

## Editorial opinion

### License to complain

Register now to voice concerns in the Pennsylvania primary

Although the Republican presidential nomination should be wrapped up by the time the Pennsylvania primary rolls around on April 23, voters in the commonwealth still have plenty of reasons to pay attention to the election.

Just because President Clinton's Republican opponent will be all but officially chosen doesn't mean you should skip the polls.

If you're registered to vote in Centre County, you might be interested in a seat in the U.S. House of Representatives that is up for grabs. Longtime Rep. Bill Clinger, R-Warren, is retiring his seat in the 5th Congressional District, and four Republicans and one Democrat are hoping to fill the important vacancy.

Those seeking the nomination on the Republican ticket are Patrick Conway, Daniel Gordeuk, state Sen. John Peterson, R-Pleasantville, and Bob Shuster. State Rep. Ruth Rudy, D-Centre, is the sole Democratic candidate.

With the incumbent out of the race, the groundwork for an interesting election has been laid. If you have been upset with how Clinger has been working in Washington, D.C., then it's up to

you to seek out a candidate who supports your views.

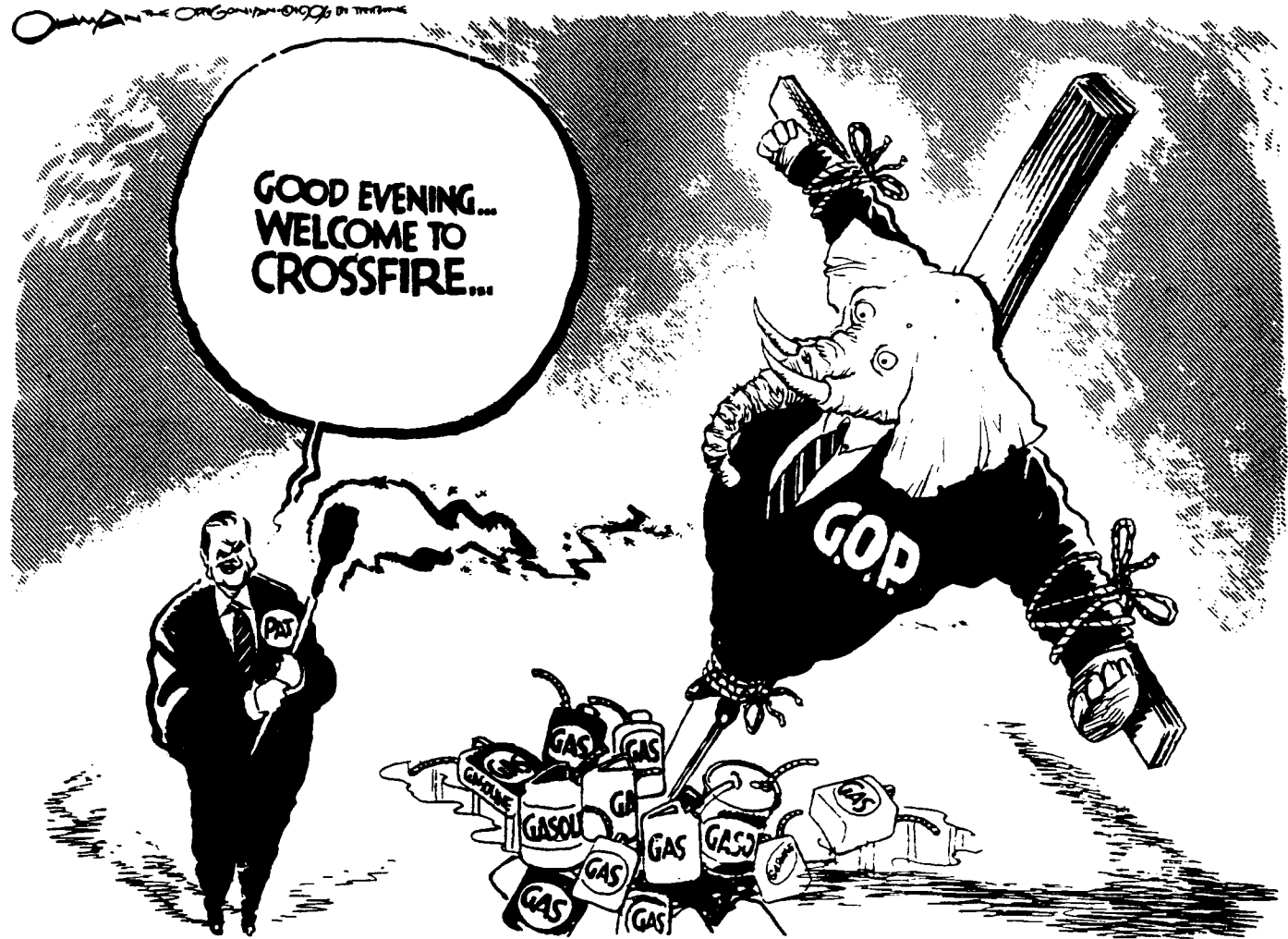
What also makes this year different is that Pennsylvania's primary is taking place while Spring Semester classes are still in session. With in-state University tuition hikes of at least 4.5 percent projected for the upcoming year, issues such as student loans, grants and work-study programs are very important. The person who steps up to be our next member of Congress must be in touch with the concerns of Penn State students — people who make up a large percentage of the 5th District's constituency.

And even if you are a Democrat and there are no contested races for you in which to vote, exercise your rights anyhow.

**Just one catch: The deadline to register to vote is March 25. Call the Centre County voter registration office at 355-6703 or go to your nearest post office for a registration form.**

The bottom line is that it whether you vote in State College or by absentee ballot your hometown, it's important to make your voice heard.

It's your license to complain.



## Letters to the editor

### Getting the job "Dunn"

It is once again campaign season, and it is time to select new USG leaders. Some have predicted that this is going to be a dull campaign, with not many choices; I can assure you that this is going to be a USG presidential campaign that has dedicated effort that will address the concerns of all students.

Before I start, I would first like to take the opportunity to thank the students of Penn Tower, Beaver Terrace, Beaver Hill, North, South, East, West, Pollock/Nittany, downtown and the fraternity areas for signing our petition in order for us to get on the ballot.

This gives us a chance to express our ideas, concerns and the opportunity to give the students the USG leadership that is so desperately needed.

On Monday, March 11, I, Jack Dunn, and my running mate, Dave Beemer, filed our petition to get on the ballot to be candidates for president and vice president of USG.

This is NOT a "USG Joke Campaign," but a serious effort to provide students of this campus with USG leadership, trust and commitment.

Year after year, you hear the same rhetoric from candidates proposing unrealistic goals and spending money for programs in which there are no allocated funds.

You have all heard unrealistic promises that never materialize. Nothing is accomplished because of in-fighting and disagreements with the campus administrators. It's time to break the cycle of empty promises and unrealistic demands, and give the students the voice, control and leadership they deserve.

We are USG outsiders looking for student support in our effort to establish a USG that encompasses the concerns of all students. Our platform consists of the following proposals:

■ (1) **USG Restructuring** — Bridge the gap between the administration and USG to establish a more efficient governing body. Also, create "On-Line" capability through the World Wide Web for easier access to representatives, and student input.

■ (2) **Activity Fee Implementation** — Proposing that fee money be used solely for student activity purposes and not blended into tuition fees.

■ (3) **CAC Lab Improvements** — Work to increase lab efficiency by adding more computers and "leasing" old lab computers to students for their rooms, and reducing compute down-time by authorizing certified students to correct software problems.

■ (4) **Student Housing and Safety** — Actively work with State College officials on Ratio Enforcement Neighborhood University (RENU) and the Rental Permit Revocation Proposal, to ensure students are properly represented and informed about housing ordinances and how these proposals will affect them.

■ (5) **Additional Educational Funding via Pennsylvania Tax Returns** — Proposing to add a box in the Pennsylvania tax return form that allows taxpayers to contribute \$2 to a fund that can be used when there are shortfalls in the state appropriations for public University funding.

If you would like more information on our platform, how you can help, or request that we speak to you or your club, visit our web site at WWW.GOT.NET/BACKJACK.

Also, feel free to E-mail us with your concerns, comments, questions, or recommendations at JPD126@psu.edu (Jack) or DLB172@psu.edu (Dave) anytime. Again, thanks to everyone who helped get us on the ballot and we ask you to BACK JACK and Dave, and let's get the job DUNN!

**Jack Dunn**  
USG presidential candidate  
**Dave Beemer**  
USG vice presidential candidate

### Additional innovation

On Thursday, Feb. 22, an article appeared on the front page of the Collegian featuring the Institute for Innovation in Learning.

We feel that implementing change in the classroom is definitely an important goal, and so it is important to point out that more than just the Institute is working toward these aims.

In 1991, the Envisioneers, a group of engineering students, formed to advocate a very similar change. They made their home in Rider II Building. They questioned and challenged, they learned and grew, and they met with unprecedented success and continue to do so.

In addition to providing interpersonal and leadership skills to its members, the Envisioneers work both within the Univer-

sity and the community to enhance engineering education. Some of our projects include:

■ **Consulting** — Just this past week, a prominent NASA representative from the Johnson Space Center came to the Envisioneers looking for ideas concerning the future of the space station.

■ **Course enhancement** — The Envisioneers created a study guide for Physics 201 to aid in student learning and to make the material more fun and interesting. They have also had similar endeavors in other classes.

■ **Outreach** — Envisioneers have been invited to give presentations at the Leaders of the Future conference for the past several years.

As the main energy source of the Leonhard Center for the Enhancement of Engineering Education, the Envisioneers have worked with faculty and industry representatives in a unique partnership. Also, the Envisioneers have been instrumental in the development of the Engineering Leadership Development minor.

We applaud the Institute for Innovation in Learning for their bold efforts to make education at Penn State across all colleges more meaningful by means of collaborative and active learning.

The College of Engineering seems to have been headed in this direction for many years. Perhaps that is why the Schreyer Institute was loosely based upon the structure of the Leonhard Center.

**Wendy Rentz**  
senior-chemical engineering and French  
**Nora Siewiorek**  
sophomore-engineering

### Redneck discrimination

Regarding the letter written by Nathan Kaleta (Feb. 21) about the students on campus not receiving The Nashville Network so that they can watch the recently revived "Dukes of Hazzard," the answer is very simple.

On our ultra-sensitive, culturally diverse campus it would not be politically correct to discriminate against Arabic, French or Spanish students.

It is still completely fine, if not even fashionable, to discriminate against the redneck minority group

**Matt Young**  
senior-film

The opinions page is an open forum for discussion for the entire Penn State community. Diverse viewpoints in columns, reader forums and letters to the editor are encouraged to promote an ongoing intellectual dialogue on issues important to our readers.

## the daily Collegian

Tuesday, March 12, 1996  
©1996 Collegian Inc.

**Editor in Chief**  
Courtney Cairns  
**Business Manager**  
Randy Abrams

The Daily Collegian's editorial opinion is determined by its Board of Opinion, with the editor holding final responsibility. Opinions expressed on the editorial pages are not necessarily those of The Daily Collegian, Collegian Inc. or The Pennsylvania State University, Collegian Inc., publishers of The Daily Collegian and related publications, is a separate corporate institution from Penn State.

### Board of Editors

**Managing Editor**  
Heidi A. Shubilla  
**Opinion Editors**  
Jason Ali, Jon Feinberg  
**Campus Editor**  
Naina Narayana  
**Assistant Campus Editor**  
Paula Shaki  
**Metro Editor**  
Amy E. Oakes  
**Assistant Metro Editor**  
Michael S. O'Sullivan  
**News Editors**  
James Kwasnik, Scott Perry

**Copy/Wire Editors**  
Rachel Hogan, Thomas A. Murse, Jake Stuver  
Chad Wehrauch, Keightley Wittich

### Weekly Editors

Lara Hyde, Michele E. Johnston  
**Day Sports Editor**  
Michael Palm  
**Assistant Day Sports Editor**  
James Reeser  
**Night Sports Editor**  
Hal D. Coffey  
**Assistant Night Sports Editors**  
Jonathan Bombulie, Hope Caldwell

### Arts Editor

Jessica Tetrault  
**Assistant Arts Editor**  
Todd Ritter  
**Photo Editor**  
Aaron R. Bandell  
**Chief Photographer**  
Laura Chiles  
**Graphic Editor**  
Matthew Zitelli  
**Chief Graphic Artist**  
Benjamin Scanlon

### Board of Managers

**Advertising Manager**  
Allison S. DeKosky  
**Zone Managers**  
Dana Dalesio, Kevin C. Foster  
**Accounting Manager**  
Karen E. Shontz  
**Marketing Manager**  
Carrie Elmer  
**Office Manager**  
Kate Crimone  
**Assistant Office Manager**  
Kathryn Fulesday  
**Layout Manager**  
Lorne Yasbin

# Grades are bribery for entrance into benign corporate world

College is this place where you learn. We pretty much knew that before coming here. But nobody ever really thought about exactly how that was supposed to happen. Do you take everything your professor says at face value and record it in a notebook verbatim? Should you just go to the library and bury your head in books? Should you skip all your classes, head straight for the bars and wax philosophical with other drunken idiots?

I don't know about the first two, but I've tried studying drunk. Every time I study for a test drunk, I get an A on the exam.

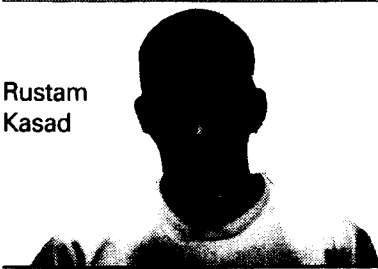
Hold on there, just kidding. It's kind of scary how badly you wanted to believe that, isn't it?

But seriously, there is an alarming number of students complaining about the subject matter that they are learning at this university and the method employed to teach those things.

Men complain that the only thing taught in a women's studies classes is how to be mean to white males. Women complain about professors

## My opinion

Rustam Kasad



who strongly encourage them to submit nude pictures of themselves for a grade... or something like that.

Students seem to be repelled by professors. They have no problem grumbling under their breath at the back of the class, or making biting professorial attacks as they leave the classroom.

But directly confronting a professor is almost unheard of.

My one Econ professor was confused, and rightfully so, about why students were requesting tutors in class, yet they weren't showing up for the professor's office hours.

Why pay some grad student to tutor you basic course material when you can ask the professor directly... and for free?

My solution to the problem with Penn State's culture of complaint would be to let your professors know you disagree with them. Talk to them in person. Leave anonymous notes on their desk after class. You can include messages like: "Your lecture notes are too confusing" or "Please wear a microphone, I can't hear you in the back" or "The way you calculate grades sucks, please feel free to smoke crack and die."

Professors are generally afraid for two reasons. First, they've usually researched the topic better than you and can more clearly explain material that is covered in a book. Second, they present the viewpoint of the dominant ideology.

They do not, as some idealistically suppose, prepare you to become the citizens of a new and utopic world order. That's your job. Dissatisfaction with present corruption in the world view is supposed

"Some students are concerned that complaining to or disagreeing with a professor might yield a lower grade. These students are really stupid. Grades do not matter."

to lead you toward inevitably employing change, sometimes with drastic consequences.

Some students are concerned that complaining to or disagreeing with a professor might yield a lower grade. These students are really stupid. Grades do not matter. They might argue, I need good grades to get a job and make money and support myself. First of all, getting a C in economics does not, in the general scheme of things, mean crap. The world moves on.

On the other hand, asserting your individual sense of creativity and innovation is kind of important and annihilates the significance of all the meaningless letter grades you might acquire throughout your academic career.

Grades are a form of institution-

alized ass kissing. Grades are a bribe; they are your ticket to the sterile, soul-crushing environment of corporate boredom. Get ready folks, pretty soon you too will journey to the land of the same-suit people.

Some corporate apologists might disagree. They might even have their secretary fax you a memo that says something like this: *This firm allows for a great deal of creativity and individual innovation. Why just last Monday, Jennings came to work with one of those wacky Jerry Garcia ties... Boy that Jennings, he sure is one crazy guy!*

It might seem as if I was burned really bad by the "grade gods" this semester. But really, it's nothing. I've been getting burned by the "grade gods" since I got to Penn

State, and I've actually done OK this semester.

In fact, after taking my first exam of the semester, I received a notice from my professor's TA that informed me of the following:

*Your total score was 80 out of 100*

*The class average 75.71*

*Of the 1,030 other students taking the test, 398 scored higher than you did, 37 had a score equal to yours, and 595 scored lower than you.*

Translation: You are better than X number of students, but Y number of students are better than you. In order to be more like everybody else, you should have scored closer to (X-Y)/2. That's kind of a rough translation. The formula might be a little off.

Earlier in this article I might have accidentally called college a place where you learn and stuff. I apologize if this sounds depressing, but Penn State is not an intellectual battleground, it's a drill field for 40,000 drunken under-achievers.

Rustam Kasad is a junior majoring in English and economics and a Collegian columnist.