

# Editorial Page

## It's All in the Timing

by Michele E. Hart Editor-in-Chief

My father has always told me that timing can be everything in life. No where has that more evident lately than at Penn State University. Timing of reactions is especially important.

Capital College Provost Dr. Ruth Leventhal and other administration members proved just how important timing is when last week they issued Capital College's Statement on Intolerance.

Leventhal said that she had been working on the statement since February, but wanted to make sure she had the wording correct before issuing it. It is regretful that recent incidents at University Park had to possibly hasten her plans.

In the statement Leventhal said that whether acts occurring on this campus are racist or not is not the issue. The issue, according to Leventhal is the fact that, "the mere perception that racism exists will be stifling to the healthy interaction required for quality education."

Leventhal is quite correct in her assumptions. In order for this campus to continue to serve its students and grow as an institution cooperation and understanding are of the utmost importance.

We applaud her efforts and her actions to curb racism and negative feelings on this campus. Leventhal showed the students that she is concerned by scheduling open forums and openly addressing student complaints and concerns.

Leventhal has also taken a step in the right direction by appointing two committees, the Campus Environment Assessment Team, and the Campus Response Team. We hope that each team will take their charge seriously and truly help create a positive atmosphere.

There are too many good things that happen at Capital College that could potentially be ruined if there is not a spirit of community on this campus.

+++++

While we are on the subject of timing, one graduate student's poor timing Friday evening ruined what had been an enjoyable event for many students.

His response to criticism is that is that for some things there is never a good time. That may be true, but the student did not even have his facts straight before he decided to put a damper on a night meant to celebrate the accomplishments of student members of all clubs and organizations, not just SGA members.

We suggest that the next time this student decides to make a fool of himself he do it in private. His letter of explanation only serves to make the situation worse, because he is not an elected representative of the student body, therefore it was not his place to "make a move."

Isn't it time for supposedly mature college students to act as such?

## Trust...What Trust?

By Joe Kupec

Before the engineering technology faculty at Penn State Harrisburg will get genuine student input from functions like the Engineering Forum, held February 27, they will have to earn student trust.

Trust is based on recognizing individual equality and developing mutual respect.

Penn State Harrisburg's engineering technology program has the reputation of being academically challenging.

The program also has the stigma of being anti-student.

At the Engineering Forum, a student suggested that the faculty consider provisions for student input on developing labs and purchasing equipment with the engineering surcharge.

Professor Bray responded by asking, "Will you tell me how old you are and how many years of experience in the field you have?"

Some students interviewed after the forum thought that the tone of Bray's remark was inappropriate for the question.

Was this an example of professional courtesy?

While the student government senators stressed that the faculty were receptive to legitimate questions most students questioned after the forum refused to express their opinions publicly. "I'd like to tell you what I think but I want to graduate," one said.

Is this trust?

"We seek not only a diverse university community but a caring one as well" may apply to racism at Penn State Harrisburg but does it carry over to the classroom environment between technology faculty and students?

Professor Cheryl Ebel once said that everyone has to have their turn in the barrel when she referred to the course load and treatment that engineering technology majors receive.

Calling on students at random during class and problem-solving sessions is one way professor William Aungst can evaluate their progress. The grilling endured by the unprepared during these sessions is legendary and deserved.

While both instructors are determined to produce, "the best product possible," the engineering technology faculty and staff must remember that the university's product is information intended for people.

Calling people products reduces them to objects. Is this respect?

Unfortunately students with legitimate questions and concerns about class material, advanced standing, elective changes and senior design projects are not encouraged to come forward because of abrasive faculty behavior.

Students returning to their branch campuses tell the faculty, staff and students of their bad experiences here.

Faculty and staff from the Penn State New Kensington campus, McKeesport campus and DuBois campus have all complained about the lack of cooperation from the technology department at Penn State Harrisburg.

A lesson from industrial history for the engineering technology department to learn from.

Executives at Detroit's "Big Three" auto makers forgot about the consumer in the 1970s and lost a sizable share of their market to foreign competition.

Their motto was, "We know what's best for America." \*

Ironically, the engineering technology department at Penn State Harrisburg is plagued with the same myopic vision.

The condition is not funny.

The "Big Three" eventually realized their mistake and became customer-oriented. Accommodating the consumer by finding out how to better meet his needs.

The engineering technology program must become student-oriented and that means treating all students with professional courtesy and respect.

That is how you gain trust and honest input will follow.

\* Read Brock Yates, The Decline and Fall of the American Auto Industry.

# Capital Times

Editor-in-Chief...Michele Hart  
News Editor...Kimberly Anastas  
Photography Editor...Kyle Weaver  
Graphic Artist & Production...Joe Kupec  
Sports Editor...Bernie Mixon

Staff: Andrea Abolins, Cindi Greenawalt, Ed Hein, C.W. Heiser, Judy Hricak, Laura Karinch, Levette Parish, Michelle Sutton, Jan Travers, Andrea Willard, Distribution-Ron Pollard

Advisor--Peter Parisi

The Capital Times is published by the students of Penn State Harrisburg. Concerns about content of any issue should be directed to the Editor in Room 212, Olmsted Building. Any opinions expressed are those of the author and are not representative of the college administration, faculty or student body. The Capital Times does not endorse its advertisers. The Capital Times welcomes signed letters from readers. Unsigned letters cannot be printed; however, a writer's name may be withheld upon request.

The next meeting of the Capital Times staff will be Thursday April 28, 1988 at 12:30 p.m. in room W-129. All staff members should attend to meet the new editors. Lunch will be provided. All judges of the Excellence in Student Journalism Awards are also invited to attend.