

The Collegian

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Martyr hopeful pleads for coup

by R. M. Prindle

In the beginning there was light. Then came the muck and bureaucracy and loop holes and accountants and administrators.

Now things aren't so bright.

Penn State is a sports oriented college to be sure, but the games this monolith of secular education play do not end on the turf or the hardcourt. Penn State is also an apt player on the playing fields of the accounting sheet.

It seems that to stay in good grace with the state, Pennsylvania public schools of higher education have to keep increases in tuition to 6 percent or under. And Penn State did just that.

Well, sort of.

Actually, Penn State has proven me wrong on one point. I've always said that this University lacked imagination and creativity to the point of being as dull as a New Kids on the Block single. Apparently this is not so.

It seems that Penn State's official Office of Tuition Increase is just full of the creative sort. A few months ago these modern day Edisons did some serious inventing to overcome a dire financial problem.

The problem: Same as always, get more money from students. Doesn't matter how, doesn't matter what we will use it for (we will worry about that later,) just get the money, the cash, the dinero, the wumpum, the big green go getters. And oh yeah, be sneaky about it, make Joe Paterno proud.

And they definitely had to be sneaky because of the six percent limit the state imposed.

YEAH RIGHT

The solution: Well, first, let's take the six percent we are entitled to. That is a given, even if we don't need it for anything per se. Then let's add just a few fees. How about computers, everyone hates computers right? Let's say \$35 computer fee. Never mind if that takes the actual increase up to 7.8 percent. Now, what else? I've got it, I've got it, I have got it. A parking fee. We'll raise that 120 percent.

What next? The question burning in my mind is what other fees and creative increase limit avoiding tactics will come in the next few budget years? Don't get me wrong, I could guess. I could get crude and hypothesize on what fees are being discussed in the office of Get-All-You-Can right now. I could guess that they're talking about selling restroom keys for \$45. Or I could talk about potential toilet tissue venues outside the doors. Or how about electricity fees, or a toll gate into each class room, or maybe a tax on each word of a term paper, but I will leave that to your imaginations.

I am not saying that tuition has no reason at all to increase. Prices go up, Penn State expands. Granted, since I started attending this campus some four years ago I have seen an increase, a substantial one, each year. And I haven't seen anything get all that much better, but that is not my main complaint.

I am complaining about deceit and mendacity.

Tell the truth PSU. Yes it is cute to use loop holes and I'm sure all the Penn State budget people have been smiling up a storm about their coup, but come on. Don't take the easy way out. If you absolutely cannot make the six percent, then lobby the state to give larger increases, but stop playing with your numbers.

Fifty-five dollars is too much to pay for parking. A 25 percent increase intuition is too much for the span of only the last four years.

But the funny thing is this isn't really the administrations fault. And it isn't the state's fault. Hell this isn't even Saddam Hussein's fault.

This is the student body's fault. It is our fault.

The really funny thing is, if we, as customers of Penn State's Knowledge Restaurant and Lounge, would refuse to pay the fees, guess what? Guess what? Guess what?

There would be major chaos. Big problems. What could they do if no one paid the extra thirty bucks to park? What would they do if no one paid? They would threaten us. They would threaten to hold diplomas, but they wouldn't because if they did they would make national news in a very bad way and they wouldn't want to do that, would they? Ronald Reagan is no longer president. Beating down the masses is no longer in vogue.

There would be a compromise. Rates would come down. Probably.

But I am sorry to say that that sweet dream will never be realized because this campus has no leadership. Sure we vote for student government and commuter council, but they are always a little too busy assigning people to study things and allocating money for the Association of God Fearing Future Game Show Hosts club to worry about leadership.

Well, I'm not paying the new and improved parking fee. Screw them and screw me because I know that my actions won't change anything. But I have another dream. I want to be a martyr.

So come on guys. If you want to make me famous come after me and don't send me any rent-a-cops. I want the big guys from U.P.

BUT maybe I'm wrong. Maybe I am underestimating the strain on the budget department. Maybe they are doing everything they can short of donating their own wages to make this college affordable. Maybe....

YEAH RIGHT.

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