*

Dear Editor,

Last year the *Beacon* ran a column called "Dick and Jane" or something to that effect. One specific column discussed sex and what the definition really was. Do you recall that? Well, I do. I was outraged to read that someone published words stating that "real sex" was only that of male/female, heterosexual, penile penetration of the vagina, type sex. Being a lesbian, my intimate exchanges with my partner were completely invalidated in this article. Plain and simple, it was painful and outrageous. I vented my outrage to most anyone around me, but decided not to write in as I understand the degree of ignorance toward diversity is rather high here.

This year, the patterns of that column seem to have continued with this "What he wants... What she wants" (or something to that effect) section.

Perhaps it's all completely harmless, but it just annoys me to the depths of my being. What does He want? What does SHE want? What about what any person wants? Why must we be put into boxes and psychoanalyzed purely as genders, not as people? Not to mention that on a college campus, referring to each other as boys and girls is ridiculous. We are all men and womyn now, let's not forget that we've grown a bit from junior high.

I know that most people take things like this very lightly. I'm betting most readers haven't even given this column the thought it takes to be annoyed, but frankly, I'm overwhelmed by the amount of gender bias dung I've encountered on campus. I come from some very large and diverse cities and I don't expect Erie, Pa., to be on the top of the open-mindedness list, but I do expect that all humanity at least make an effort. For heaven's

sake up above, how does anyone know what SHE wants until you talk to her? Perhaps she doesn't subscribe to traditional gender roles and isn't worrying about why she can't communicate with her significant other to her satisfaction. Maybe she's filling a very stereotypical male role and worrying about why he doesn't have sex with her more than once a day. Maybe he's the one who really wants to learn how to effectively communicate with his partner. Maybe they're both actually thinking about why China would hold Tibet captive like they are. Thanks for listening.

Abbey Atkinson
GAS, 04

Everything that torked me off this week, in 1,050 words

Hello again Behrend! Welcome back from fall break, it went by way too fast for me. And even though it was supposed to be a break, I was left unsatisfied and even more pissed about different things here at Behrend than I was before. And this week has been the epitome of all hell weeks here on campus for me. And lucky for me, I have a way to vent it all through this column! And lucky for you, you have the choice to read it or turn the page. I hope that you choose to read on, bare with me, it will all be worth it in the end.

Let me start off by saying that I have had it up to my ears with the financial aid people at University Park! I swear, if this system of student loans and parent plus loans and releasing things to so-and-so was anymore unorganized, it would be our newspaper office. Can they please pull their heads out of their butts for five seconds and tell me EXACTLY what I have to do to get my loan to go through so I can schedule my classes for spring on time. For further rants on this subject, see the staff editorial box.

Ok, can everyone please calm down and not read things into every little thing that they see in the paper, or that they see in life in general for that matter. Honestly, not everything written (or unwritten) is directed toward you! Stop thinking so highly of yourself. Come on, I am sorry if our amusing 'What a girl wants/ I know what boys like' column offends you, however, it wasn't created simply to play into all the stereotypical gender roles that people seem to want to put themselves into. And as a matter of fact, even though the column doesn't appear on my page, I feel the need to defend it simply because the title that people find offensive was picked only because they are song titles. It has nothing to do with the fact that we are all blind to diversity and intolerant.

So those were just two things that have been making me irritated and not able to enjoy the Yankees victory over Seattle, which I really hate. But, I would have to say that my biggest

Detours and Small Potatoes

Katie Galley

editorial page editor



beef with this campus right now is the lack of courtesy! I know that a fellow editorial writer waxed poetic on the subject a week or so ago, however, he was nice about it, I'm not going to be.

Let's all remember the manners that we were taught in kindergarten. Please, I am about to go postal here. If one more person walks in through the door that I already have opened for myself, I am going to freak. That is why there are TWO doors in most of the buildings on this campus. With the exception of some of the dorms, there are two doors in which you can enter and exit. So, if you see someone walking in a door or to a door and it only appears that they are going to walk through it at some point in time, then for the love of God, use the other door! That concept seems so simple to me, yet maybe it is too far beneath us educated college people to practice it. I sure as hell can't figure it out. I dunno on this one.

Another thing that is torking me off to no end is a phenomenon that I like to call the 'stop short'. It's not the stop short that they talk about on Seinfeld, but when students, or professors, I don't care who, stop right in front of you when they are walking. I can't figure this one out either. Picture this, you are walking from Reed to Academic. Right as you approach the nicely labeled trees, the person, who has, thus far, been walking at a normal pace just stops. They stop walking and before you know it, you have plowed into the back of them. And they have the audacity of throwing a dirty look your way! As if! Sorry, I was having a *Clueless* moment.

There is a second, more sinister part to the stop short. It involves lurkers. You know the

type, you come around a corner and BAM, there they are. Sometimes they are standing there talking to other people, but other times they are just standing there doing absolutely nothing. And those are the people that I don't get. Must you stand right around a corner where there will be about 300 students walking during the peak of hallway traffic? Isn't there somewhere else you can meet your friends, maybe outside of the building where there is more than 20 square feet to move in? Anything, I beg of you!

One final thing that really irks me is the fact that the smokers on campus have no respect for anyone. Now, in no way am I saying that you shouldn't be able to smoke if you want to. I have no place to tell you that smoking causes lung cancer and emphysema, because if you don't know that by now, then you have been living in a hole since the late 70s. Anyway, smokers, all I implore you is to keep your smoking area to one or two well marked locations, so I can avoid them. There is absolutely nothing worse than walking to your first morning class when the person in front of you lights up a cigarette. Then you spend the entire walk to wherever sucking up all the smoke that they exhaled from their lungs. Just what I wanted to do in the morning, breathe in all your re-respirated icky, smoky lung air. Gross. Again, if you want to smoke, that's fine, just have some courtesy for those of us who don't want to char our lungs.

So, thanks to everyone for reading this. I know that it sucks to hear other people rant and rave, but I have a feeling that there are people out there that feel the same way that I do. Feel free to suffer alone in silence, or feel free to send your own 'rant letter.' I just might print it for you! Adios!

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