

## Edit this article: a Penn State 'Wiki'?

CCSG Contributor

Hi! My name is what? My name is who? My name is... Wiki Wiki Wikipedia! First comes first: What's a Wiki? Wikipedia, commonly referred to as simply 'Wiki', is a free online encyclopedia that anyone can edit. It may sound strange, but this is an information revolution that has garnered strength and reputation since 2001. It allows entries to be posted and then for anyone with access to the internet the ability to edit it. So what's this have to do with Penn State?

Recently, legislation has been passed through the

Undergraduate Student Government (USG) endorsing the implementation of a Penn State Wiki. George Chriss, of USG, who introduced and sponsored the project and legislation, fielded questions on the project in the Academic Affairs Committee meeting in CCSG on October 21st. "It's quite a fascinating idea. You can go online and edit the content of any page at any time and the results are instantaneous. If you don't like what it says, think it could be improved, or think it could be updated, you can simply edit

the page and save the changes for the next user," Chriss said.

The Penn State Wiki could be utilized in many contexts ranging from the history of Penn State, class and club information and work, to information regarding professors, courses, and teaching effectiveness. George Chriss commented on the benefits of a webpage or a project like ANGEL compared to a Wiki, "When you have a webpage or some other project, you have one or two individuals updating a page and the information is then biased

to those one or two people's viewpoints. The information would turn out to seem very polished and probably wouldn't be as comprehensive or beneficial to the needs of students," Chriss said.

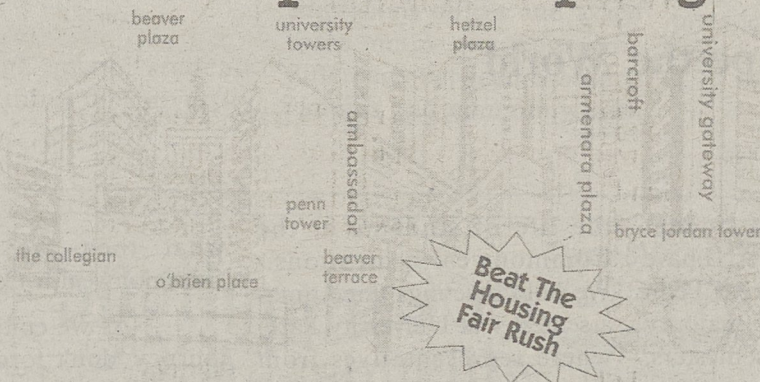
The project comes with criticism. The idea of a Penn State site which leaves open room for racial/ethnic epithets as well as unfair criticism doesn't bode well to some.

The software package which Penn State would receive, Chriss said, would be authenticated by each person's user ID. Though it is

viewable to the world, it cannot be edited unless you have an authentic PSU ID. In addition, the Penn State's software package would have a history page where you can see what changes and when you made them. Hypothetically, this factor would discourage people from writing unethical comments because the students would be suspended from the site and subsequently, referred to Judicial Affairs for reprimand.

Criticism is geared towards the excessive free-reign on

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