

Class Cancellations — Who Decides?

Class cancellations during the Winter Term provoked and inconvenienced many people at the Delco Campus - students, instructors, and staff members alike. When it snows, who decides whether or not 495 will be announced on the radio?

Mr. John Vairo, Campus Director, is responsible for making the decision. But it isn't a matter of Vairo's own opinion. The decision is a culmination of the knowledge of a number of sources.

In the event of irregular weather, campus security personnel contact Vairo and his associates as early as 3:00 am. Vairo makes the trip to the campus and begins the decision-making process in his office. The decision to close the campus is a serious and important matter. It is a decision that "Affects so many persons at a variety of levels," according to Vairo.

On a snowy morning, Vairo contacts such authorized sources as the Pennsylvania State Police, PennDOT, the National Weather Bureau, Bell Telephone, and KYW Radio for reports on road conditions and weather forecasts. Staff members who reside in the far reaches of the campus area (Delaware, Chester County, etc.) are also consulted. Vairo then correlates the data to form a picture of the conditions in the areas surrounding the campus.

On Friday, February 16, as Vairo pondered the decision in his office, the radio announcer warned his listeners to "Stay off the roads if possible! If you do have to drive, do so with care." Vairo suggests that we drive with care at all times. He feels that radio announcers formulate scare stories that make people feel that we are close to the end of the earth. "Weather seems to scare people," says Vairo. The radio commentator is in effect saying that you won't survive if you don't stay tuned.

As Vairo absorbed all the information, the phone rings. An anxious mother suggested that the campus be open because "my daughter needs the material."

Another mother called and said, "My son is too inexperienced to drive to the campus in the snow." A student called and told Vairo that he wanted the campus open because he had an exam. Another student phoned and said he wanted the campus closed because he had to take that same exam. A faculty member wanted the campus open so that "I can teach my class." Another instructor advised that the campus be closed because "I can't drive in the snow."

The decision is one that, "once made, satisfies no one; once made, gives everyone an opportunity to complain," comments Vairo.

Vairo must make a logical judgement. He waits for some divine revelation that will enlighten him to close the campus. There is none. He must inform the Philadelphia Emergency Communications Center before 6:00 am if 495 is to be included on the list of school closings.

The campus was open on Friday, February 16. But on Monday and Tuesday, February 19 and 20, the decision was made to close the campus.

When the campus is closed, the problem of make-up days enters the picture. The University is obligated to insure each student 225 minutes of in-class instruction each week, 2250 minutes per 10-week term. "There's no sin in losing a 75-minute period (although it is not recommended), but the final exam is important," notes Vairo.

After conferring with Dean Linder, Faculty Senate Chair-



(Photo by Donna Curran)

SNOW JOB

While students had an unexpected vacation on February 19 and 20, campus maintenance workers were on the job clearing the parking lot.

man Marietta Raneri, Associate Director of Academic Affairs Stephen Cimbala, and other associates, a make-up schedule was developed. While they had to consider problems students might encounter (with vacations, employment, studying, etc.), the representatives also had to consider their professional obligation to provide the students with an education. The schedule was thoroughly analyzed before being initiated.

Vairo feels the revised schedule was successful. Although students did experience some confusion, he attributed that to the psychological upset of having a Monday-Wednesday-Friday time schedule on a Tuesday or Thursday, and to the anxiety as a

result of the upcoming exams. He feels the revised schedule served a useful purpose because it opened discussion of a new Winter Term calendar.

Vairo has proposed that a minimum of three days - to be used in the event that severe weather forces the closing of the campus - be built into the Winter

Term calendar. He hopes that this system may be initiated during the 1979-80 Winter Term.

Vairo reminds students that this alternative has not been approved yet and that student suggestions are welcome.

— Harry Mac Cartney

OPEC Conference at Swarthmore

The Departments of Political Science, Engineering, and Economics of Swarthmore College, in cooperation with the forum of Free Speech, will sponsor "The United States and OPEC," a conference open to the general public and free of charge on Saturday and Sunday, April 7 and 8. The conference is planned to be both a forum for the interchange of ideas and a working session for the participants. Outstanding experts on energy policy in the United States, including Craig Karpel, executive director of the Council on Energy Policy, will be among the participants. The major events will be held in the Meetinghouse on Whittier Place. For more information, call Peter R. Deutsch at 544-7900 (ext. 285), Professor James Kurth (ext. 324), or the College News Office (ext. 426). The timing of the conference on the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries coincides with the possibility of an "oil shortage" allegedly because of the turmoil in Iran.

Spring Festival at Philadelphia

Celebrate Spring with Community College of Philadelphia's Fine Arts Festival, a week of free programs of music, drama, and dance presented by CCP's Student Activities Office, April 16 through 22. All events will be held at Plays and Players, 1711 Delancey Street. For a list of the free events, telephone Community College of Philadelphia, Office of Student Activities, 972-7123 or 972-7125, during business hours.

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