

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

The Behrend Beacon

Published weekly by the students of Penn State Behrend

THE BEHREND
Beacon



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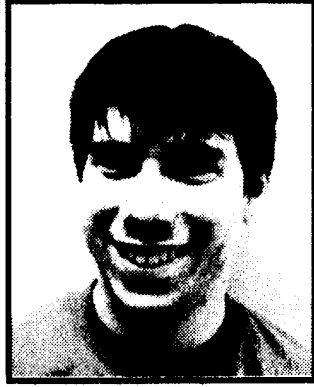
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This isn't high school



By Chris Brown
copy editor

Penn State Behrend has a lot to offer its students. The faculty here is helpful and support services like the Learning Resource Center's tutoring program help set students up to succeed. Behrend's campus is small enough to not be overwhelming, but has the resources of a big university with its affiliation to Penn State Main Campus. However, with all these positive attributes, Behrend has lots of room for improvement.

The most annoying aspect of this campus is all the posters that occupy every inch of open wall and bulletin board. Maybe I'm nitpicking here but I'll bet I'm not the only one that is annoyed at the amount of "Last Minute Fall Housing" and "Join our Band" posters that have been up since before we went home for winter break. Here's an easy solution, SGA should require all posters be turned in to the Reed Front Desk before posting, then one day a week SGA puts up the posters themselves, and then while they are putting

them up they can take down the expired posters that have been up for two weeks. SGA should then limit the self-ads to a designated area in Reed; this will provide a central location for students to look at want ads and prevent important school events like Lewis Black and the Speaker Series from being crowded out by useless posters on the wall. Problem solved.

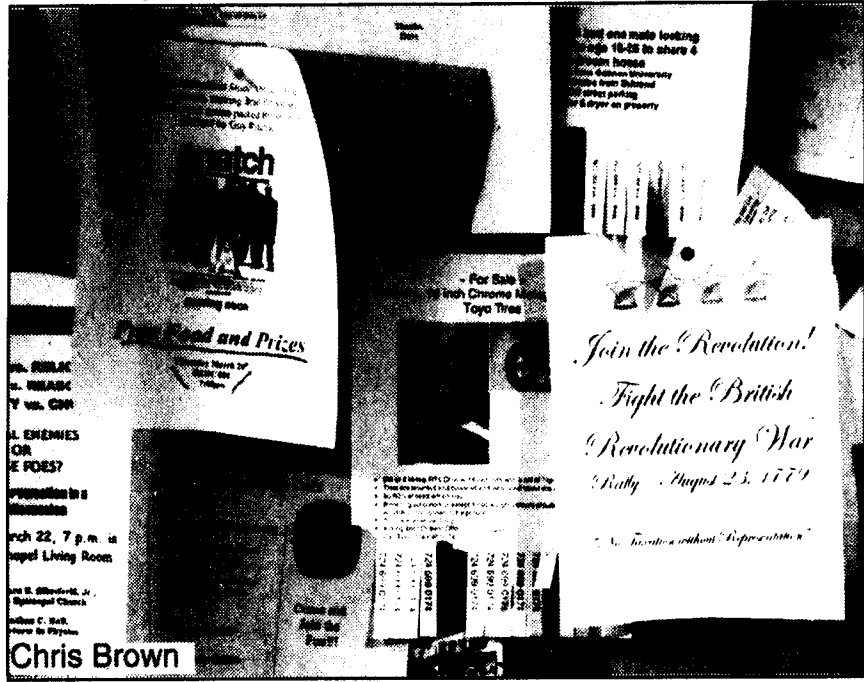
The thing that needs to change the most around Behrend is the increasingly high school-like atmosphere of the campus and its students. Not a semester goes by when I have to listen to the same complaints from the same type of students: Is there going to be a curve? Do we have to do a paper? Can't we have some multiple choice questions? Where's the study guide?

This probably isn't going to score me points with my fellow students, but here is a novel idea every student should take to heart. Stop complaining and

to read, you need to study, and you need to be responsible for your own education. Welcome to the real world.

It would be unfair to point the finger squarely at the students because some professors and administrative policies only add to the problem. For the professors that do give out study guides and cave in to wimpy demands from students, you are not doing them a favor by teaching them that someone will be there to hold their hand every step of the way in their lives. I understand part of the problem comes from the way professors are evaluated; they have an incentive to make class easy because that means higher evaluations from students. The university needs to place less emphasis on grade production and student evaluations, they should instead focus on other areas like publishing and reviewing the syllabuses of its professors when evaluating professors to help solve this problem.

Another administrative policy that needs changed is the way students schedule classes. Right now students are allowed to register without meeting with an advisor. I don't know if this is the university's idea of "collegiate Darwinism," where all the 'smart' college students meet with an advisor and get input on what they need to graduate and what will be most useful for them in the future, while all the "clueless" students take classes that they hate, are out of their league, and that don't help them graduate. The university and its students would be better served if it made students obtain a registration code from their faculty advisor before allowing students to register for courses and abandon its current policy.



Chris Brown

start learning. Do the assigned readings, take good notes, ask relevant questions, and practice good study habits. If you still have trouble understanding the course material, take advantage of the Learning Resource Center or *gasp* go talk to your professor during his/her office hours (trust me it isn't all that scary). This isn't high school, you need

THUMBS UP



- Hasn't snowed for a few days
- Sunshine!
- Only five weeks of classes left
- Skirts
- April Fool's Day
- Running into old friends in random places

THUMBS DOWN

- The constantly changing temperatures
- End-of-the-year projects and finals are approaching
- People who stop at green lights
- Stupid moustaches
- Losing money at the casino
- Naggers



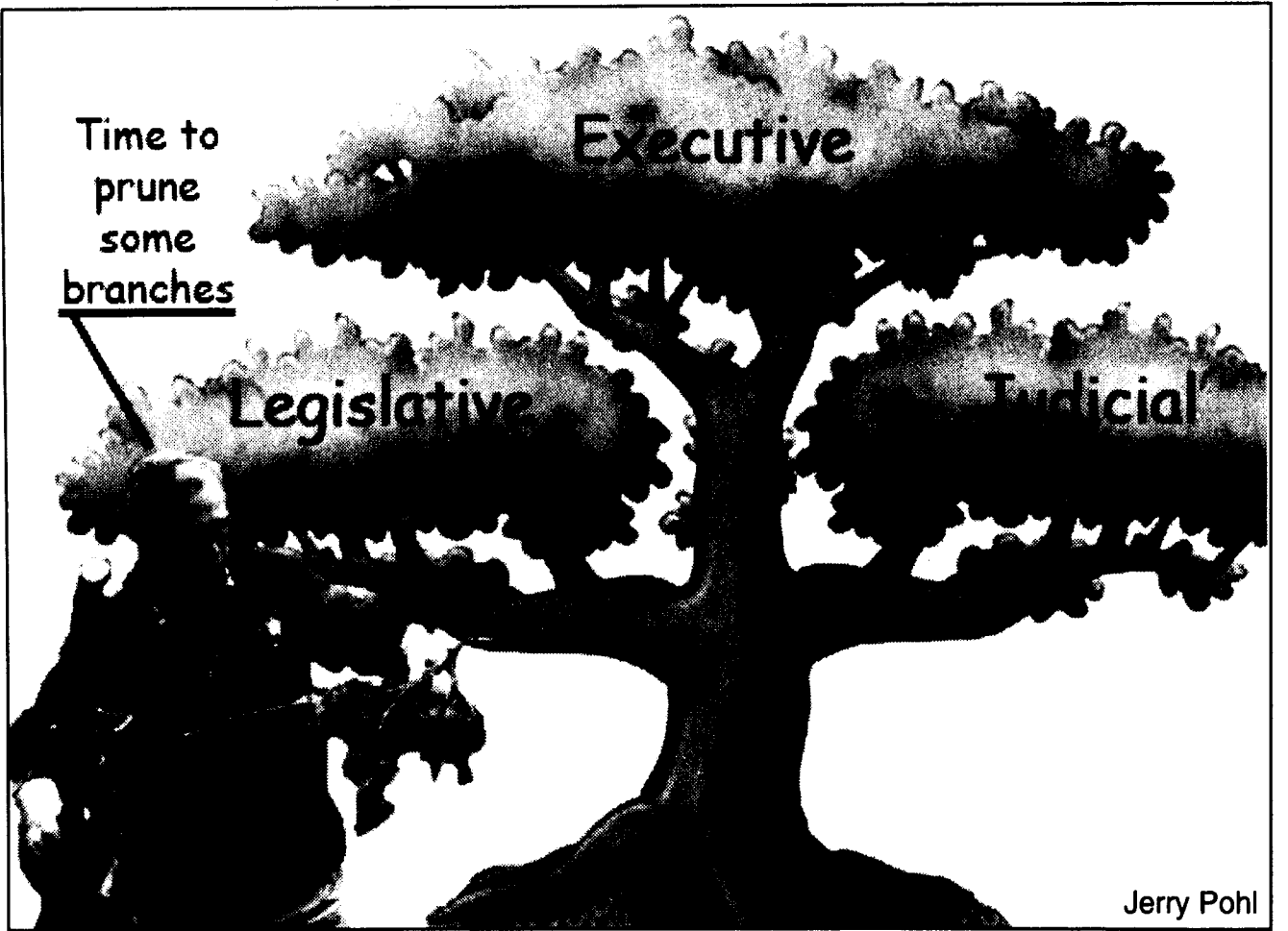
Submission Guidelines

The Beacon welcomes readers to share their views on this page. Letters and commentary pieces can be submitted by email to jan219@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.

The Behrend Beacon reserves the right to edit any submissions prior to publication.



Jerry Pohl

What's keeping students away from campus?

By Patrick Webster
managing editor

Is Penn State Behrend content being a suitcase campus?

Because that's what it is. Students who attend classes during the week immediately vacate the campus on Thursday or Friday when their last class is finished in order to find activities of interest. Why do they have to leave campus to do this?

It is true that Behrend's campus is widely recognized as a beautiful place. Wide open spaces, some mountainous terrain, and a large amount of forested area give the impression that this city college is kept safely away from the hustle and bustle of life in the city of Erie. It is also relatively clean, and there are few distractions from its academic and athletic offerings. It all adds up to an idyllic setting that looks great on promotional pamphlets and parent-possible visitation trips.

It's possible to have too much of a good thing. This near-total seclusion from every business and

opportunity that the city of Erie has to offer has its drawbacks. With the lack of on-campus activities, the students have few reasons to stay here on nights and weekends, let alone the rest of the week. Any activity, from going out to the bars with your buddies, to hanging out at a local coffee shop and talking about the latest news and entertainment events, requires getting into a car and driving several minutes to a remote location. There's no way here to just decide to get a couple of friends together and walk to the restaurant across the street after a night of classic contemporary college shenanigans. And if you're going to be driving anyway, why not drive to your hometown or some other college where you have friends that actually have things to do?

Some student organizations and clubs make a valiant effort to produce activities and events for the student body, but even these organizations are at the mercy of the apathy of their under-stimulated target audience. Over half the clubs here are inactive.

Everyone knows that Lewis Black is coming to campus on April 21. That event will no doubt bring

in hundreds of Behrend students and Erie residents to the Junker center for an evening of comedy. But why does it have to be the only noteworthy activity for the whole semester? Ask around; just see how many other events and activities the average student here has gone to, or can even correctly identify as having happened at all. We have things like the Speaker Series and the Logan Music Series, and these are good educational programs, but they don't always appeal to a wide array of college-aged students. Some attract so little interest on campus that the majority of students in attendance may be there only because it is required for some class, or for extra credit, totally defeating their purpose as an extra-curricular activity.

I admit that I do not know Penn State's policies on allowing businesses to operate near the Behrend campus, but I sincerely doubt that the reason we don't have any is the fault of local business operators. Locations next to college campuses are some of the most profitable in the country, and they would see dollar signs in an opportunity to run

restaurants or stores near Behrend. This kind of easy access to a student clientele might also encourage them to sponsor Behrend activities.

Likewise, the proximity and accessibility of local businesses would keep more Penn State students on campus more often, probably causing those students to spend more money on the food services and stores located on campus. Those same students, spending more time on campus, would make more friends and be more likely to participate and even help make more events happen. It's a win-win situation for everyone.

The long-term effects of greater student interest are hard to predict but there are some logical assumptions we can make. Greater student participation in Behrend events and satisfactory opportunities for things to do can lead to far fewer transfers, both to College Park and to other schools, making Penn State Behrend the four-year school that it's trying so hard to be. And in the end, that's a worthy goal for administrators and students alike.