

Published Tuesday through Saturday mornings inclusive during the College year by the staff of The Daily Collegian of the Pennsylvania State College.

The Daily Collegian

Successor to THE FREE LANCE, est. 1887

Collegian editorials represent the viewpoint of the writers; not necessarily the policy of the newspaper. Unsigned editorials are by the editor.

Entered as second-class matter July 5, 1934 at the State College, Pa. Post Office under the act of March 3, 1879.

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Annual Fight: Seniors vs. Finals

The College Senate next month is expected to discuss what has become of the Penn State student's perennial fight: elimination of final exams for graduating seniors. Fortunately for the Senate, most students will be home when the decision is revealed.

A final examination committee, which studied final exam policies at about 100 colleges, is presenting the proposal to the Senate to remove final exam requirements in any course in which a graduating senior has a 2.0 average. The committee reports 25 per cent of the schools answering have a special senior final exam plan.

Elimination of senior finals is a touchy and interesting problem. Students in general—especially seniors—feel a strong need for their elimination. And as a freshman nears his senior year, he gradually realizes that final exams for seniors are the most terrible of all animals. This is a natural feeling.

Looking at the exam problem in a disgustingly objective way, the student point of view seems merely an attempt to get out of work. Elimination of senior final exams is supported mainly by one argument: a student who has completed seven semesters of college, and is passing in his last semester, may flunk out merely by failing one final exam. Sad but true.

However, this argument overlooks one thing: college is not seven semesters, nor seven and one-half, but eight. And the student who, realizing he must pass a course and its final to be graduated, usually has no one to blame but himself if he fails the final and flunks out altogether.

It is hard, sometimes, to see why final exams should be eliminated for seniors as a reward for reaching graduation. If a student is worth graduating, he should be able to pass the final. Graduation in itself is the reward, not the elimination of finals.

This type of thinking is contrary to student thought in general, however. Perhaps the students here have a right to look out for their own welfare, especially when a college diploma is at stake.

The committee's proposal that a 2.0 course average be required for exemption from a course final is a compromise. It may be a good compromise. It may inspire students to better grades. It may also remove incentive to try for a three course grade by hitting the final.

One thing is sure: it will ease the end of the trail for weary seniors. Another thing is sure: no matter what the decision, the problem will come up again next year.

Safety Valve—

On the Class Gift . . .

TO THE EDITOR: Using the knowledge gained from four years at Penn State we have come up with an excellent use for the extorted funds in the senior class treasury. Our idea is to divide the fund by the number of people in the class and make a refund to each member.

We are sure each recipient will be able to put the money to good use; whereas, the College has to tax its ingenuity to find another useless item to add to the collection of many others.

—Ken Harris, Andrew A. Vicker, William F. Shaw, Morton Solomon, Danny Fagan

Editor's note: Are these the five Penn State students who never sit on the campus benches, never pose for pictures at the Lion shrine, and never set their watches by the Old Main chimneys?

On Exam Editorial . . .

TO THE EDITOR: I would like to answer your editorial "Do We Need a New Exam Rule?" with this question: What is the purpose of an exam? Aren't exams designed primarily to give the instructor a fairly reliable indication as to the extent of learning . . . thereby enabling him to assign a reasonable grade to the student?

If that is the purpose, then what does it matter how many exams are given in one week, assuming that the student's physical energy is not exceeded? Aren't we students supposed to learn the course material as we go along?

No, I don't feel that an exam rule is necessary. I might even go so far as to advocate the other extreme; that is, give the instructors more freedom in the scheduling of exams.

—Joe Hanania

Interpreting the News

By J. M. Roberts Jr.

Associated Press News Analyst

When and if the three great Western Allies hold their Bermuda conference, France and Britain will be chiefly interested in relations with Soviet Russia and the first interest of the United States will be in relations with Britain and France.

That was made clear in the statements issued Thursday by Eisenhower, Churchill and May-er.

Mayer may not be there—his cabinet fell within hours of the announcement of plans for the meeting, having tripped over strictly domestic issues. But his attitude is indigenous to France, and he or whoever forms a new Cabinet is expected to attend the conference and work from the same viewpoint. There may have to be a change in date.

The State department made it clear, after the French and British Prime Ministers had expressed their hopes that the Bermuda conference would lead to a larger one with Russia, that the U.S. was not committing itself to anything beyond the President's expressed desire for "a further development of common viewpoints" among the Big Three.

This was also implicit in the developments which led to the President's invitation. Just when his idea began to germinate was not known. Churchill made a speech suggesting a top level

conference with Russia, about which the U.S. is skittish. Clement Attlee, former Laborite Prime Minister, made some statements which stirred great anger in the U.S., although later perusal of his full text took out some of the sting. For days statements have been flying back and forth.

Then, Wednesday, Churchill was asked in Parliament if he didn't think he ought to get Eisenhower over there and try to straighten out the policy differences between the two nations, particularly with regard to Russia and the Far East. Churchill carefully replied that he wasn't magnifying the differences by any such idea, but that he'd like to see Eisenhower over there, of course.

At the same time, in Washington, a new storm was being created by charges in Congress that British ships out of Hong Kong had been used to transport Communist troops in the Korean area. The implication was promptly and flatly denied; the British saying that if any such thing occurred it involved ships captured by the Reds.

But the storm was at a new peak. Eisenhower held late sessions with his advisers Wednesday, the suggestion for a conference went to Churchill and Mayer overnight, and acceptances were swift and eager. Despite U.S. doubts about the

value of risking a diplomatic failure, with its consequent spiritual let-down among free peoples everywhere, the pressures have been growing for a four-power conference ever since Stalin died and Russia intensified her talk about the possibility of peaceful settlements.

France, Britain, India the Vatican and many lesser powers have taken official stands for it. Russia has said it suits her.

They just don't think the dangers which preoccupy the United States are as great as the possible benefits, or that any stone should be left unturned, as an expression of attitude, even if benefits are impossible.

The Prime Ministers will come to Bermuda eager on this point. Eisenhower will say let's get together on these other things—Britain's warmish policy toward Red China, France's ratification of the European Defense Treaty, establish a common front toward Russia and keep it that way—and then see about the timeliness of a four-power conference.

Eisenhower and general State department policy has made it perfectly clear that there is no closed mind about such a conference. The administration just wants what it considers a proper lineup, including some indications of good faith from Russia, before it plunges in.

Gazette . . .

COLLEGE HOSPITAL

Joseph Bell, Ralph Brooks, Jose Carreiro, John Connerton, Charles Diehm, Glenn Grove, Kent Kiehl, Lee Kummer, Geraldine Lalli, Ralph Laudenslayer, Lloyd Lupfer, Gino Mori, Thomas Owens, Walter Segl, Robert Thomas, and William Wright.

STUDENT EMPLOYMENT

Students from Philadelphia area wanted for summer jobs in selling.
Men wanted for meal serving jobs on and off

campus next fall.

Men wanted for garden and lawn, housework, and odd jobs.

Men wanted for production work near Lancaster. Full time summer work.

Boy or girl with medical lab experience wanted for latter part of July, beginning of August, to work in State College.

Boy or girl with ability to take x-rays wanted for first two weeks of August in State College.

Pottstown Community Camp will interview waterfront man May 23.

Little Man on Campus By Bibler



"No more pencils—no more books—no more teachers' crosseyed looks."

Glancing Around

By DICK RAU

Monday night I attended a borough council meeting. My attendance was not spurred by a driving interest in the phenomena of borough government in State College, but by a professor's driving interest in my receiving an education. I did.

There were quite a few of us there. Oddly enough they were all from the same class. Probably all spurred by the same professor.

Everyone was there except one student—and the borough council. The meeting was scheduled for 7:30 p.m.; the class arrived at 7 p.m. The council and the professor arrived at 7:30.

The class didn't arrive there cold. We got a briefing beforehand. We were told there would be a pool table over which we would have to peer to see the legislators in action. Again the wires were crossed. The pool table wasn't there. The class was disappointed. The anticipated aesthetic impression of observing the councilmen counsel over a field of rich green was one of the drawing cards of the evening (along with the professor's prodding).

Shortly after several of us arrived we discovered a very soft and comfortable couch near the door. It was also near the councilmen. The decision to use the couch proved nearly disastrous. The warm room and low babble of conversation had a most soothing effect.

The council provided a type-written agenda for the class' information. There was only one item listed for discussion. This didn't bother the council. They talked for an hour and a half anyway.

The item scheduled for discussion concerned the width of sidewalks. It seems there's an ordinance that says sidewalks to be constructed will be five feet wide. Someone in the borough apparently took exception to this ruling. Their house was only about four feet from the curb line. The only way you can get a five-foot sidewalk in to a four-foot space is to curve the ends up. Apparently someone in the borough doesn't care for this arrangement. I can't quite see their objection. There is nothing I like better than a sidewalk with a built-in hand-rail.

There were citizens at the meeting—two of them. They had a complaint. It seems that one street in the borough isn't. They want it paved. One said the conglomeration of holes that the borough referred to as a street put undue mileage on cars, mileage going into the holes and mileage getting out.

The council sympathized with the citizens, but told them they would have to contact an engi-

neering firm in Pittsburgh about sewers. This struck me as being a bit odd, but council continued the explanation. The council will have to find out exactly where and when sewers in that particular area would be installed before the citizens could be answered. It seemed like a lot of fuss to get rid of dirty water and to fill up holes.

A question also came up about increasing the local income tax from one half of one per cent to one per cent. The tax had been one per cent originally, but had been cut to one-half of one per cent because they collected a surplus. The surplus was used and now they need more money. Who doesn't?

The class was jerked out of its semicoma by the professor's announcing that the important business had been handled and we could leave. I left with the rest, later dwalled over a cup of coffee, and considered with respect the weightiness of local self-government.

Posy Picking Pack Pays Pretty Price Per Posy Plucked

Tears in the eyes of members of Kappa Sigma fraternity at the University of California are from flowers—but hayfever isn't the cause.

Cause of the tears is the bill received for the flowers used to decorate at the group's last dance—\$1000 and suspension of social privileges for eight months.

The group's last dance was the group's last dance for quite a while.

The bill was high because the flowers came from the gardens of nearly two dozen homes—without authorization. The university's faculty committee and the Interfraternity Council ordered the fraternity to make full restitution and spend eight months on social probation.

But they were mighty pretty flowers!

Fehnel Elected President

New officers of Coaly Society are Edgar Fehnel, president; Harry Roth, vice president; Morris Brown, secretary; John Zug, treasurer; Ned Clark, sergeant at arms; and Robert Dahle, historian.