

We need a balance

Judging from the letters sent to the Capital Times protesting Charles Kern's resignation, we must question the policy at PSH that allows this institution to lose such an excellent instructor.

Yes, it is true that Kern's contract specifies that he should teach four class sections. No one is disputing that. But, he offered alternatives, including a \$5,000 pay cut, so that he could continue to teach and manage his CPA firm during the spring semester which coincides with his busy tax season.

Tied into this loss is the College of Business Administration's goal for accreditation with the American Assembly of Collegiate Schools of Business (AACSB).

In order to gain this accreditation, the college must not only retain a specified percentage of Ph.D.-prepared instructors, the school must also prove that their tenure-track instructors contribute distinctive research in their fields.

With only 20 percent of the business schools across the country holding this accreditation, membership into this affiliation would place our School of Business in an advantageous position when recruiting students and faculty.

But, there is no guarantee that PSH will attain this accreditation and the process can take up to five years to complete.

What's sad is the fact that the accounting students are losing an instructor who has a gift for sharing his wisdom and practical experience with his students. Such knowledge is essential to prepare our students to function in the real business world.

While research is a necessary function to the higher education process, learning is the goal of college students.

Most of us chose PSH because we were seeking a learning experience that guaranteed us smaller classes and professors whose primary goal is to teach.

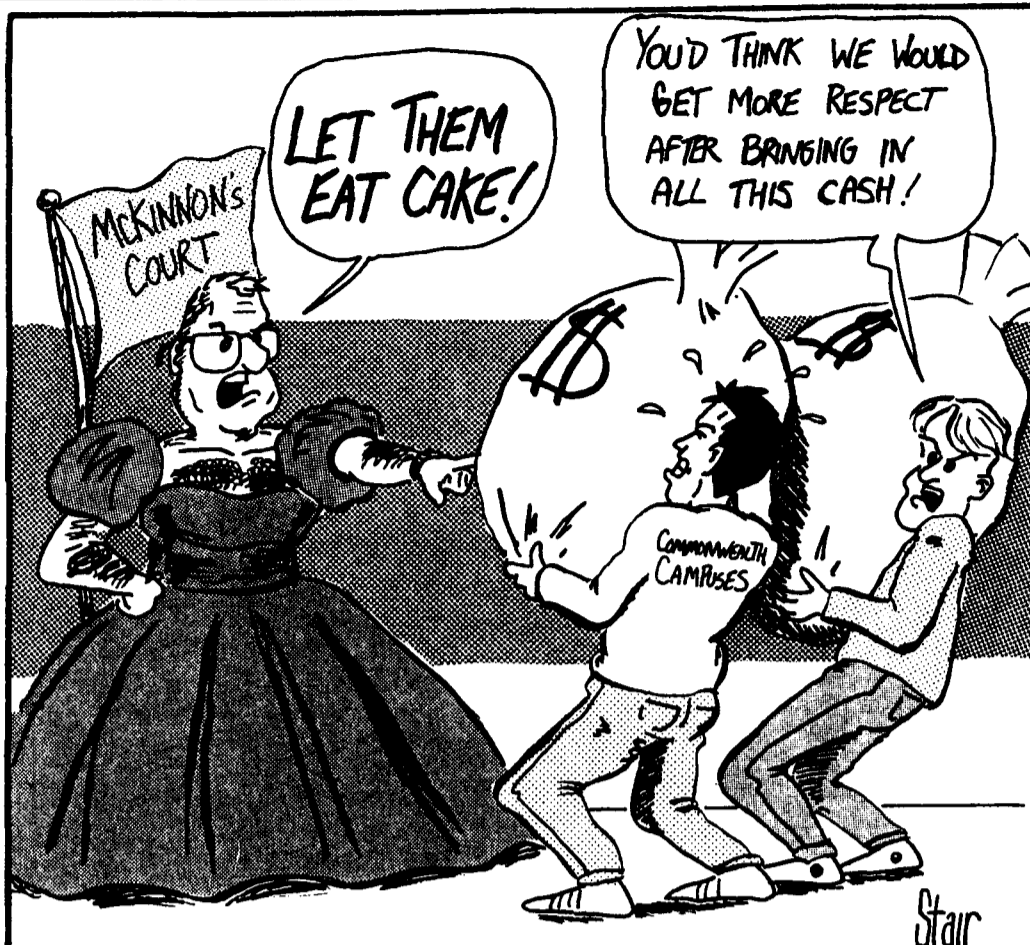
Without dismissing the value of research, we hope the administrators at PSH will change their policy.

Teaching must remain the primary function at PSH ---not research and accreditation in AACSB.

In all fairness to the students, whose tuition pays the salaries, PSH must find a balance between the need for accreditation and the educational needs of its students.

As it stands right now accounting students are losing a talented instructor at the cost of fulfilling status requirements established by AACSB.

Ann Feeney-McGovern
Editor-in-Chief



William McKinnon "loses his head" over the Commonwealth Campuses

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR:

Dear Editor:

I want to share with you my concerns regarding recent events in the School of Business Administration at PSH.

We have lost a quality instructor in the accounting department due to poor policy administration. Dr. Krishna Dhir has lost sight of the goal of the School of Business Administration and does not understand the quality of non-tenure track professors.

Dhir has been quoted as saying that the department's goal is to "provide students with state-of-the-art business methods," yet he enforces a policy that is counter-productive to that goal.

He has revived an unenforced policy that says non-tenure track professors are not required to do research or publish, but they must teach a minimum of four sections per semester.

Dhir has two arguments: First, having a Ph.D. and doing research means that a professor knows how to advance his or her specific field. Secondly, not publishing has a direct effect on the ability of the school to present a quality education.

In other words, he believes that non-tenure track professors do not provide a quality education. His solution to this problem is to require more teaching hours from them. This is a poor solution and it's poor policy.

By enforcing this policy, we have lost Charles Kern, professor of accounting. He has been a non-tenure track professor at PSH for the last 11 years. He does not have a Ph.D., nor does he publish, but he does do the kind of practical research that students respect and prefer.

Kern owns and runs his own CPA firm. His research is seeing to the day-to-day needs of his clients and is keeping up with changes in the accounting profession.

We lost Kern because he is unable to carry four sections in the spring semester during tax season. I can sympathize with him because I work at a CPA firm and during the spring semester I will enroll in only one course due to my tax season constraints.

This is not a budget problem. Salaries of non-tenure track professors are, on average, 60 to 70 percent that of tenure track professors. Kern offered to have his salary cut in the spring in order to subsidize an adjunct instructor to cover sections that he could not teach.

As a student of professor Kern and an accounting major, I feel this is a sad day for PSH. Action needs to be taken to see that we do not lose any more quality instructors due to poor policy.

Angela L. Poer
Junior, Accounting

Dear Editor:

I am writing this letter because I don't think the students, faculty and administration realize the consequences of the resignation of Professor Charles Kern.

First and foremost affected are the students. As a result of this vacancy, PACC 431-Auditing II, PACC 440-Advanced Managerial Accounting and PACC 450-Governmental Accounting will not be offered in the spring semester. This leaves graduating accounting seniors with only PACC 410-Corporate Tax to take as an additional course for emphasis.

Please understand this is not a matter of waiting until the last minute or putting something off. These classes, following the sequence of courses within my major, are to be taken in the student's eighth semester standing. They were last offered in Spring 1992, when we did not have the necessary prerequisites.

These courses are not just electives that would be nice to take, they are courses that prospective employers look for and courses that help students who plan on taking the CPA exam.

Besides depriving the students of a quantity of subjects, they are also being

deprived of the quality of courses, too. With less faculty members to teach almost all of the courses, the remaining business faculty will have to take on more courses. Some professors are even being forced to teach in areas outside their area of expertise. Currently, there is a finance professor teaching a Management Information Systems (MIS) course. This is appalling. Students are not receiving the quality of education they paid for.

The other point I wanted to address is the lack of appreciated professor/practitioners from the administration. These professionals bring their expertise gained from working in their businesses to the classroom to share with the students. Lectures, accompanied with lessons from the "real world," are often those remembered most.

Professor Kern and the other Fixed-term I contract professors bring a unique insight to their students. They also provide contacts for students seeking employment after graduation, keep students abreast of current practices actually used in the profession, recruit companies for student

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Capital Times

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