

editorial opinion

Semester report raises serious questions

Once there was a big University in a Happy Valley. Students studied and researchers researched and teachers taught and administrators administered. Everyone was happy.

But then the President said the University might change to a semester calendar. And there were forums and discussions and seminars and action was not happy. But still, students studied and researchers researched and teachers taught and administrators administered.

Until one day when some of the unhappy teachers got together and wrote a report — and the report was very serious indeed.

The report called for:

• Immediate cessation of work towards implementation of this decision and a withdrawal of the decision until such time as a full review of its impact on the primary missions of the University is completed and the resulting benefit or detriment is assessed.

The report also ominously warned: "A great University will be in conflict for years if action is not taken now..."

The writers of the report questioned whether the President had the authority to make his decision, whether the change would provide a better academic environment, whether the change would cost too much money, whether it would increase class sizes and teachers work loads...

It was the first serious opposition in the Valley to the calendar change since the final decision was made. It was a serious report with serious implications for the entire University — especially those students who are freshmen and sophomores now. Their classes will be greatly affected (for the better or worse) by the switch.

For example, students might drop courses and have to wait a year before being able to repeat the course. Also, some students might have to stay at

the University an extra semester or year because of the change.

The report, prepared by the Faculty Committee on Semester Review, was released today and appears on Page 4 of today's Daily Collegian.

Students who study all the time and teachers who teach all the time and administrators who administer all the time should take the time to plough through the lengthy, yet clearly written, report.

Because if there are severe problems with the change (as the report claims), they should be discussed now, while there is still a chance for revision and improvement. This may be the last chance for those who have concerns about the change to voice their opinions.

As the report says, "... there is no shame in changing a decision once made. The shame lies in failing to change a decision when it needs to be altered."



"I WAS FRAMED!"

reader opinion

An eye for an eye?

I am writing in regard to the editorial in the Feb. 12 Collegian concerning President Reagan's proposal to Congress to lift a 13 year moratorium on the production of lethal nerve gas weapons. In the editorial, the President's intention of deterring the Soviet Union from using their chemical weapons by building the same weapons ourselves is dismissed as being dangerous. You then use an analogy to describe the situation by portraying the United States and the Soviet Union as rival street gangs, with the Soviets having knives and the Americans being unarmed. You rationalize that if the United States is to obtain switchblades (chemical weapons), the Soviet Union would go out and get revolvers (better and more exotic chemical weapons), thus leading to an arms race in the area of chemical weapons.

In ridiculing the President, you are taking the typical left-wing stance of believing that if we just cease producing arms, the peace-loving and benign Soviets will follow our lead and also disarm, leading to a nice utopian world where everyone would live happily ever after. But this "bleeding heart liberal" scenario is extremely dangerous to the security of our country and should be rejected.

Your editorial obviously underestimates the treachery of the Soviet Union when you state that the President's policy will not deter the Soviets and their allies from "initiating" chemical warfare. Maybe you should get your head out of the sand and face some facts. The fact is that the Soviets, through their puppet allies, have already used these "horrific" weapons as you call them. You talk of the Soviets possibly initiating chemical warfare, when the fact is that they have been using them since as far back as 1963 against our allies and other anti-communist peoples.

The grisly history of Soviet-baked chemical warfare has its beginning in 1963 when Egypt, a Soviet ally, used chemical and biological weapons to kill the Yemeni village of Kawma. The deadly weapons were again used on the mid 1970s against the pro-United States H'mong tribesmen of Laos. And today these deadly gases are still being used against fiercely anti-communist forces Kampuchea (Cambodia) and against the brave freedom fighters in Afghanistan.

Until recently, these atrocities were ignored because they were too horrible to believe. But the weight of evidence is beginning to turn the tide and make this an international issue.

Evidence and eyewitness reports were presented at the Senate Foreign Relations Committee hearings on Nov. 10, 1981. Thus for the first time, Soviet evil-doing was brought to the attention of the public.

The chemical and biological samples taken from Southeast Asia have shown that the chemical being used is called T2 or Trichlotheene — a lethal form of grain mold which causes violent internal hemorrhaging and death. This same grain mold killed scores of Russians during past epidemics, so they have had experience with this toxic agent.

Also, first-hand reports were given from interviews with H'mong tribesmen from Laos and freedom fighters from Afghanistan. They told of a yellow mist which descended after Soviet-made aircraft passed over the targeted village. The survivors told of horrible scenes of villagers dying of terrible symptoms. These symptoms included violent convulsions, vomiting of blood, bleeding from the nose and ears and agonizing death within minutes.

If the Soviets and their allies show such a blatant disregard for international agreements covering chemical warfare such as the 1925 Geneva Protocols and the 1972 Biological Weapons Convention by gassing their enemies, do you seriously think it won't gas an unprepared United States in an all-out war?

Your analogy is a good one to answer that question, as any street gang with the advantage of having knives against an unarmed enemy is going to use that advantage to cut the other gang to pieces.

If you think it is more prudent to stand by and do nothing in the face of a Soviet advantage in chemical weapons because it might lead to an increased arms race, then you deserve to be on the battlefield with dying American soldiers wallowing in their bloody vomit.

James Donaghy, 5th-business administration
Feb. 15

But we are adults!

I am writing in response to Harvey Abrams whose letter, "Cheers and jeers" appeared in the Feb. 17 Collegian. A few things bothered me about Mr. Abrams' editorial reply.

Mr. Abrams was writing in reply to Joe Berkowitz who wrote "All a plot." (Feb. 16). Abrams said Berkowitz gave no motive for the physical education department's intentional misleading of students into believing swimming is required to graduate. Well, Mr. Berkowitz did give a motive. He said, "This seems to have been a plot for THEIR OWN GOOD." He is saying that the physical education department was lying to the

students because they thought it was best for all students to take swimming. That, sir, was the MOTIVE.

The second thing that bothered me about Mr. Abrams' letter was that he used no facts in his argument. He implied that the physical education department didn't deliberately lie to the students, yet he didn't explain why the Winter Term Orientation Tabloid read: "Those students who do not pass the swim test are required to enroll in beginning swimming" when we now know that the class isn't and NEVER WAS REQUIRED.

Another thing that bothered me is when Mr. Abrams mentioned that many of his self-defense students told him they thought self-defense should be required instead of swimming. At that time, why didn't Mr. Abrams tell these students that swimming was not required, or didn't he know? If he didn't, then why didn't he? Maybe someone didn't want him to.

Mr. Abrams said this about Mr. Berkowitz: "He has demonstrated an immature mentality while claiming to be an adult." Well, Mr. Abrams, I have news for you. We, the students at Penn State University are ADULTS. We also expect to be treated as adults, just like you. I believe this may have been the attitude of the physical education department when they decided not to tell us the truth "in order to do what was best for our own good." It took a USC Senator (Darryl Daisey) to uncover this "plot."

Yes, Professor Jim Thompson did correct the situation promptly, but I think the fact that Darryl Daisey was threatening a law suit may have swayed it up a little.

Now to all who think swimming should be mandatory (including the Collegian's Board of Opinion) — take swimming and the leave the rest of us (which is a large number) alone. Just as you can make a rational decision to take swimming, we can make a rational decision not to take swimming.

Pam Willis, 8th-pre-medicine
March 9

Dorm lines

As each year passes, the situation concerning dormitory contract lines worsens. The major culprit however is not the students, but rather it is the University.

The disturbing trend of students lining up increasingly early has been instigated and inflamed by University policy. Students know they can risk lining up early because Penn State will almost assuredly let them go if it gets too cold, too warm, too wet or even dark.

Once a student lines up, he should know that he is there for the duration — no ifs, ands or buts. Furthermore, the University should disclaim any responsibility for the health and safety of the students in these lines until 9 a.m. of the day of contract

acceptance. Penn State could even go one step further by stationing campus police by the line areas to prevent any premature formation of contract hungry students.

Since these measures will probably never be enacted, the University should at least correct the following inadequacies to make next year's dorm contract lines less of a hassle for everyone involved:

- 1) Better coordination between dorm areas. If the lines are to be released, there is no reason why one area should have to wait longer than any other area. This past weekend some lines were let go more than a half hour before some others.
- 2) Interest House students should be required to stand in line. Why should Penn State create an elite class of dorm students who share in all of the benefits of dormitory living, but don't share in its biggest hassle? This is clearly discriminatory.
- 3) Sororities should be allowed to move off-campus. If the chauvinistic policy forcing sororities to reside on-campus was abolished, one or two of them would surely leave the dorms within the next few years. This would open up more rooms for the beleaguered independent dorm student.

Joseph R. Boyle, 8th-forest science
Feb. 19

Semester switch

Semesters are coming... but is Penn State prepared for them? Recent criticism of the change to the new calendar has been manifested in a lengthy report by several University faculty members (re-printed in today's Collegian).

Is there still deep-seated resistance to the semester calendar? Do unanswered questions remain about class size, laboratory space, teaching load and availability of course offerings? Or will these thorny problems be ironed out in time?

Will the calendar adversely affect students and the University for years to come? Or is it, as its supporters claim, a step in the right direction?

On Wednesday, March 24, The Daily Collegian will devote its Op-ed page to the semester calendar. If you have input about this topic, please bring a forum (two to three pages, double-spaced) or a letter (one page, double-spaced) to the Collegian office, 125 Carnegie by March 21 at 5 p.m.

reader opinion

Lost sheep need new religion

By DAN REYES
5th-architecture

Searching for a meaning in life? So many people have not found it, so many people want to tell us where to look. We have religions, cults, all sorts of faiths and missions. We have people asking us to believe in more things than we could ever imagine or want to imagine on our own. Still, with so much effort, with so many energies being applied, we still cannot find it.

forum

It disturbs me to see so many lost sheep wandering while the apprentice shepherds cannot contain them. It is alarming having millions of people with either no or low spiritual direction. A terrible potential exists for all of these directionless souls to bring problems upon us all — to bring fostered conflicts, crusades and even wars. Clearly, these waste energies have to be harnessed into some useful form, or at least into some harmless variety.

To direct this damned potential, a faith with clear guidelines and understandable beliefs is needed. The curiosity which supplies the energy for everyone's searching must somehow be structured before any sort of spiritual harmony can be achieved — before anyone can find his sense of worth.

I propose that we use the resources we already have. I propose that the Campus Crusaders, missionaries and others eager to serve a religion, conglomerate and spread the faith of the Church of Jesus Christ the Kidnapped — a new Christian faith which has the potential to unite a people such as ours.

The Church of Jesus Christ the Kidnapped is a faith born of simplicity (and the creative genius of Kurt Vonnegut). Basically, the believers hold the premise that God's Son is among us again, but He has been kidnapped by the forces

of evil. The followers of the faith insist that we drop all we are doing and spend every waking hour trying to locate and rescue Jesus. Also, an incentive has been added which is perfectly appropriate. If Jesus Christ is not rescued soon, God will destroy mankind.

The conversion should not be a problem with the number of missionaries available even on campus. I suspect most missionaries and preachers would be delighted about the increased credibility brought on by a following, and what a following we would have with a town of college students, many of whom are for the first time in their lives trying to figure out what life is all about.

Sure, it would take a while getting used to the members of the faith constantly firing ardent glances in every which way (trying to find the kidnapped Christ). It might take a while to get accustomed to folks not being interested in anything outside the realm of their search, but it will be better than leaving restless sheep to stir-up otherwise peaceful wolves. It would keep everyone busy and it would give them a harmless direction which, after all, is what any good religion should do.

So, I propose that our modern day missionaries get working on this worthy project soon — it might even give them a sense of purpose. I believe this religion can be the biggest movement in the history of civilized man, and I will utterly enjoy watching it and our society grow in a new variation of their normally malignant ways. I will be watching even though I cannot participate because of one of the few biases I possess. I believe it is terrible when someone is abducted from the normal haphazard course of his life like Christ has been. I do think the Church of Jesus Christ the Kidnapped has a noble goal in trying to help someone so afflicted, but paradoxically I freeze up when I am in a situation that concerns freedoms lost, and because of my disturbing emotional response to slavery, I cannot practice this faith. Still, even though I will not be in the inner circles of this church, I am sure I can do quite well. There are so many people here looking for crosses.



BUDGET ROUNDUP AT THE DOUBLE-R

Student concert?

I was one of those many students (50 or so) petitioning outside of the HUB ballroom for a \$1 price to see the Sharks' concert on Feb. 17.

First, it seems that the price of \$2.75 was not clearly defined by the HUB, WOWK radio, the Modern Rock Appreciation Society or The Daily Collegian.

Second, it wasn't the price that bothered us as much as the principle involved — why weren't we informed of the price prior to the time of the concert? The crowd obviously wanted to see the Sharks' concert but many students couldn't see paying the \$2.75 cover charge to see a presumably low-priced "student concert." Yes, a "student concert" — one that should be aimed at the "wall" as well as the taste of the students.

The society could have made enough money to pay for the expenses but the students had to stand up for what they believed in. Maybe the next time the price for a "student concert" will be taken into consideration and a more successful turnout will result.

Joseph R. Boyle, 8th-forest science
Feb. 19

Fix the system

Sean de Hora, in his article "Giving the Money to Do Their Duty" that

appeared in the February 8 issue of The Daily Collegian, gives the impression that he feels the churches should be given the job of the education and welfare of the people because they could do a better job of it than the government is doing.

He says that it is traditionally "their duty" and also says that Mayor Ed Koch of New York City and President Reagan have both said basically the same things. The biggest problem he sees in the idea is the fact that the government collects the taxes that are supposed to go to the poor and spreads them around to bureaucrats; none of it goes to the churches that want to take care of the poor. He feels that the churches should get some of the money, to help them "do their duty."

As it is now, some churches try to do what they can. Many of them do help the poor, and many have schools that could be attended if so wished. Because they are usually private schools, their funding is from student tuitions and they are a good bit more particular about their teaching methods because they want their students to come back again the next year. This helps to explain why the church-affiliated schools consistently outperform public schools. He parallels this with the idea of what the churches could do in the welfare and medical care sectors, since they are doing so well in education.

Mr. de Hora claims that the money that is being paid in taxes now is going to "buy

consultants and eggheads who administer the poverty programs." He offered no proof for this and he then contradicted himself by saying that the New York City school system is spending \$3,000 per year per student for inner city students who for the most part are from disadvantaged backgrounds.

This is an awful lot of money spent on the "functional illiterate," he says the public schools produce, but he says they do spend it.

Then he comes up with his solution to his problem — to give the churches half of the tax revenue collected by the government. This almost makes sense, but not quite, because if all the responsibilities are turned over to the churches, should not all the revenues also be turned over? His suggestion is for half of the taxes people pay to be donated to the church of their choice. He mentions the problem that would result — bogus churches would spring up to get in on the money.

He says in this problem by suggesting that each state should have an official or some official representative to mention the fact that some of the money should go to the churches. He says that if they did when they were doing so well in education.

The churches would probably welcome the opportunity to take over the responsibilities of the education and welfare of the people, but if they were provided with the funding and the chance, who is to say they would not "squander" the money (although they probably would not). They offer, on a much smaller basis, what Mr. de Hora suggests they take over completely. They, though, also have to take care of the spiritual needs of the people, which is a big job and one that the Department of Health, Education and Welfare does not have to worry about.

Giving the churches the entire burden of caring for the people's physical, mental and spiritual needs would cause many more unforeseen problems than there are now. One of the problems would be the large expenditure of time, effort and money on both the giving and receiving ends. Then there are all the problems that would arise from the people who do not want their children to go to religiously-owned and -operated schools.

If the present system of taking care of the poor is not working, it's not time to shift the burden to someone else. It's time to fix the present system to make it workable.

system would probably cause less problems and less expenditure of time, energy and money than giving the problem to someone else, and would most likely come up with the same results.

Stephen W. Buchanan, 2nd-architecture
Feb. 9

Candidates

Incumbent Republican Rep. Gregg Cunningham has stated during his travels around the state in support of the Abortion Control Act that his ultimate goal is to outlaw abortion in the state of Pennsylvania. At a meeting in Murrysville, Pa. last fall, Mr. Cunningham described the Abortion Control Act (vetoed by Gov. Dick Thornburgh) as an interim measure and noted to his audience that he would persevere in his efforts to abolish safe and legal abortion on this state.

I wonder if this extreme position is shared by his constituents. His opponent in the primary race, Don Heggester, believes that the decision to terminate a pregnancy is a private one between a woman and her physician. He is a pro-choice candidate. If you are concerned about your rights and reproductive freedoms, give

Nobody, but nobody, loves a lonely loser

Penn State is more than beer kegs and football games, more than happy-go-lucky partying in the Neighborhood of Make-Believe. Beneath all the frivolities and fun there lurks intense competition.

Yes, egos are big and competition keen on college campuses, and Penn State is no different. On the field and in the classroom, ego and competition are inseparably linked: Many competitors feed their egos with heavy helpings of winning. And a person who loses may think of himself as, well, a loser. But is he?

There are a lot of people, especially in a competitive setting like Penn State, with tremendous egos fueled by beating others. Competition used in this manner is deluding and destructive. If we are to determine right and wrong and see life truthfully, competition must be put into its proper light.

Anything involving a judgment of superiority is competition, whether it be against others or within oneself. Competition must have to be bad — it can serve a useful, necessary purpose.

What is that purpose? If it involves a judgment, the reason must be to see who is better. Someone wins and someone loses. That's where a problem starts. Winning — and losing — may be interpreted to mean more than they actually are. They are often taken as a judgment of personal worth. With this attitude, a person who loses thinks his personal worth has lessened, which is destructive.

A prime example is a top-notch high school

student leaping into college life expecting the same successes in college. And he then finds college a lot more difficult than high school and delusion.

It's just not truthful to say one person is better than another because he's had success. But it's pretty hard to persuade an egotist of that.

An egotist is a person who thinks he is more important than you. A college campus tends to attract this type. Of course, this label may be bad: We all have an egotist lurking within us.

But should we be cocky about some talent we have? Or of intelligence? Or of good looks?

There's no reason to be. It's kind of like the Christian belief that God, not men, is responsible for earthly successes. In other words, don't be overly-proud of natural talent, intelligence, good looks — or anything; those are all natural abilities.

I started wondering about competition, pride and its excesses back in those faraway high school days when being the quarterback, valetudinarian or prom queen was all that mattered. I remember a sign on the track coach's office door: "NO PAIN, NO GAIN." Quite inspiring. The American work ethic of athletics. Be proud of something worked for, something gained.

Not many people were attracted to the hard work, but they were attracted to its rewards — attention and high school glory.

But there was always the cocky natural athlete who consistently missed team practices, but won shelves of trophies. That's the kind of guy who makes a coach uncomfortable. Sure, a coach wants top performers, but he also wants everyone to work hard, or team spirit could be undermined.

Here's how my track coach put things in perspective: "Boys, when each of you came down the chute, the good Lord gave you a certain amount of speed. All I can do is help you take longer steps and help you build your stamina. All you can do is to do what I say."

In other words, whether or not you believe in a supreme being, you play no part in the inheritance of natural abilities. The only part you play is the development of those abilities.

A person who may work very little and, due to natural ability, still be successful, has nothing to be cocky about. Pride over something worked for is justifiable and a lot healthier. But it still must be remembered that we have been given a potential by God or whatever.

Anyone cocky of their success is simply turning on the radio and then taking credit for the music.

John Schlander is a 5th-term journalism major and a member of The Daily Collegian's Board of Opinion.



John Schlander

the Collegian

Monday March 15, 1982 © 1982 Collegian Inc.
Editor: Paul Rudoy
Business Manager: Sharon Taylor
Managing Editor: Asst. Business Mgr. John Allison
Editorial Editor: Michael Conklin
Office Manager

The Daily Collegian's editorial opinion is determined by its five-member Board of Opinion, with the editor holding final responsibility. Opinions expressed on this page are not necessarily those of Collegian Inc. or The Pennsylvania State University.

About the Collegian: The Daily Collegian and The Weekly Collegian are published by Collegian Inc., an independent, non-profit corporation with a board of directors composed of students, faculty and professionals. Students of The Pennsylvania State University write and edit both papers and solicit advertising material for them. The Daily Collegian is published Monday through Friday and distributed at the University Park campus. The Weekly Collegian is mailed to Commonwealth campus students, parents of students, alumni and other subscribers who want to keep abreast of University news.

Complaints: News and editorial complaints should be presented to the editor. Business and advertising complaints should be presented to the business manager.