

Letters to the Editor

But Pal...Ease Up!

Dear Editor,

As a graduate student, I can feel for Phil (ed. note: refers to a letter to the editor in Capital Times, October 30, by Philip Clark concerning a library carrel). But pal...ease up! It's the undergrads sacred rite to make our life living Hell around here, isn't it? It seems that at Penn State Harrisburg no distinction is made between us. There is no Kern Grad Building, graduate mail boxes, study carrels, or special treatment. It is too bad they can't see fit to treat us like real grad students at a real university.

But anyhow...Phil...make the best of it. Life is too short to worry. Short of massive retaliation there isn't much to counter guerilla tactics. Learn from our experiences in Vietnam and ease up.

Alfred E. Newman

Pat on the Back

Dear Capital Times Staff,

Congratulations on your fine October 18 issue of the Capital Times!

Your hard work and dedication are obvious and the finished product looks like a good college student newspaper. Three cheers for the student press at a time when it needs them, both locally and nationally!

As for the open letter on page 6--you don't need to speak to the campus anymore on this matter. Just do your job as best you can, occasionally reminding others that you are students first and student journalists second. The nation's top newspapers get the same criticism you do, anyway.

Keep up the coverage of student-oriented issues like grading, and be careful not to give PR to people like John Vartan and Jeanette Brinker (fine citizens though they are.) News is one thing and PR is another!

Yours,

Trum Simmons
Adviser, The Fourth Estate
Harrisburg Area Community College



This Month's Survey

By Jan Travers

The Penn State University Commission for Women was created in 1981 to support women in various roles and activities in the college community. The Capital College Liason Committee is continually looking into issues which affect the quality of life for women. One suggestion has been to form a Returning Women Students Organization where informal socializing and networking could occur. We'd like to hear your comments on this subject no matter what your age, sex, or student status.

1. Would you be interested in joining a returning women's group? _____
2. Do you feel that there is a need for such a group? Why or why not. _____
3. What day/time for open house/coffee meetings would suit your schedule? (MWF or T TH, lunch or morning) _____
4. Would you prefer the group to be made up of just students, or would you like to see faculty and staff included? _____
5. What is the best way to get information to you about this group, bulletin boards, the newspaper, WNDR, or This Week? _____
6. Are there any specific issues you would like to see this group address? _____

Don't forget to deposit surveys in the Capital Times box in the stairwell off the main lobby.

SGA Update

By Cindi Greenawalt

Junior John Nagengast and senior Ronda Graby reported on their trip to the Maryland Conference. They attended several leadership and business meetings, one of which was how to run an effective meeting. Nagengast complimented President Todd Hammaker for already running meetings in accordance with the suggestions given at the meeting.

Graby said her experience at the conference made her realize what a "good campus" Capital is. She said some other schools represented had no student government, ineffective ones, or ones that competed with other campus activities. She complimented V.P. Kay Trebatoski for organizing the campus functions and preventing social clubs from competing with each other during fundraising events.

Hammaker said he is now receiving newspapers from other Commonwealth campuses. The problem of making these papers available for student readership was discussed but undecided. The papers are available to read in the student activities office until it is decided where to keep them.

SGA received a response to their query into the abuse of the elevator shut down. There is a possibility of having the switch replaced with a key-operated mechanism.

SGA continues to discuss the possibility of an after-graduation dinner. Community Relations commented that a sit-down dinner in the CUB was not possible. However, a hot hors d'oeuvre buffet is being considered.

SGA meets Tuesdays at 12:30 in room W137, Olmsted.

Grades, Teachers and Attitudes

by Michele Hart

Last month's survey on grades, teachers, and attitudes produced nine informative and entertaining responses, unfortunately I realized after the paper was printed that I should have asked people to give their major as well as their opinion. With that in mind, on to the results

Of the nine responses received we had eight undergraduate students, one graduate student, and one instructor take the time to answer our questions and we thank you sincerely for your time.

Only two of the respondents thought that their classes had too many people in them, the rest said that their classes had 20 to 30 students in them and that they could live with that. The instructor who answered said his or her classes were okay in size, but generally education classes always were too large.

If there was a minor consensus on class size, it went out the window when it came to satisfaction or dissatisfaction with instructors and whether or not instructors are accessible and responsive to students' needs. Three people are absolutely not happy with their instructors, three are completely satisfied with all of their instructors, and two like some of their professors and dislike others. Only two people, however, think that their instructors are accessible to them and care about a student's needs. Three respondents said that only some teachers make any effort to help their students, and two others feel that no teachers are accessible. In the words of one of those people "they (instructors) couldn't care less."

Our instructor that filled out the survey said that he or she is happy with his or her students because they are mature, but he or she wished that students would be more concerned with ideals rather than cold facts. Our instructor also said that he or she is very interested in the students and tries to be

very accessible, but he or she said it would be easier if there wasn't so much pressure on professors to publish articles.

Most of our answers concerning class work loads were positive with only two people citing any problems. Both of them feel that they are not given enough notice about the due dates of assignments.

One respondent, however, says there is way too much work at this school and way too many tests given, but this is the respondent who, when asked what he or she thought could be done to improve this campus, replied "better partys (sic)."

As to the new plus/minus grading policy, our instructor supports it for the reasons that it was implemented, one person is undecided, one person is for it, and six people are very strongly opposed to it. Reasons for being against it included: "It penalizes A students and damages employment opportunities," "It's unfair and inconsistent," "helps poor students, while hurting the good ones," "does not reflect effort."

Only one of the respondents claims to have submitted unoriginal material for a grade, the rest of you said it was too dishonest and that you did fine with your own work.

Our final question dealt with what issues you thought should be addressed to make this a better campus. Most of you mentioned the resolution or the abolishment of the new grading system as the highest priority, and larger course selections as the second. Our professor would like to see less emphasis on publishing and more emphasis on teaching excellence in matters of tenure and promotions. And of course, our partier wants more parties. Thanks to all of you who took the time to fill out our little survey, and if you don't mind, take a minute to do this month's.