

## Letters To The Editor

### Salary Differentials Unfair?

Dear Editor:

In the November 16 issue of *Capital Times*, reporter Josette Kloker had an interesting article titled: "Faculty Concerned About Salary Differentials at Penn State University."

This was an important matter that had a special significance for Capital's Full Professors for it discussed the fact they were being paid much less than their counterparts at University Park.

It should also have been important to Associate and Assistant Professors. Although these ranks were receiving salaries that were on the average closer to those at UP, it was seen that very many Capital faculty had remained at these lower ranks for very long periods of time...in some instances, decades!

Although I feel indebted to Dr. Jacob DeRooy, Associate Professor of Economics, and his colleagues, for this latest report on faculty differentials at Penn State, I was disappointed that none of the concerned faculty touched on some of the more substantive reasons why the faculty at University Park may appear to be more productive and thus more rewarded. Some ideas on this might help to explain why some of Capital's talented faculty have had trouble gaining promotion as well as tenure.

As a tenured engineer in Penn State and two other universities, I feel that some comparison is in order. I'd expect our mathematics and business colleagues and perhaps others to make similar observations.

One of the more serious problems for Capital's engineering professors is their heavy class loads. In general, engineering faculty have averaged between 12 and 22 class contact hours per week for several years.

Unfortunately for many of these faculty, each of these hours requires two or more hours of preparation so that we're looking at between 36 and 66 course-related hours per week before they even get into student advisement and other duties.

Course and student related hours would then total at least from 41 to 71 hours per week before any research is even started. How much of a faculty's total time should be given to research?

Responding to this question earlier, one of our Research Directors suggested that research and/or creative activity at Capital should amount to one-third of the faculty's total work load.

This is a reasonable amount when one considers similar work at other universities. Simple arithmetic suggests that the total work load for engineering faculty at Capital should be some number between 61 and 107 hours per week, if they are assigned between twelve and twenty-two class contact hours.

Now the University has a means of completely ignoring these matters of fact, because only student credit hours are tallied at University Park.

Class contact hours which are more often tied directly to the total work load of the engineering faculty appear to be inconsequential.

UP gets some information via a so-called Snyder card, listing each faculty's workload every semester. But extremely large workloads have been ignored.

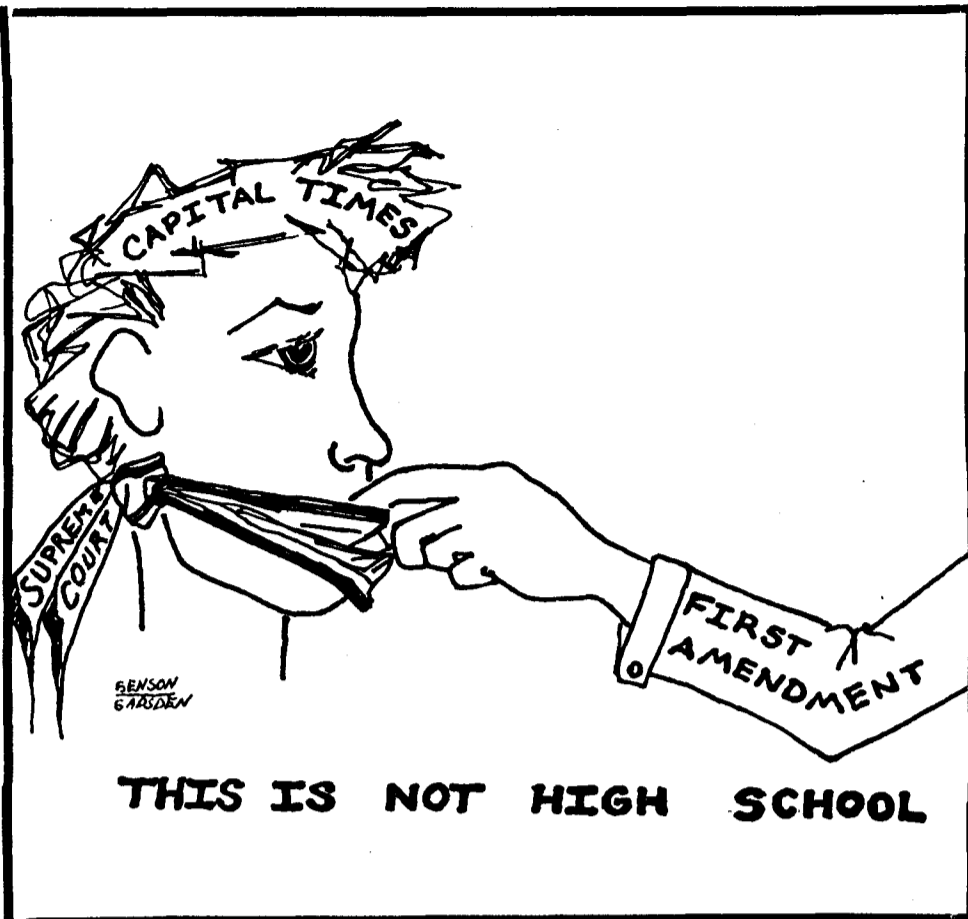
How can this untenable situation be corrected?...By merely recognizing the facts as they exist and providing satisfactory solutions.

I sincerely believe our past and present campus/program administrators have done extremely well in working with the faculty to meet enrollment requirements of the University. However, it is impossible for these administrators to observe the need to keep the enrollment climbing ever upward without a more than commensurate increase in the number of faculty to handle the increased load.

If the requirements of PS-23 are to be used to hire, fire, promote and grant raises to our faculty, then allow our administrators the means to provide faculty with the time that it takes to do the research that is not only necessary to meet the requirement of PS-23, but of equal importance, is absolutely vital to the professional growth of our faculty.

Lacking this kind of understanding and consequent action, the University and its sponsoring agencies, public and private alike must eventually face a lawsuit that will make the salary differential look like peanuts!

George H. Grenier  
Professor of Engineering Technology



### From the editor's desk . . .

Well, here we are. Back from our short holiday break. By now, most of us are just about hitting our academic pace for the remainder of the semester, but still I'd like to say "welcome back" anyway.

This is my first issue as editor in chief of the *Capital Times*. I hope you enjoy reading the fruits of so much hard work. I've gained a good first-hand look at just how much work our staff accomplishes each issue. To all who've helped me get my feet wet: thanks!

It seems the university's no-smoking policy has stirred more than a few strong opinions. Personally, I've enjoyed walking through the halls of Olmsted building without having smoke blown in my face from every direction. But, as some are asking, is it fair to make smokers stand outside in January to smoke?

I can understand that smokers might feel the administration's decision was somewhat arbitrarily imposed without actually asking those concerned. But which is more important: the right to clean air, or the right to pollute the air?

The privilege of a healthier working environment shouldn't be taken for granted.

David A. Blymire

## Capital Times

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