

Editorial Opinion

Exam Guidelines Needed

Approval by the University Senate of a final examination period marks its recognition of a crucial problem posed by the term system but also indicates a reluctance of the policy-makers to face the problem squarely.

The plan, which passed the Senate unanimously, calls for a final exam period following the regular 60 days of classes. The period will be established for the fall term and its use is optional in each course.

No classes will be held on these days while students take exams, presumably in the present 75 minute periods although the Senate made no official ruling on this question. Students with two or more finals scheduled for the same day may file to take a conflict examination.

The Senate has evidently recognized that even under the term system, many courses conclude with comprehensive final examinations. Testing time has remained at 75 minutes, which means that an entire course is covered in the same span as one bluebook on one section of the class material.

Professors and students alike now feel the weight of a hectic finals time, especially with the regular class schedule continuing.

One complication is that six days are required between terms for processing of transcripts and making registration preparations. While the officially-passed policy contained no specific length for a finals period, a three-day limit was discussed as the most feasible method under the present calendar.

Barring rescheduling, there are barely enough days after the winter and spring terms for the administrative work and a finals period. No such problem would exist following the fall and summer terms because of lengthy vacations scheduled. In pursuing a standard policy, it seems logical, however, that a three-day period would be adopted after each term.

An administrative committee survey found that 75 per cent of the courses offered might end with final examinations under this plan. Yet the three days are adequate only for this 75 per cent. The University calendar is too complex to risk the mass confusion which might exist if only several departments in each college decided to schedule additional exams.

The provision for conflict exams is an attempt to meet the problem which arose under the semester system, that of an excess of tests on one day. Students carrying an average credit load, however, usually enroll for four courses. In scheduling conflict exams, it will indeed be difficult to find a day on which these students will not already have one final planned.

While in effect merely sanctioning a finals period, the Senate is serving its function as a policy-making body. Too much leeway has been given the scheduling office concerning the duration of the period as well as the length of the tests within that time. Guidelines can be created without going beyond the policy-planning level.

To aid in administering this plan, the scheduling office is preparing a survey on final examination requests for the fall, winter and spring terms. To save time and trouble as well as to uncover more opinions, the survey might well include questions on the number of instructors planning comprehensive finals and those whose tests would require more than 75 minutes.

The Senate-passed bill still leaves many aspects of the final examination picture out of focus. This uncertainty might resolve itself in even more pressured situations that currently exist. The fall term will serve as a testing ground for this plan. We recommend, however, that the University Senate consider a six-month wait too long to postpone study of an improved final examination period.

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KAY MILLS Editor, JOAN MEHAN Associate Editor, HERBERT WITMER Business Manager

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STAFF THIS ISSUE: Dorothy Drasher, Nancy McCorkle, Joel Myers, Carmen Flappaport.

kaleidoscope

Which Way Out?

by kay mills

Which way out of the danger of nuclear war is a question that returns to haunt us time and again. And it should haunt us, indeed bound us until some road to solution is discovered.

There have been many proposals and many premises about the horrors a war in our thermonuclear age would bring. I don't pretend to know what is right. I only wish that I did.

Some people say that the United States must disarm even if it must disarm alone. The critics of this viewpoint argue that it is hardly realistic—that the Soviet Union would seize the opportunity to level America and rule the world under Communism. They feel the United States must continue to build deterrent forces to prevent an enemy from attacking America, of course, faces the problem of desiring peace yet not daring to disarm in fear of loss of world power.

Lord Bertrand Russell offers another solution. Let Britain disarm unilaterally, he says, and become a neutral force to propose solutions which both

the United States and the Soviet Union could accept without loss of prestige. Russell agrees that the neutrals have lacked success to date but feels that the British have enough governmental experience to lead them wisely.

These are only a few of the many proposals.

Again I don't pretend to know who's right. I do say, however, that we in America too often expect a solution, then expect the other fellow to do the solving. Until a real desire for an answer to this question develops, no such answer will be forthcoming. One may not agree with Lord Russell. Still, his words have merit when he says that if people were anxious for agreement, they would get agreement; what they want and get now is disagreement.

Not being a scientist, I can hardly verify Nobel Prize winner Linus Pauling's statement that bomb tests to date will cause the deaths of thousands of people in the future because of genetic defects. I do know, however, that nature did not construct the human body to reproduce perfectly under such adverse, manmade conditions. The number Pauling predicts may mean little, but consider one of the deaths as your son or his child a few years hence. That hits home.

Americans have not had their homeland touched by war. In Britain, Russell says,

the people feel they would all be killed—ALL be killed—if a war began. This idea is not part of U.S. popular opinion. We cannot get over the idea that we are isolated. We are not and we will not be.

I don't like being a harbinger of doom. Indeed, no one likes to carry bad news. However, if we continue to enjoy today and let tomorrow take care of itself, we may not even be around to sing the old song, "There's No Tomorrow."

Today we may enjoy, enjoy. But—and Russell is a good source of quotes along this line—the English philosopher says that if the world continues along its present path, war is likely within 10 years and certain within 20. The grim odds are 6-4 against survival, he adds. In other words, it is "slightly more probable that the human race will NOT survive nuclear war."

Maybe this is all exaggeration, and I deplore exaggeration in the realm of reality. But on the off chance that it isn't, we've got to get busy. I don't know about you, my friend, but I'd like to live to see retirement age.

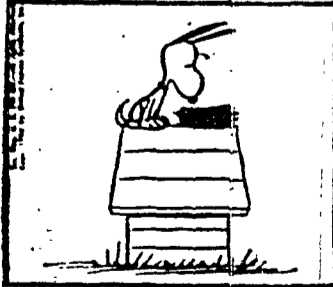
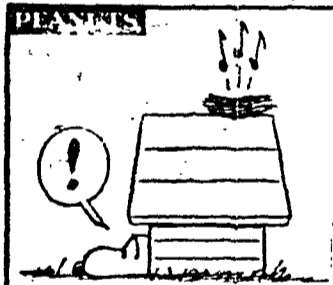
As citizens, we have the responsibility of presenting the decision-makers with rational views on ending the current nuclear neurosis. Practical politicians may say that public opinion is powerless. In this case, hopefully they are wrong. The world's at stake.



MISS MILLS

LETTER POLICY

Letters to the editor must carry the full name of the author and identification of the author will be verified before any letter is published. In most cases, letters over 400 words will not be published. The Summer Collegian reserves the right to edit any letter if it is deemed necessary. The decision to publish or reject a letter lies solely with the editor; letters containing obvious misstatements or lacking in good taste or fair play will be rejected. On a few occasions, the name of the author will be withheld but only with the consent of the editor.



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Action Needed

by joel myers

The many conferences and conventions that are held on campus each summer promote much criticism of the administration from students, faculty and University employees. However, these affairs are necessitated by the present system and concept of education in Pennsylvania.

Despite the initiation of the four term system, one of the goals of which is to encourage high summer enrollment, University students have as yet shown little inclination to attend Penn State en masse during the summer.

This has left the University's physical plant operating at approximately one-third efficiency.

In the interest of better public relations, and in order to better acquaint the public with the facilities available in this "backcountry of the state," the administration is doing a wise thing in allowing organizations to use its physical plant during the summer.

Since these facilities are not otherwise in use and because of its status as a state university, Penn State also has a certain moral obligation to avail its residence halls to interested parties.

The money acquired by renting these facilities to visitors

is used to help repay money that was borrowed to finance dormitory construction. Thus, these visitors actually save students money in residence hall fees.

Despite the fact that conventions are basically good for the University in its entirety, the administration should take action to reduce the inconveniences to students, faculty and employees that are created by the visitor's presence.

The HUB Terrace Room is one such area where action is needed to reduce inconveniences to the student body. Conventioneers flocking to the Terrace Room have caused students and faculty members to waste 15 to 25 minutes waiting in long lines at lunch and supper.

It seems that conventioneers don't have to eat in the residence halls but can make their own eating arrangements. Many of them apparently prefer to eat in the Terrace Room.

Although this overabundance of patronizers is undoubtedly welcomed by the man who sells black ink to the Terrace Room, it should be remembered that the HUB is the STUDENT union building. It was paid for with student funds.

I do not dispute the right of conventioneers to decide against eating in the dormitories. However, when the exercising of this privilege infringes upon the rightful convenience of the students and faculty, it is time for administrative action on their behalf.



MYERS

Graduation Glimpses

Welcome back to Penn Status, my summer friends. And to all the new folks I've directed to Armsby or Tyson, I hope someone else was on hand to steer you back toward the HUB.

Undoubtedly there were few of you around to see the big spectacular at Beaver Stadium. They called it commencement and it was a long feature. No air conditioning, either.

Never will I forget the announcement of those graduates who received high honors. When one young lady's name was read, a long sigh was

clearly audible. Mother was pleased.

Speaking of honor students, I did not recognize too many from my hubology hours. Perhaps they slunked that course early in University life. Incidentally, my 400-level courses were omitted from the timetable, but they will meet from 10:30 a.m. until noon.

The lab is required but lectures at Whipple's are optional. I have the easiest course to get attendance at the entire University, my students tell me. See you there.

Prof Wayne