

# U. News and Notes

I swear we don't just make these things up:

## A bright idea

A student at Cal Poly disenrolled his ex-girlfriend from classes by using her Personal Identification Number, according to the *Mustang Daily*, Cal Poly's student newspaper.

Apparently the jilted student thought it would be a great way to get back at his ex. He called an automated registration line and dropped all of her courses. Now the student faces disciplinary action and possible charges. In the words of some long-forgotten "Gunsmoke" hero, "It just goes to show... Crime doesn't pay."

## Man's best friend? Yeah, right

Wire services at Arizona State U. reported the story of a woman trying to feed a chicken to her "pet" python. Instead of chowing down on the bird, the "pet" started chomping down on the woman. It took four firefighters to pry the pet off Susan Inherst's hand and body. She suffered puncture wounds as a result of the attack. "When he struck, I knew he thought I was the chicken," she said. Maybe the fact that the six-foot snake hadn't eaten in a week had something to do with it.

## Letters and more letters

When Mary Jane Ryals wrote a commentary for the *Florida Flambeau*, Florida State U.'s student newspaper, she probably didn't bet on all of the letters she would be getting. Ryals said the contestants in a local beauty pageant didn't need to think. Ouch. The *Flambeau* seemed to predict the onslaught of letters. The headline on the letters page read "Readers respond to Ryals' wrath (Part 1)."

## Don't forget your rubbers

A safe sex campaign prompted the *Vermont Cynic* to tease readers with the caption, "These are condoms. You are supposed to wear them. Stupid people don't. Obnoxious self-infatuated males don't think it is their responsibility. We all know better. Happy safe sex week." And with this piece of advice, I will leave you. Happy hunting and feed your pets.

## Oops

One more thing. In February we failed to give credit where credit was due. Paula Mathieu, a reporter for the *Chicago Flame*, pulled together the original story on the "skull sculptor," which we used in News and Notes. Thanks, Paula.

—J.S. Newton,  
Editor on Fellowship, Eastern Kentucky

# Long haul

## Students at public universities take longer to earn diplomas

By ASHLEY FOGLE

*The Daily Tar Heel, U. of North Carolina*

While many students shudder at the thought of an "extra" hour of class, more students at public universities are opting to stay in school an extra year.

Statistics show that students at public universities take longer to graduate than their private school counterparts.

Fifty-four percent of students who entered private schools in 1980 had graduated by 1986, compared to 43 percent of public school students, said Frank Balz, executive director of the National Institute of Independent Colleges and Universities.

In the past several years, many public universities have seen a decline in graduation rates, due in part to state cutbacks in education spending.

Kelly Cox, statistical information officer for Kansas State U., said some students at K-State faced difficulties in registering for courses.

"It's been a problem to some degree," Cox said. "Some students at this university can't get into required courses. They end up having to wait until their senior year to take their core classes."

K-State students also are taking fewer classes per semester — some by choice, some out of necessity.

"When you're not taking 18 hours a semester you have a lot more time to go out and earn money for living expenses," said Craig Raborn, a senior at K-State.

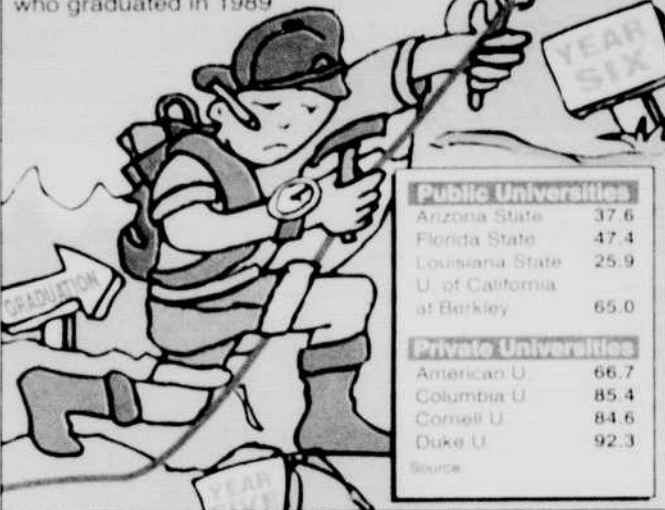
Lighter class loads and registration difficulties add up to only 18.6 percent of K-State students graduating in four years.

Lack of available classes also is slowing down the graduation rate at the U. of North Carolina.

"We believe that it is taking students progressively longer to

## Taking longer to get there

Percentage of 1984 Freshmen who graduated in 1989



EMMETT MAYER, THE DRETFWOOD, U. OF NEW ORLEANS

graduate," said Ray Dawson, UNC's vice president for academic affairs. "Availability of required classes obviously is a major factor. If you can't get the courses, you can't graduate."

Dena Hart, a senior at the U. of Colorado, which has a four-year rate of 32 percent, said graduating in four years hasn't been easy.

"Basically I worked my ass off," she said. "I took 18 hours or 15 hours each semester. I did everything I could to get out. I stuck to the core and didn't take any classes I wanted."

Russell Jones, a junior at Emory U., said taking extra classes is one reason he chose to take five years to earn his degree. "A lot of people (stay in school longer than four years) because they feel they can't get everything they want to get out of college in four years. With distribution and major requirements, it allows you to take a much wider variety of courses and also helps if you're trying to double major."

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# Colleges hop on 'Buy American' bandwagon

By JOEL P. ENCARDIO

*The State News, Michigan State U.*

College students are unknowingly being drafted into an economic war with Japan.

America's ongoing recession has been blamed on Japanese competition by everyone from President Bush to the factory worker, with "Buy American" as their battle cry.

And some universities are signing up for the fight, ordering their purchasing departments to buy mostly American products.

At Michigan State U., "Buy American" is an unwritten policy. All purchases are expected to be American made.

Forrest Kelsey, head purchasing agent for MSU, said about 90 percent of the 50,000 orders his department fills every year are made in the United States. That translates into \$115 million pumped into the American economy by one university.

"We supply MSU with everything from fertilizers to footballs," Kelsey said. "And in doing so, our intent and theme is to buy American."

While he tries to buy American, Kelsey said the volume of orders makes it impossible to investigate every purchase.

"The 'Buy American' thing is first and foremost, but it is tough to deal with because of the international integration factor," he said.

What becomes frustrating is when the parts of a so-called American product are manufactured overseas, Kelsey said. The uncertainty of a product's origin may force MSU to buy a mostly foreign-made product.

But this doesn't hold true for automobiles. Where vehicles are concerned, MSU refuses to accept bids from a foreign company.



ANTHONY MUNOZ, THE STATE NEWS, MICHIGAN STATE U.

Forrest Kelsey (above) says 90 percent of his orders are filled with American products.

The practice of blindly buying American for the sake of the country's economy is one that Judie O'Leary, senior purchaser for the U. of New Hampshire, finds limiting.

"It's a double-edged sword," O'Leary said. "I want the university to support its country, but I also want the university to support itself by getting the best buy. That's what a purchasing agent is supposed to do."

"The American economy needs the boost," said Derek Smith, a freshman at the U. of Massachusetts. "But universities should buy American only to the extent that they don't deprive us of the education we could get if they bought foreign."

At the U. of Utah, the "Buy American" theme is secondary to a Utah law which mandates that universities make as many purchases from Utah businesses as possible, foreign or domestic.

James Parker, director of purchasing at Utah, said that of the more than \$100 million

worth of purchases he makes each year, more than 60 percent are made within Utah.

Parker said although the majority of his purchases are done in Utah, the products are often foreign. This isn't done purposely, he said, but in some cases he has few options.

"Ever try buying a non-Japanese calculator lately? There's no option," Parker said. "And you couldn't even buy a truly American TV or VCR if you wanted to anymore."

Parker also is wary of strict "Buy American" policies because they could infringe on the rights of the faculty he serves.

"If I have to tell an English professor that he can't buy a computer made in Japan, then I think that is outside my authority as a purchasing agent," he said.

Both Parker and Mike McPherson, manager of MSU's engineering school computer system, said university efforts to boost the American economy will only make a short-term difference.

The \$115 million MSU puts into the economy each year is merely a "drop in the bucket" when compared to the private sector, McPherson said.

Individual Americans have not committed to American products yet, and until they do, the "Buy American" theme will not provide a solution, he added.

Universities are part of a "public relations act" to spur the economy, he said. "Right now, state and federal government feels obligated to support its country. If MSU bought only Toyotas, it would look embarrassing."

But Parker said the American public respects universities and will follow their example. "Reviving the American economy is going to take more than just universities," he said. "But this is a good place to start."