

Editor's Comments

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Kelly Nagurny, assistant editor

Here we are in November, and I'm sure I'm not the only one who could use a break from school, work, school and school.

The good news for all of us is that the end of the semester is fast approaching. The bad news? We have to climb over that little hump called finals before we can finally enjoy a month of catching up on sleep and spending "quality time" with the family while relaxing in front of the fire (or yelling at each other...I'm not sure what it's like in your house).

For those of us who are seniors, and even juniors, the end of the semester signifies something else that is fast approaching. What might I be speaking of? The end of college itself. (Imagine a doomsday sound here).

Yes, the days of considering ramen noodles sustenance and carting around town in your mom's old Pontiac Grand Am are ending.

While in the midst of a work-heavy semester, students probably find the idea of college ending refreshing. Admittedly, I was anxious at first to shuttle right through college, get a cushy job and find a cute apartment that I could decorate with cheap stuff from Target.

But now that May is finally a blip on my radar, the excitement is joined by a little hesitation. Will I get a job? Where will I live? Will I have to, dare I even say, take on some RESPONSIBILITY? How will I do that when my dad still does my taxes?!

What I'm trying to say is that college rushes by so fast, and we're so busy that we don't always notice. For many of us, it's a four-year transition between the zits and crushes of high-school and the bills and reality-checks of adulthood. We're adults, we can buy cigarettes, go to bars and vote, but many of us still rely on our parents for a lot. In the grand scheme of things, I think that's a pretty good deal. Take some time to enjoy it before you're walking down the aisle in your graduation gown wondering where the past four years went.

Enough of the gloom. Did I scare you?

In other news, the editors of the Capital Times would like to

make a complaint. WHERE IS THE PUDDING? On many occasions, we headed down to Stack's Market to treat ourselves to a little reward (pudding) for all the hard work we do. However, as of late, it has been missing. Chocolate, vanilla, it doesn't matter. Just bring it back! We're having withdrawal symptoms. And also consider making grilled cheese once in a while. Is it clear that we eat in Stack's constantly?

One more point, and then I'll let you go so you can flip to page 11, because I know the Police Report is your favorite part of the Capital Times. The newspaper is an outlet for PSH students to speak their minds. We love to hear from anyone with suggestions, story ideas or time to help out.

With that said, I'd better get back to work on the paper. It's 10 p.m. on a Wednesday night, and I think I'm the only person in the Olmsted Building. What a geek.

Submissions:

You may reach The Capital Times at Penn State Harrisburg Campus, E126, Olmsted Building, 777 W. Harrisburg Pike, Middletown, PA 17057. Phone us at: (717) 948-6440. or email: captimes@psu.edu

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Nigerian professor aides in Uganda

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a colleague brought up the idea of traveling to rural western Uganda where community leaders were asking for help with science programs. Last summer, Idowu made the idea a reality.

"It was an experience that I very very much value," said Idowu. During his three-week trip, Idowu visited approximately 3,000 students and their teachers in remote Ugandan schools and universities, where he was able to help address problems faced by the schools. Many of them suffer from desperate economic circumstances, prolonged war, and a lack of resources such as textbooks and libraries, said Idowu.

"The satisfaction really is in being able to talk with people like Makerere University, who think certainly we can work together toward addressing those issues," said Idowu.

Makerere University is a school that Idowu is working especially closely with. Together, Idowu and the university are exploring feasible options for finding support for the school's science program, locating resources and tools, and developing libraries.

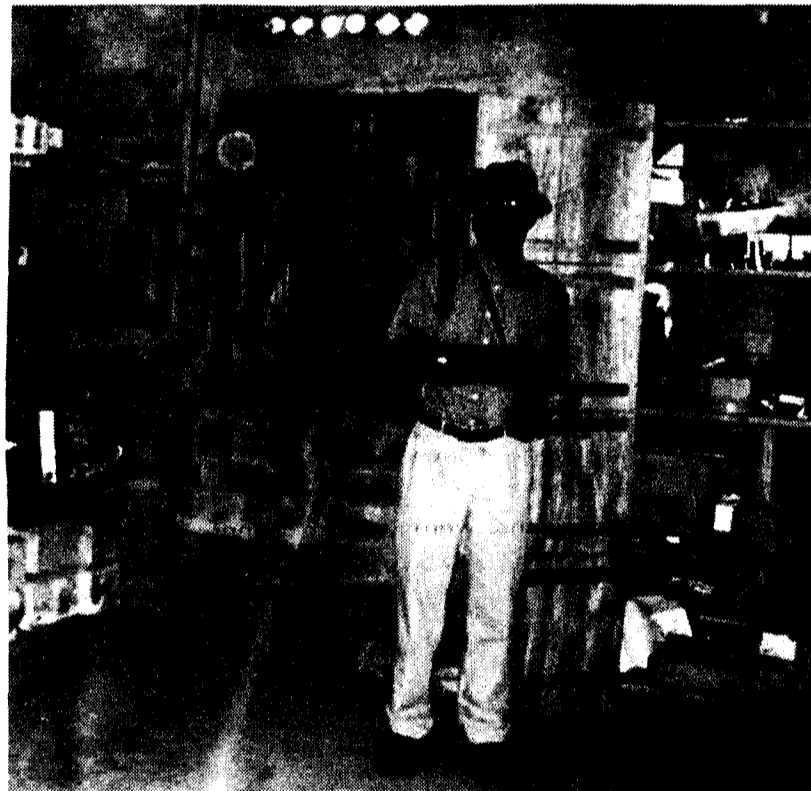


Photo courtesy of Dr. Peter Idowu

Dr. Peter Idowu stands in a school's science lab in Uganda. Idowu visited the country last summer to assist in the development of science programs.

Idowu's collaboration with rural Uganda is a continuing project. He is currently working on a memorandum of understanding between Penn State's School of Science and Engineering and Makerere University's College of Engineering.

When he is not traveling to distant lands, Idowu teaches electrical engineering classes at PSH. Teaching gives him an opportunity to explore things much more deeply than he would have otherwise, said Idowu. "I think I benefit more from teaching than the students...because in preparing for classes, I am pushed to explore so many things," he said.

Despite his love for teaching, exams are a part of the job that Idowu could do without. Giving exams and grades is stressful for both him and the student, he said. However, he understands that they are necessary for some students.

Taking exams taught Idowu a valuable lesson during his years of education. After acing tests in college, he arrived at graduate school only to find out that memorizing material was no longer enough. When he failed the final in an automatic control systems course, Idowu did not know how



Photo by Kelly Nagurny

Dr. Peter Idowu is an associate professor of engineering. He specializes in high-power electrical engineering.

to go about arranging for a makeup exam. After all, he had never needed to take one in the past. By the time he figured it out, it was only one hour before the makeup exam was scheduled to begin. "So I did what a real man must learn to do. I refrained from panic, went back to my dorm room, got on my knees, prayed and asked God for help in what I believed then as a great crisis of my life. I went over and sat for the makeup exam, and to my amazement, I pulled a 100 percent." Impressed with Idowu's performance, the professor then offered him a position as a teaching assistant. The experience was both a blessing and a lesson in humility, said Idowu.

One way that Idowu hopes to improve the academic environment for engineering students is through the use of information technology. The field of electrical engineering is a "static field," said Idowu. "In 40 years, nothing has changed." He would like to develop creative ways to use technology to make the field attractive and exciting for young people.

Even though he has accomplished a lot, Idowu still strives to do more. "I still have goals of making a wider impact than I am able to at this level," he said.

Idowu's accomplishments have not reduced his sense of humil-

ity. His Web site features the quote, "Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and do not rely on your own insight or understanding." This statement, said Idowu, reminds him that no one has the answers to everything and that we all must learn to be humble.

Outside academia, Idowu enjoys "doing nothing." To relax, he listens to music and plays with his 4-year-old son Jacob, who is "a regular" on campus, said Idowu.

Traveling is also a great passion of Idowu. He and his wife, who works at PSH as an event planner, have visited Canada, England, and Germany. They hope to travel to the Philippines and Nigeria for their next trip.

Although Idowu did not initially intend to end up in the engineering field, his skills have allowed him to help those in need. Born in the Nigerian town of Ijebu-Ode, Idowu came to the United States to master the field of electrical engineering, only to return to Africa to use his expertise for a great cause.

Idowu is actively seeking faculty and other people who are interested in and passionate about assisting foreign institutions. If you are interested in offering professional insight on how to help foreign educational institutions develop scientific programs, please contact Dr. Idowu at pbi1@psu.edu.

Students, faculty adjust to changes

VISER continued from 1

A search for temporary replacements for the spring semester will begin in January 2005 and a search for a permanent tenure track position, chaired by Dr. Peter Kareithi, lead journalism professor for the Communications program, will begin in August of 2005 said Churchill. The search committees are already being formed for these positions. They are looking for one to two students to join the alumni and faculty on the search committees. Churchill said he would like to have one professor to teach all of the courses originally assigned to Viser. The permanent position should be filled with someone with public relations and advertising experience and a Ph.D. "There is no way these classes won't be offered," said Churchill.

Adding more confusion to the Communications program is the emergency medical leave of Dr.

Samuel Winch. Beginning the tenth week of the semester, just after midterms, Bill Cologie, a well-versed communications professional, took over teaching his Media Law and Ethics class and Dr. Troy Thomas, American studies professor at PSH is taking over his photography class. Winch plans to resume teaching in four weeks, following a quick recovery from treatment.

Churchill and Kareithi each took one of Viser's classes. The third class, public relations, is now being taught by Sloan Auchincloss, public relations professional. "Students are fortunate that other faculty members took over for Dr. Viser," said Mahar. "It shows real commitment to the Communications program." Churchill said he sees this change as a positive one because it gives students a chance to learn from a different perspective the replacement professors will bring with them. "We recognize that these are unusual

times and we hope students will be patient and generous by helping the replacements," said Churchill. Although students are in the midst of all these changes the general mood is positive.

Because each professor has different teaching styles and classroom standards students will need an adjustment period. "We were used to online assignments and a more discussion driven class," said Kellye Way, senior Communications major. "Dr. Kareithi conducts class as a lecture and we were just getting used to the discussions," she said.

The replacement professors are able to alter the syllabus at their discretion, but are required to consider the original curriculum. "My job is to try as best as I can to ensure that there is some continuity and that students don't suffer," said Churchill. All work done for Viser will be counted in whatever way the professor chooses to incorporate into the

class requirements, said Churchill. "I took over [Viser's] Media Law and Politics class and it's working out fine," said Kareithi. "The transition was very smooth."

Another dilemma for the Communications program is accommodating students needing advising and supervisors for internships. It is the common practice of the Communications program to match a student with a particular type of internship with a supervisor specializing in that field. Viser was the main public relations and advertising professor, thus he was the supervisor for the large majority of communications students interested in those fields. All internship supervisions and academic advisees have been dispersed throughout the rest of the faculty, adding to their workload considerably. Churchill said the communications faculty is trying to serve each student's needs as best as they can and that is the



Photo by The Capital Times

Dr. Victor J. Viser recently resigned from Penn State Harrisburg citing denial of tenure as his reason for leaving abruptly leaving other faculty to cover his classes for the remainder of the semester.

number one concern. All students with problems regarding these changes or any other issue within the Communications pro-

gram are encouraged to bring their concerns to either Churchill or Robinson immediately.

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