

# The Reader Asks

Why did you participate or not participate in the boycott of the course evaluations at the end of last term?

Feature by Mark Switzer  
Photography Editor



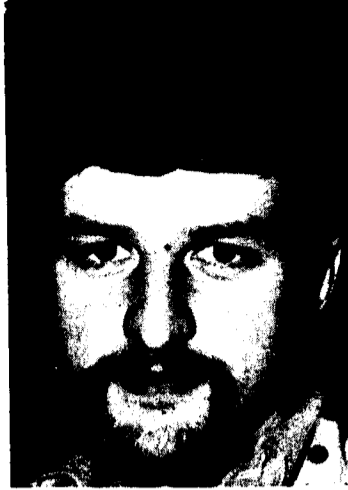
**Gary W. Pennick-9th term- EDET**

I didn't participate in the boycott. I do not know how the evaluations are used at Capitol Campus, but at HACC, I believe they play a great part in determining a teacher's raises and promotions. If there was more publicity as to why the evaluations are not beneficial to students at PSU, I may have participated in the boycott.



**Sharon Lee Henry-9th term- Elem.Ed.**

I did not participate in the boycott. Most of the instructors in the Elementary Education Dept. have shown an interest in me. They have helped me throughout my time here at Capitol Campus in all my subjects. I feel that the present system is a good way for me to give them a honest evaluation.



**Bob Schmidt-12th term, EDET**

I did participate in the course evaluation boycott last term. I feel that the evaluations do not better the educational system if the teachers are not obligated to reveal the results.



**Margery Sanford-9th term, Human.-Multi-Media**

I was in favor of the boycott to a degree. However, I feel that a boycott is disorganized and ineffective unless all the Penn State campuses participate. There should be more input to the evaluations. They should be taken seriously by students.



**Winslow D. Spady-12th term, EDET**

I did not participate in the boycott. I think that evaluations give me a chance to express my viewpoint on the course, which gives the teacher information in improving the course. Perhaps, the courses should be evaluated at mid-term so the teacher can deal with any problems the same term.



**Cathy Dunkelberger-9th term, Psycho-S.S.**

I did not participate in the boycott. I think the evaluations give the department heads an idea of how the students feel about the professors and courses.

# Dean Wolf Clarifies Evaluations

The suggested boycott of course evaluations may reflect some misunderstandings on the part of the Student Government Association.

The primary purpose of the evaluations is to improve instruction. The results are returned directly to the instructor and include the mean response and a distribution of the responses for each question.

From these results, the instructor may infer which, if any, particular aspects of the course require attention. Additionally, program, campus and University-wide averages for each item are supplied so that the results on each question may be studied with reference to those of other courses. From term to term, the instructor is able to respond to these specific results in order to modify the course when necessary.

Tenure, promotion and salary decisions are based on the evaluation of teaching, research, scholarship and service. The importance given each of these functions is based on the particular faculty member's assignment. During the review process, the instructor is asked to submit evidence of effectiveness in all of these areas. At this point, the results of systematic, reliable student evaluations are accepted as one measure of teaching effectiveness. Decisions are not based on a single term's evaluation results, but rather on trends.

The form in current use at Capitol was developed during the 1973-74 academic year at the direction of the University Council. That council included valuable student representation. To develop the form, all units of the University were requested to submit items and suggestions. Capitol Campus also submitted suggestions which were considered. In all, more than 100 evaluation forms, including various student-made forms, were submitted and over 1,500 individual questions were received. These 1,500 items were grouped into approximately 30 categories and the most frequently used questions were chosen from each category to construct a questionnaire. To arrive at the present University Instructional Survey, 10 of the original 30 items were agreed to by the University Council.

Recently, a new 18-question form has been adopted by representatives of various colleges at University Park. The new questionnaire will be printed directly on an answer sheet for greater ease in use and to reduce overall cost and processing time. Moreover, the greater number of questions will allow instructors to better pinpoint specific problems. Spaces are available for instructors to ask additional questions and certain items deemed inappropriate for a particular course may be omitted.

Last July, I asked the Capitol Campus Joint Committee on Promotion and Tenure to study the new form for adoption here. We again sought student input and two representatives of SGA testified at length before the Committee. Unfortunately, the Committee's recommendation was not received until Wednesday, March 10, the afternoon before the posters suggesting the boycott appeared.

In fact, there has been substantial student and faculty input into this important matter.

The review of faculty members for promotion and tenure must take place in one form or another. The secondary use of systematic, reliable student evaluations is an attempt to make one part of that process as objective and equitable as possible.

Finally, it seems clear that the use of past student rating for administrative decisions precludes their public disclosure. Widespread knowledge of previous results, taken out of context, would surely affect the utility of subsequent ratings. More importantly, there are serious questions regarding rights to privacy, if results obtained for the purpose of instructional improvement and administrative decisions are used by a wider audience for course-choice decisions.

George Wolf

Dean of Faculty

## Course Repeat Rule Out

EFFECTIVE IMMEDIATELY\* the Senate course repeat rule (M-3b) has been dropped.

All courses taken after January, 1976, will not be subject to the repeat rule.

All students who took courses before January (Fall Term 1975 and earlier) may

still utilize the repeat rule (M-3b) for those courses.

The repeat rule allowed a student to repeat a course in which an F was earned. The second grade earned for the course was then used in figuring the student's grade point average.

## Delta Tau Kappa Has Busy Spring

Delta Tau Kappa, the International Social Science Honor Society, is planning a busy spring.

D.T.K. sponsored the appearance of presidential hopeful Fred Harris on campus.

The next big date is a banquet for D.T.K. members to be held at the beginning of May. There will be a guest speaker, dinner and a membership-certificate presentation.

All old and new members who would like more information should get in touch with either Chris Cox, Deb Hoffman or leave a message in the D.T.K. office

in W-110.

At the last meeting on Tuesday April 6, committees were formed for organizing the Fred Harris appearance, planning the banquet and planning the future executive officers elections.

Also decided by the members was whether or not D.T.K. scholarships were going to be awarded this year.

Two \$150 scholarships will be awarded, one to an undergraduate student and one to a graduate student. The scholarships will be made on the basis of student merit as determined by a faculty committee. Applications will be available soon.

D.T.K. is in need of new members to insure the continued life of the organization next year.

Anyone interested in joining must be majoring in the Social Science program or have 30 credits of social science courses with a cumulative average of 3.0.

For more information see Deb Hoffman, Liz Tobin, Greg Meily, Dr Milspaw, or stop in W-110.

### WHAT A BIZARRE COINCIDENCE!

By special request of Theatre 330 The Bald Soprano will make a guest appearance May 26 and 27 right here in the Capitol Campus auditorium.

COME JOIN THE CROWD AND MEET HER PRIVATELY.



Open 24 Hours

7 Days / Week

"Just around the corner"

On The Square in Middletown

SAVE THIS COUPON FOR

50¢ OFF

1-Large or 1-Small PIZZA

At

NAPLE'S PIZZA

25 S. Union St., Middletown