

## Same requirements; nifty new packaging

That squeaking sound you may have heard Wednesday was the University Assembly narrowly passing a revised race, gender and non-European curriculum requirement. In a 175-155 vote, the assembly required students entering the University in 1994 and after to take two courses to satisfy the requirement, as opposed to the current one course required now.

Few at the University would argue that a multicultural education is not necessary in contemporary society, but when 47 percent of the University Assembly disagrees with the revised guidelines, those guidelines should be re-examined.

As passed, the guidelines do not enhance the multicultural requirements; they merely add another class to students' already full schedules. The guidelines call for one class to focus on race relations in the United States and a second course to cover gender, class or ethnicity in either non-European or European societies.

The original complaint against the current system is that it allows students to take classes such as Problems in Chinese Art in order to meet the requirement. These classes may be interesting and enlightening, but they do nothing to better prepare students for life in a multicultural society.

The new guidelines do nothing to address this issue. They simply require students to take two of the very classes "reformers" have repeatedly called a joke. Rather than narrowing the focus of the requirement, which was the original intent, the focus remains unchanged, merely the number of classes required has doubled.

The problem lies with the first requirement, which "will focus on the contemporary race relations in the United States; or the historical roots of contemporary race relations in the United States, specifically linking the historical matters to contemporary issues." Ideally, that would be the extent of the requirement, a narrowly focused course on racial issues in the United States.

However, the requirement can also be met by studying "the social, economic, political, cultural, and/or psychological conditions of, and/or the artistic, musical, oral or written expressions" of minorities in America.

There is no difference between these guidelines and the current system. For example, revising the Problems in Chinese Art class to Problems in Chinese Art in America would satisfy the new requirement. Big change.

If the guidelines were sufficiently narrowed (as they should be) to deal exclusively with race in America, only 11 of the 178 classes that meet the current guidelines would be acceptable.

The most likely reason the first requirement was expanded to include topics irrelevant to it was to appease faculty and administrators who didn't want to see their courses cut. The committee that drafted the guidelines lacked the courage to exclude these classes and thus turned from academic reform to political vote seeking.

Nowhere was this more evident than at the assembly meeting itself, where some faculty accused their co-workers and deans of using pressure tactics and intimidation to coerce votes in favor of the new guidelines.

Professor Thomas Givon, who has been adamantly opposed to the guidelines, said he received a barrage of E-mail regarding his position. He told the assembly that one E-mail note told him to have "courage."

"It shouldn't take courage!" Givon said before suggesting a secret mail-in vote. Givon said he believed people would more likely vote their consciences if they were not under pressure from colleagues.

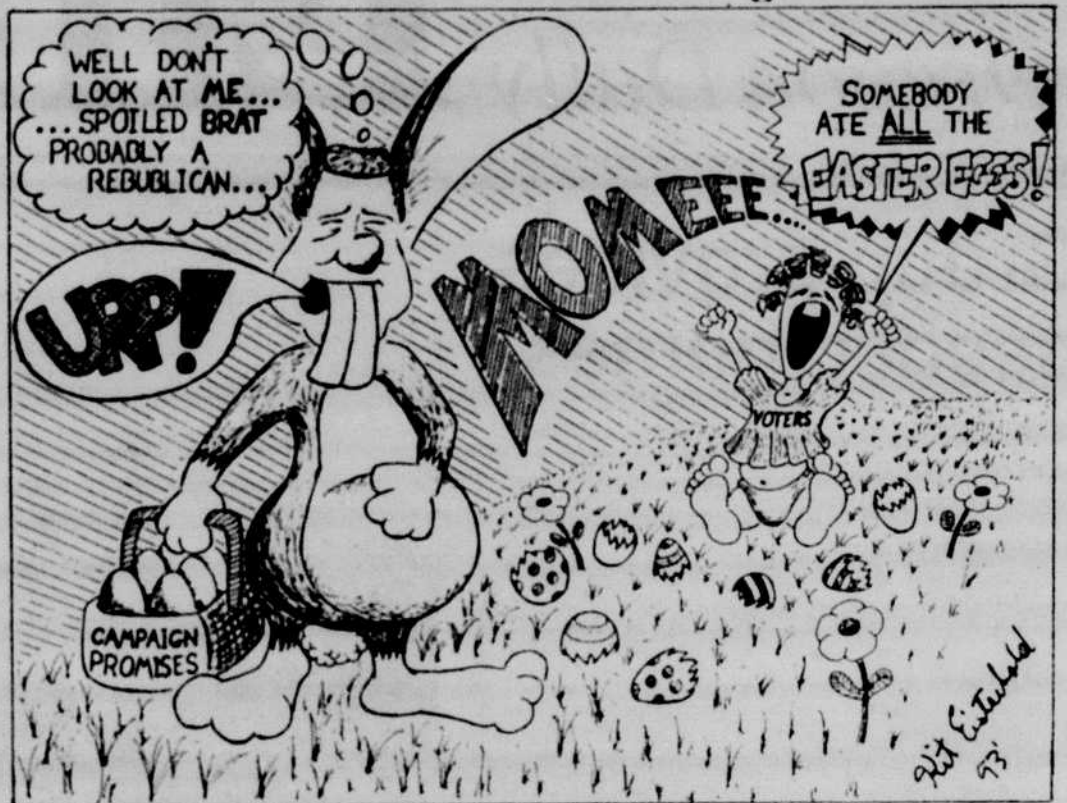
The motion was defeated, rightfully so considering the assembly is a public body, but not before Associate Professor Sumi Cho, a member of the committee that drafted the requirements, revealed the true nature of the coercion.

Cho, arguing that there was no reason to vote by mail, said she did not believe faculty were being coerced, but that assembly members should be held "politically accountable for their vote." If the issue is not political, why should people be held "politically accountable"?

The weirdness continued when, during the vote on whether to hold a mail-in vote, those who wanted an open vote began shouting at photographers, "No photos during voting!" Their hypocrisy, coupled with their gross lack of knowledge about public meetings laws, nearly made a mockery of the entire proceedings.

In the end, the assembly passed an imperfect measure that will require revisions before it can be effective. We suggest the committee get back to work, draft a satisfactory proposal and leave the politicking at the door.

## EASTER -w- BILL CLINTON



### LETTERS

#### Porn bad

Scott Bishop shows his ignorance by believing that porn begins and ends with masturbation (*ODE*, April 6).

At a time in history when sex crimes and child abuse are rising, we don't need porn.

I'm not a foul-minded Christian, and my ideal of a real man isn't one who would frequent such an establishment or find it necessary to "use" porn to stimulate sexual fantasies.

God gave us all pleasurable sexual feelings and self control. I view the sign in Springfield each day on my way home from work; I find it quite appropriate and a clear message to young men that it is OK not to "use" porn.

Bishop's ending thought was very repulsive. I hope he seeks counsel soon.

Vicki Travis  
EMU Staff

#### Man's world

Whether the pictures in *Playboy* are art or pornography is debatable, but *Playboy's* position on how the women in the magazine should be viewed is clearly printed on every issue: "Entertainment for Men."

You have the information. Make up your own mind.

Greg Cheong  
Computer Science

#### God helps

Over the past year, I've read many letters from those who have chosen the homosexual lifestyle, and from those who disagree with it. Often in these letters, those who are not involved in a homosexual lifestyle profess a Christian belief, and often use scripture to back up their "side."

I want to state that I believe there are no "sides." We are all sinners saved by the grace (a gift without merit) of God.

I realize sometimes, not

always, being homosexual may be due to some type of abuse or confused gender roles, or sometimes people choose it for simpler reasons: spite, loneliness and so on. I may not understand everything about the homosexual lifestyle, but my heart goes out to those involved.

According to our Creator, God (not to sound preachy), we were created to be with the opposite sex, to complement each other. God is not here to condemn, but to bring everyone to restoration and healing. We all have problems and can benefit from His help. He will change our lives and bring us to better life through new relationships.

He can change our circumstances and build a satisfying relationship with us. He loves you so much. If you need a friend, check into Christ.

Janeen Elmont  
Music

#### Big presumption

Stephanie Sisson states in her recent column, "Bible answers tough questions" (*ODE*, April 5), that "homosexuality is a chosen behavior and is wrong." Once again Sisson has used faulty logic and misguided information to arrive at a senseless hypothesis.

Sisson uses verses of the New Testament to back up her own prejudices and fears. Though divinely inspired, much of what is written in the Bible are man's interpretations and not God's exact words.

Originally the word "Bible" meant "library," and that's still what it means — a collection of writings. Sisson uses Romans 26:27 as an example. This was a letter written by Paul to friends in Rome. They are not God's words, but Paul's interpretation of right and wrong, which directly reflected societal views of the time.

I'd be interested to see a place in the Bible where God actually said, word for word, that homosexuality is a chosen lifestyle. I sincerely doubt you'd find one.

Furthermore, it's not my

place, Sisson's place, or the OCA's place to judge others. To do so would indicate that you have all the answers and thus presume to be God. How's that for sin? Like Sisson, I am a heterosexual Christian, but unlike her and those holding the same opinion, I believe it's far more "Christian" to learn how to tolerate and respect everyone — even those who are different — than to expend energy oppressing others.

Erik Larson  
Biology

#### Ludicrous

Stephanie Sisson's column regarding homosexuality (*ODE*, April 5), like her column regarding environmental issues (*ODE*, Jan. 11), is too ludicrous to warrant serious consideration. I do hope that Sisson eventually gains sufficient maturity and intellect to be embarrassed by them.

Russell Barnett  
Graduate Student  
Public Affairs

#### Mortal morality

Regarding Stephanie Sisson's column (*ODE*, April 5): For those of you, Christian or otherwise, who just don't get it, AIDS does not discriminate. It is not an exclusively homosexual or heterosexual disorder. We are all, every one of us, in danger of contracting it by practicing unsafe sex or otherwise. Get educated.

And as far as Sisson's stance on homosexuality: If it were a "choice," we'd live in a perfect world. Since I can't convey the truth of that statement to her, I will settle by saying, natural or unnatural, homosexuality is not going to disappear. If it is a "sin," let God take care of it as God sees fit in God's judgment.

Sisson needs to take herself off the Jury of the Mortal Morality.

Nick Mahayni  
German