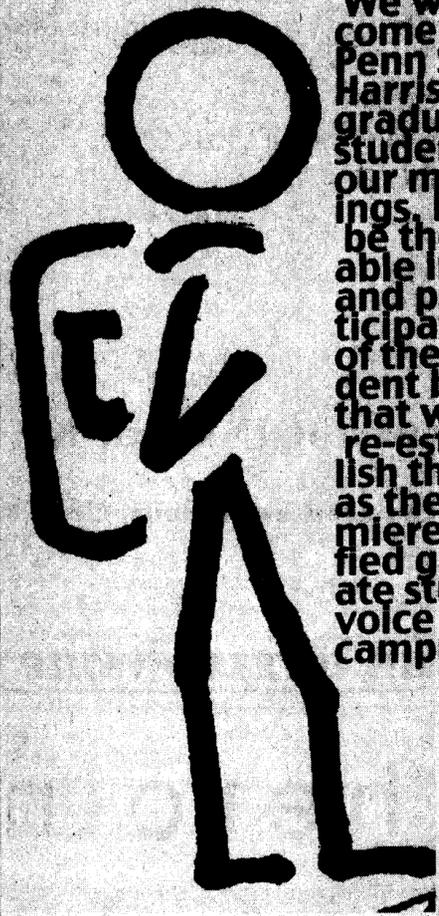


# Graduate Student Association (GSA)

"The premiere graduate student voice for the Penn State Harrisburg campus" is looking for all graduate students to participate in this newly formed association.



We welcome all Penn State Harrisburg graduate students at our meetings. It will be the valuable input and participation of the student body that will re-establish the GSA as the premiere, unified graduate student voice on campus.

For more information about meetings, events, etc. please check our website <http://www.hbg.psu.edu/clubs/GSA/> or contact GSA Director of Public Relations Jordan A. Slopey, [jas921@psu.edu](mailto:jas921@psu.edu) or 717-386-0350  
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# Americans with Disabilities, What?

## Letter to the Editor

By Auggie  
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As I walk around our campus, I am saddened by Penn State Harrisburg's inability to use a little common sense and unwillingness to move forward. Attending a University would lead one to believe that reasoning and sound judgment plays an integral role in the daily operations. Most disturbing is that Penn State Harrisburg seems content with being clueless.

With some initiative and a whole lot of common sense, I believe that many of the discrepancies in the Olmstead building could be fixed. Is it possible that no one else has noticed these? Or maybe it's just that no one cares. You wonder what I'm talking about. Simply stated, the activities most of the student body takes for granted.

When you enter or exit the main entrance of the Olmstead building, you may or may not notice the lack of a curb cut (A small ramp built into the curb of a sidewalk to ease passage to the street, especially for bicyclists, pedestrians with baby carriages, and physically disabled people). There is a curb cut at the beginning of the path, which leads towards the library. A student in a wheelchair must travel 50 feet down the side walk, then wheel back another 50 feet in the road in order to reach the curb cut leading to the library. Shouldn't there be curb cuts across from one another? This may not seem like a big deal, but what about when it rains or snows. Have you ever tried to maneuver a wheelchair on an icy or snow covered road? Apparently, risk

management isn't a concern for Penn State Harrisburg.

There are many restrooms in the Olmstead building, but how many of them are accessible to someone in a wheelchair? The University gave thought to and installed accessible restrooms in the basement and on the first floor. Did it ever occur to decision

wasn't constantly out of service. An out of service elevator also makes it difficult to attend classes. I don't suppose Penn State Harrisburg is going to reimburse a portion of the \$5,522 tuition for classes missed at no fault of the student. There is much talk about installing a second elevator. Most of the faculty seems to know that

disabilities are to go to the ends of the Olmstead building and wait for evacuation. Are you kidding me! Isn't that like saying they wait to die? This is the 21st century and the best Penn State Harrisburg can say is students with disabilities wait at stair wells to be evacuated. Are there signs posted anywhere indicating that this is the procedure? How would anyone know to come back for students waiting to be evacuated? This would almost be funny, if it wasn't real.

During the last week, I have informed various Penn State Harrisburg staff members of my concerns. No one I asked or met with had the answers I needed or was looking for. The one answer, which I received often, was "the school is up to code".

The Americans with Disabilities Act was passed on July 26th, 1990 and it appears that Penn State Harrisburg has complied with this act by meeting the minimum standards. I was curious to know when and if the school planned on fixing or addressing these issues. I attempt to set an appointment to meet with the Chancellor, but I was told she wouldn't have the information I was looking for. I was hoping she would be the one with enough power to implement change. I guess it's up to us.

I challenge all students to come up with different ways to solve these issues. I will start you off, (School of Engineering, quikrete, modify one restroom at a time, modify most restrooms during summer, chair lift, evac-u-chair).

I will end by pointing out that just a few years ago, Duke University reached a settlement with the U.S. Department of Justice based on the their inability to comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act.



Photo by Maruja Rosario/Capitol Times

Augustine Bravo, a Penn State Harrisburg senior, attempts to use the restroom while in a wheelchair with a sign stating, "I can walk...ask me why I'm in a chair".

makers that a student in a wheelchair might want to "pee" on the second or third floor? They must have assumed the elevator would make it possible for such a student to get to the first floor to "pee". This would almost be an acceptable answer if the elevator

it's coming, but no one knows when. I guess if we can't have an elevator, we get the next best thing...a cement slab outside of the cafeteria.

The most disturbing thing of all is the Olmstead building evacuation plan. Students with

# Culturally Inept



Oscar Beisert

By Oscar Beisert  
Coulmnist  
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From the beginning of my time in Harrisburg until now, I have confronted a taxing array of cultural differences that intrigue, infuriate, and mystify me. While all bear on my ability to formulate an opinion of my new surroundings, I am constantly saying to myself, "You're not in Texas anymore, Osci," and because of that, I remain in my discombobulated state.

Just as a boss in corporate America would conceal his negative comments by first adulating the employee with his or her positive traits, I will do the same when opening my perception of the capital 'Burg. Intrigued, my intrinsic passion urges me to felicitate Harrisburg's forbearers. John Harris' efforts, picking such charming location for his ferry, created an eventual, picturesque panoramic of this

state's capital. From hovel to the steps where the poor man grovels, every structure tells its own story and retains some of its original beauty. It seems to me that the value of these homes—and even this city for many—is little to the locals. It is my belief that these buildings are masterpieces of anonymity.

Infuriated, I see again the beautiful Victorians hemorrhaging with nothing but integrity. With disintegration in almost every neighborhood—other than Shipoke—and total decadence above McClay St. and east of Third St., the lack of integrity lies within the home owners and slum lords who have allowed these homes to fall into such disrepair. As for the tenants of these historical shanties, they are also to be shamed. Their lack of interest in their own home—whether rented or owned—is disheartening. Even I, a Harrisburg citizen of only twenty-two days, can be seen pulling the weeds from the sidewalk cracks outside my rent-efficient, three room flat. For those who only contribute to the said decadence, "SHAME ON YOU!"

Hmm, you are wondering, what does this have to do with the students of Penn State and its affiliates? In the words of Hillary Clinton, "It Takes a Village!" In order to preserve—or should I say restore—greatness, there must be a common

interest. Well, if you didn't know, because either you are spoiled by gentrification or are so accustomed to the area that you fail to see its intrinsic beauty, Harrisburg is a great city with potential to be much more than it already is. Just the architecture alone is phenomenal. My point: get up and do something about your community; think about moving downtown. It's a short walk to the nightlife and the old houses have much more character than modern apartments. At least be aware of the beauty that surrounds you.

However, I—an American Studies grad student—have a personal bias and an intrinsic moral beef. Eventually, even my own suds can get a little slippery and soapy, so I'll move on, but with a firm hand slapping this subject on the rear-end.

As for my only experience with Penn State's culture, Mr. Edwards, unlike your distant relation—you are the president and, if I were you, I'd start spreading the word about your —or should I say our—Association and start disproving all the predictions that were made about you in the spring. Because thus far, I haven't heard a word about SGA and from the looks of your PR—which I would have expected to be your forte— it isn't all that great! And as for my new American Studies cronies, you rock!

# Bring back the draft



By Marko Primoroc  
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Paying taxes to the U.S. government is not enough. We must repay the inherent debt we incur by being (or becoming) citizens of this great United States of America by serving it. It is our civic responsibility.

Here is my proposal: Upon completing high school, both male and female graduates would have the choice of either immediately going to college and/or trade school, or serve the US government.

One would have the option of enlisting in any of the military branches (for male foreigners (18-27) hoping to gain U.S. citizenship, this would be the only option), the Peace Corps, other governmental aid organizations, or Homeland Security. Those who opt to serve in the military (in which there are dozens of non-combat military occupational specialties to choose from) would have the choice of a regular active duty contract, a regular Reserve or Guard contract, or one full year of service (with 6 years of Inactive Reserve; i.e., you don't drill but you can be mobilized), which would be the model for Homeland Security (translation: patrolling the borders and points

of entry at the pay-grade of Private).

Students, upon completion of college or trade school, you would then serve like everyone else. Welcome to the party, kids. GI Bill benefits would only be granted to those who sign or complete active duty, reserve, or guard contracts with the military, since it is the most difficult and dangerous of service commitments.

Building homes for the displaced in New Orleans is serving your country, as doing the same in South America, Africa or Asia; or patrolling our northern and southern borders and ports of entry; as is standing post or running patrols somewhere in Iraq or Afghanistan. They are all civic and patriotic responsibilities that must be fulfilled. We should want to fulfill them.

The benefits of universal service are incalculable. First and foremost, it ends the "it's someone else's kid" mentality that poisons mainstream political thought; a Congressman's kid will be serving with the child of their rural, suburban, or inner city constituent. With everyone's kid serving, one can only foresee a more cautious approach to employing military force, and a more moderate and cautious domestic and foreign policy all together. The "Perfumed Princes" (as the legend himself, Col. David Hackworth put it) down in D.C. would actually have to justify their actions far more comprehensively before adopting strategies that would endanger everyone's kid (or grandkid, or niece or nephew), as opposed to "someone else's."

We would also be filling all of the gaps in recruitment and security; we save money by preventing illegal immigration and terrorism. We save money by assisting

developing nations by helping build roads and infrastructure and educating their youth. It is an investment in both our and their future, spreading positive truths and images of the US abroad while engaging in concrete humanitarian activities.

New high school and or college graduates would have an opportunity (many of which for the first time) to travel, make money, save money, and be responsible. Or party like rock stars. Either way, mandatory governmental service prepares them for life, while directly or indirectly, they are protecting their own lives and the lives of their families.

Mandatory service provides opportunities (many who had no idea what military and government service had to offer would be introduced to it), parity within society (no longer "someone else's kid"), and more education, experience, and understanding for our future leaders. Everyone who serves would walk away with a new trade or experience, which should be an incentive in and of itself.

The bottom line is that universal service is fair: the poor and the patriotic, that 5-10% of our population who are in the military, who have a relative or spouse in the military, who are the ones who bleed and die, should not bear the burden alone. We should all bear the burden equally. All capable and qualified to serve must serve the US in some way.

Look, you don't have to join the Marine Infantry like I did. You should, however, want to serve your country and fellow citizens, if not as a career, then at least for a little while; if not for the money, the travel, or the adventure, then solely because it is the right thing to do.