

Profs lose audience

There used to be a time when the tough question was, "what's the best college or university?" Today it's, "what's the worst colleges or universities?"

A generation of hippies and rebels and social outcasts bent on making the world a better place to live sold out their values. Many of those people are now more concerned with the paycheck than the quality the paycheck buys. The situation has reached the point where the newest question is, "what's wrong with modern education and how do we fix it?"

Today's students are more computer-aided/graphic oriented in their texts while being less text and learning oriented. Students are distracted by theatrical graphic presentations which hide education, overpriced, over-hyped texts, and the less than inspiring teacher presentations.

Today's teachers, many of whom are of the Beat and/or Hippy generations, are more complacent in their intellectual leanings. I'm generalizing, but even if one teacher is at fault, wish that was true, then it still represents hundreds, even thousands of minds robbed of some education -- or worse, improperly educated and needlessly turned away from a given subject. At today's prices, and tomorrow's

threats, this is an outrage!

If you were grading your teachers, what would you give them? Be honest. How many professors and teachers would need the support of the bell curve?

Students could consider grading their teachers: A, A-, B+, B, B-, C+, C, D, [GIVE UP!] Rather than giving the grades to their peers where undue hatred can easily ruin a career, why not give the grades to the teachers? Put the grades on a piece of paper, all paper uniform to protect anonymity, and give the bunch to the teacher sometime around the second or third week of classes long before the semester is too old to save.

I'm leaving next semester after a very long stay at Behrend. I've come to like and admire many of the people to whom I'll be saying goodbye, and those to whom I've already said it. This place holds many nice memories. I like the idea of graduating from a university that looked and, for the most part, felt -- excuse me while I take a step back -- groovy, man!

I'd like to be able to look back at Behrend and smile with pride at having been a part of it, but that depends on the university and the people who staff it.

I have time, while I'm still 'on the inside', to focus attention on the hidden issues:

Some teachers don't follow their code of ethics or honor. Money has become the main motivator. Some teachers have become sloppy and lazy; many are unprepared for classes, or aren't properly prepared, and it shows. Many students follow their teachers' examples. (Did you know:



teachers are considered by many to be role models for the people they teach? What a concept!)

So, how to fix it? There are some basic truths that need to be addressed:

Teachers *should* pull together and be teachers. They should also be judged in areas such as, communication, presentation, development, and organization.

How instructive is the teacher? Are messages sent

effectively and efficiently? Are overhead notes smeared? Are handouts legible, timely, and relative to the discussion at hand? Can people in the back hear? Can people see the overhead or the scribbling on the chalkboard?

Are unknown phonetics coming out of the erratically moving, all too nervous person facing you? Is the hard copy on the overhead projector positioned so the screen receives the full image, or the relevant section? Is the projected image in focus? Were the words on the hard copy written with a marker dark enough to be seen by the entire class?

If you (teachers) are using a text book and the overhead notes are nearly or completely verbatim from the text, why are you teaching? You might want to consider a position as a radio announcer. Or, perhaps you have but were turned down because of a boring presentation.

Do you know how much you lose your audience when you ask students to copy notes from an overhead image while you move to the chalkboard to write down tangential information (sometimes irrelevant to the main points, or not fully explained, and often in unrecadable handwriting,) then move back to the overhead projector to replace hard

copies before students have a chance to finish writing? (Drop the useless tangents and you'd have time to slow down!)

A curse, of a wedgy during a several hours long presentation to your peers, upon you! Cretins! Buffoons! Dolts! Oafs! Morons! You're not stupid. You're just intellectually lacking! Are you trying to run a Gum Ball Rally through your students' minds?

Some teachers say students are lazy, and many are, but look at what their role models are doing! ALL teachers need to unite, not in fear behind the 'green machine,' but in pride behind education.

For those teachers who still don't get it, let me rephrase. Think of each class day as a presentation and the students as your audience and approach it (teaching and getting ideas across) as if it was a speech communication presentation. Be enthusiastic. Know your subject. Know your audience! Know your s--!

Don't you, as teachers at this fine institution, want to look back someday and smile with pride? Do you care?

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