

OPINION

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances. - The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

Words of wisdom from a reluctant graduate

By KJ Margraff Jr.
staff writer
kjm289@psu.edu

Ask any graduating senior about this time of year if they are getting excited about the semester being over. More than likely they'll all respond with a resounding "YES!!!" but I for one, will not. Why? Because college is fun, and despite my numerous attempts to sabotage myself into staying here (yes, I took English 015 five times), I actually have to graduate. Yes, I am sick of classes, homework and exams but there are a lot of great things about college that I'm going to miss.

For one, since I didn't go directly to college out of high school, I know that the "real world" isn't so fun. It's a lot of work. You have to go to work every day regardless of if you want to or not or if you're sick. On those rare nice days here in Erie, you can't ditch work for the day to sleep in and head to the beach; you have to go to work. And when there's a lot of snow, you know you need to get out to your car even earlier to clean the ice off your windshield and let the engine warm up. It's always been my opinion that although work can be fun at times, they call it "work" for a reason.

And in addition to working at least a solid 40 hours a week, there are other stresses to life on your own. For example there are these little things like rent, utilities, groceries and insurance to pay for. I don't know what their problem is, but apparently bill collectors really don't like it when you don't pay them. So say goodbye to random Sheetz runs and midnight pizzas unless you're graduating with an engineering degree and will actually make a lot of money. But most nights you'll probably be in bed long

before midnight anyway. I for one stress the most about managing a budget. I'm already "OK" at it, but searching for an apartment I can afford while paying off my student loans and trying to save up for the future is really starting to get to me.

Needless to say, there are many things that I am going to miss about college, so I guess that the best way for me to get over the fact that I'm leaving is to pass on some suggestions and "words of wisdom" (in quotes because I'm really not all that wise) to everyone that I'm leaving behind. Here are the two things that made my college experience so incredible for me.

First, go to class and do all your homework. If you're wondering why, just read the first paragraph about me failing English 015 five times. Trust me; teachers think it's important and so should you. Someone very important to me once said that you only get as much out of life as you put into it; I've found that he was right on the button.

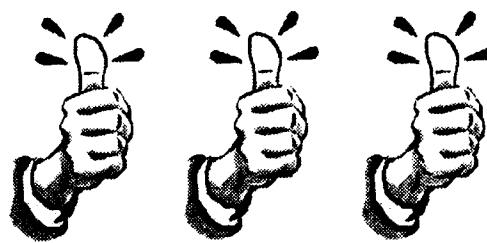
Second, get involved. There aren't enough pages in this newspaper for me to fully explain all of the benefits I've received from the various campus clubs and organizations that I have been involved with. There is something for everyone here from race and religion to sports and recreational activities. Take a good look at all of the posters up on campus, and keep an open mind; you never know what you might find.

My time as The Student Life section editor of the Beacon helped me to build confidence in my writing skills and encouraged me to work extra hard at the things I'm not good at. It helped to show me the power of perseverance and the importance of patience when you get discouraged.



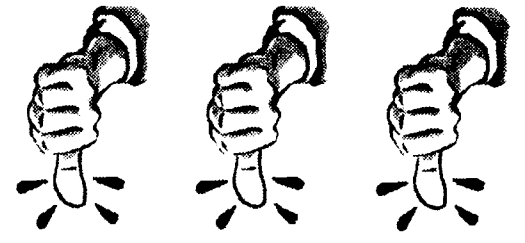
Jerry Pohl

Beacon Thumbs Up



- Wikipedia
- Battle of the Bands
- Nerf guns
- Slim hopes for no more snow
- Top ten sports mistakes

Beacon Thumbs Down



- Loud suitemates
- No Midnight Bingo in April
- Banning Brokeback Mountain
- Boxers without a button
- Everything in Brunos being greasy

Sarcasm exemplified

By Jerry Pohl
humor editor
jbp153@psu.edu

I'd like to thank Scott Soltis for his letter to the editor, "Irony versus Ignorance." Ken Middlemiss taught us all about irony by asking, "Is there any way we can suspend the constitution to get quorum?" Now Scott has provided the perfect example of sarcasm. He tips readers off to the fact that he is being facetious by writing in the first sentence that a few people think I'm funny; nothing could be further from the truth.

In Scott's letter, he talks about suspending quorum five separate times. A key element of well-written sarcasm is skillfully avoiding the actual issue of potential controversy, instead creating a false yet analogous issue that sounds similar. The careful reader will no doubt note that suspending quorum is subtly different from suspending the constitution.

One of the most clever things Scott does is reiterate and con-

firm the point I made in the original editorial, saying, "you must have quorum to suspend quorum." While this was very funny, I advise Scott for the future that it would have been even funnier if he had quoted my article, specifically when I said, "quorum would be needed to make the decision to suspend the constitution."

Scott then points out similar situations in which quorum is suspended. Those readers who have followed Scott's joke this far are sure to appreciate the humor here, elaborating on the analogous scenario for humorous effect. I'll give Scott the benefit of the doubt that his subtle jab at Middlemiss was not mean-spirited when he said, "Ken's actions show a great deal of congruency with his character and should be expected."

Kudos to you Scott for giving us all a magnificent example of sarcasm. I will stick to humor, but by no means should you stick to politics; while it did need a little work, your published humor is admirable and shows a great deal of promise. If you'd like to collaborate on a project give me a call.

Quote of the Week

"A great pleasure in life is doing what people say you cannot do."
~Walter Bagehot

Letter to the Editor

As a reader of The Behrend Beacon and an informed voter in the recent SGA election, I found Jerry Pohl's editorial "Democracy Canceled" to be libelous and ridiculous.

On a page that is dedicated to "humor," but has recently been turned into sub-par political debate and borderline slanderous editorials, the recent article was offensive to read. Pohl blatantly says that Straub and Middlemiss didn't earn their win and now receive "ill-gotten stipends." First of all, "ill-gotten" implies that the team did something malicious or conniving in order to win. This is, of course, false. Secondly, Straub and Middlemiss worked hard on their campaign and have an honest and intentional platform to make positive changes here at Behrend. They are far from a sorry default president and vice-president. The fact is their competition dropped out of the race. This is not abandoning democracy to name Straub/Middlemiss the winners; it's common sense.

In addition, this article didn't mention all the students who voted for Straub/Middlemiss before the website even stated

that they were the sole competitors. Also, the president and vice-president are a very important part of SGA. However, one must consider those who won the seats as senators. Are they not as instrumental to SGA? Is this writer choosing to say that they don't matter by neglecting to mention them as having any important role whatsoever? I would put forth that it could be seen this way. Students didn't get their right to vote taken away from them. They had a choice to vote for other significant positions in SGA.

This editorial is neither entertaining nor informative, and I am shocked that this attempt to stir up unneeded drama was even printed. In an attempt to be "funny," this article was a definite miss.

Thank you,

Lisa Lamendola, COMM 04

Submission Guidelines

The Beacon welcomes readers to share their views on this page. Letters and commentary pieces can be submitted by email to dgm147@psu.edu or directly to the Beacon office, located in the Reed Building.

Letters should be limited to 350 words and commentaries should be limited to 700 words. The more concise the submission, the less we will be forced to edit it for space concerns and the more likely we are to run the submission.

All submissions must include the writer's year in school, major and name as The Beacon does not publish anonymous letters. Deadline for any submission is 5 p.m. Tuesday afternoon for inclusion in the Friday issue. All submissions are considered, but because of space limitations, some may not be published.

All submissions must include consent to be edited before they can be edited for publication.

Have a "Thumbs Up" or "Thumbs Down"?



Send Suggestions to opinion@psu.edu

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Michelle Vera Surovic

Penn State Erie,
The Behrend College
First Floor, The J. Elmer Reed Union Building
Station Road, Erie, PA 16563
Contact the Beacon at:
Telephone: (814) 898-6488
Fax: (814) 898-6019