

# College credits offered via cable TV

By BEVERLY M. PAYTON  
Collegian Staff Writer

Billed as the world's largest cable television network of its kind, PENNARAMA will go into service Thursday, making college credit courses available to an estimated 1.5 million cable television subscribers throughout the state.

The cable classes represent a joint effort between the University and the Pennsylvania Educational Communications System, a nonprofit organization of 11 cable companies. The statewide network will serve, in addition to larger cities, many small and rural communities that do not have educational programming.

The system will enable users to earn college credits and work toward a degree through television classes.

Program coordinator Jerry A. Sawyer, of the Division of Learning and Telecommunications Services, said most subscribers would not be able to complete their degree requirements through PENNARAMA, but the system is helpful to non-traditional students, allowing them to "get started."

Also, with the exception of a speech communications course, a student can fulfill the requirements for the associate degree in arts and letters through the cable network and independent learning, he said.

"It will be a while before there are complete degree programs offered through PENNARAMA,

but I see it in the future," Sawyer said.

Another important aspect of the expanded system is that the network courses will eventually be available to users all the time, instead of only a few hours a day, he added.

"A big advantage is that now there will be a complete channel dedicated to hard-core educational course programming," Sawyer said.

In State College and Bellefonte, PENNARAMA now shares air time with a news service on cable channel 12.

The courses will be offered through correspondence from the University's Independent Learning Program which has been in effect for 60 years, Sawyer said.

PENNARAMA has operated in State College and in some cities in northeastern Pennsylvania since 1980. The expansion will make it available to viewers in the southeastern and western part of the state.

Among the most popular courses are English 10 and 20, business logistics and management.

"Teacher education courses are also very popular," Sawyer said.

The integrity of TV courses has been questioned by some colleges and universities, but that is changing, he said. In some cases, PENNARAMA courses are more difficult than classroom courses, he added.

"Standards are set by full professors; they also oversee courses offered by other institutions and add or delete as necessary to make it a true Penn

State course," he said.

Proctored exams for PENNARAMA courses are administered through the campuses. If no local campus is available to the student, his exam can be mailed to the principal at a local public school who will make arrangements to have it proctored.

Student Instructional Services coordinator Linda K. Ellinger said independent learning courses are recorded on a student's transcript exactly as any other Penn State course would be.

"We work very closely with the departments to make sure that only those courses that meet rigorous Penn State standards are approved. We don't simply take any course that comes down the airwaves," Ellinger said.

Ellinger said she was concerned with the misconception that someone can "just sit in front of the tube and get credit for it."

"There is a lot of reading; this is not simply watching TV and getting credit. There's a lot more to it than that," she said.

Lucille M. Diehl, a University employee in management services who has taken several courses through PENNARAMA, said she thought the course content was good and she did not feel alienated from professors.

"I have called the instructor and if she did not answer the phone, she always returned my call," Diehl said. "Other times I have written down questions and sent them along with my assignments and have always received an answer."

# PSU professor emeritus dead at 88 in San Diego

By KELLY YALE  
Collegian Staff Writer

Franklin C. Banner, 88, University professor emeritus and long-time head of the Department of Journalism (now the School of Journalism) died June 5 in San Diego, Calif., the University learned recently.

Banner became the first head of the Department of Journalism in 1933 and helped to build the department until he retired in 1955. As head of the journalism department, Banner was an early supporter of The Daily Collegian, then known as The Penn State Collegian.

Along with Ralph D. Hetzel, former president of the University, then known as the Pennsylvania State College, and A.R. Warnock, dean of men, Banner encouraged editorial freedom and independence for the Collegian and thus helped to make its incorporation in 1940 possible.

In 1954, Banner expressed his support of the Collegian in a letter to a Collegian editor: "In the fall of 1926 I met the first Collegian staff, struggling to produce a semi-weekly in a tiny downtown back office furnished with four battered typewriters. I was determined that the Collegian should be brought to the campus, should share equally with the department of journalism what equipment was available from our funds, should lose neither its liberty or opinion nor responsibility of action despite these relations with the department, and that it should become a daily to serve better the communication needs of a growing college..."

In 1929, Banner founded the Pennsylvania Newspaper Publishers' Advisory Committee to the Department of Journalism. He served as vice president of the American Association of Teachers of Journalism in 1930 and associate editor of its publication.

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