

Withdrawal policy limits class choices

Without a doubt, the University's decision to decrease the length of time students can withdraw from a class without gaining the ugly "W" was a step to reduce "class-shopping" by students and open additional seats early in the quarter for high-demand courses.

Adopted by the Undergraduate Council last November and implemented fall term, students who wish to exit a class and avoid a minor stain on their transcripts must do so after the first week of classes. In this case, Oct. 3. Promptly withdrawing also saves \$10 in fees.

Proponents of the new policy believe it will open more seats to truly dedicated students and penalize those who sign up for a class and don't show up. By forcing students to choose quickly or pay the price, \$10 plus a "W" recorded on the transcript, the instances of class-shopping will probably decrease. This could make additional space in classes with over-filled waiting lists early enough in the term that late entrants will have more success.

But one week isn't enough time for students to make a fully informed decision whether or not to shed a GPA-killing class or tough it out. A lot happens during the first week of the year, situations come up that are clearly out of a student's control.

The first week offers very little in terms of getting a true reading of an instructor's personality, or the workload of the course. Most classes meet briefly on the first day where syllabi are distributed before early adjournment. A syllabus arguably presents the class workload, but not all of the intricacies needed to make an informed decision. Such a judgment takes more time than one or two meetings, especially in crowded sections.

The new policy also presents an interesting Catch-22. Students who are holding on to a class as a second or third choice while awaiting an opening in a top priority class pay a price. Even with the new policy, openings most likely won't come up until after the second week, if at all. This is too late for the student hedging against the system in the race for graduation.

Some argue the new policy is aimed at eliminating such a situation, students should not hang on to a class as a second choice while waiting for another to open. However, such expectations are unrealistic.

Students should have the choice and the opportunity to sample a class or two during the initial weeks of the term. By retaliating against students who like to shop around for their expensive education, the University is placing ill-conceived constraints on the students.

While the reasons for the new policy are sound, its implementation is not. Instead of changing from a three week grace period to one, the University should try for the middle ground. Two weeks would be more appropriate. This will give students time to settle into a routine and make better decisions.

In the rush of things, we often forget that the students are not here for the University; the University is here for us.



LETTERS

CIA blunders

Why are we keeping the CIA going at an exorbitant price to taxpayers when it never seems to be able to inform us (The president, Pentagon) on the true conditions of the country being invaded?

How come our soldiers had no idea of the terrorism in Haiti and what they would be up against? How were they briefed? What did the president actually expect? This whole Haiti affair seems so ill-conceived that they already talk in Congress of limiting the troops' time there in the usual "quagmire." Can't we plan any better? It appears that the not-so-saintly Jimmy Carter tied American hands in an untenable deal with some real thugs and terrorists. Sure, we avoided a shooting-match invasion, but we traded a gutless compromise (Clinton tradition) that will accomplish little. The terror of the old Tonton Macoutes and the attaches will return the minute our troops leave. A Somalia scene revisited! Does the CIA understand all of this? The agency appeared very busy a while back spreading some blatant lies about the mental condition of Aristide.

Are there really only inept advisors in the Cabinet? Their policies are very opaque. Jimmy Carter should be kept away from peacemaking missions and "observing" elections and should not be portrayed as the lily-white saint he is not. He has always supported the elite and U.S. interests. Did the president really not know that all along Texaco was selling oil to the military in Haiti while he tried to enforce the embargo? All we saw were buckets of gas black-marketed over the Dominican border. We need some strong and honest leadership.

Hilde K. Cherry
Eugene

Needless death

On Oct. 3, 1977, Rosie Jimenez died in McAllen General Hospi-

tal in Texas where she had been brought following an illegal, back-alley abortion. An unsterilized foley catheter (a long rubber tube) had been used by the abortionist. Within 24 hours, she had contracted an infection similar to tetanus that progressively worsened until her death.

Who was Rosie Jimenez? She was a 27-year-old Mexican-American woman, one of 12 children, the daughter of migrant workers — she had been one as a child. A mother, raising a child alone — on welfare and working part-time in an electronics plant. A university student, six months from graduating with a bachelor's degree in education. She had a \$700 scholarship check in her pocket when she died. She refused to use that check for a legal abortion because that would have meant abandoning her education.

The woman who performed the abortion was the means, but she was not the reason for Rosie's death. Rosie died because she did not have access to a funded, safe and legal abortion. She was the first known victim of the Hyde Amendment, which denies women federal Medicaid funding for abortions. Unfortunately, she was not the last victim. The conditions that forced her death still threaten many women's lives — especially the lives of poor women, young women and women of color.

Both the House of Representatives and the Senate have recently voted to continue the Hyde Amendment. The Hyde Amendment is a direct threat to the lives and health of women. We must continue to oppose it in our ongoing struggle for reproductive freedom for all women. We must let the leaders of this country know that we will no longer tolerate the inequality in access to abortion and other health services.

Sarah Sanford
Chairwoman, Lane County NARAL
Mandi Hood

Students for Choice

OCA is fickle

Not surprising that Oregon Citizen's Alliance Director Lon Mabon and OCA employee Loretta Neet have turned on Republican gubernatorial candidate Denny Smith when he rightly opposed the OCA's discriminatory Ballot Measure 13. In a snit, Neet huffed, "Smith doesn't stand a chance and we won't help his campaign."

How reminiscent of the OCA's failed attempt to recall 30 legislators (both Republican and Democrat) who passed House Bill 3500, legislation negating discriminatory local measures. Similarly, the OCA tried (and failed) to recall Albany's mayor for his efforts opposing the OCA. Now the OCA aims its enmity at Denny Smith.

Lane County Republican precinct committee workers will elect a new Central Committee in November. Currently, our "leadership" includes Neet and other OCA members such as our chairwoman, Kathy Phelps. Mainstream Republicans must take this opportunity to send these switch-hitting, single-issue carpetbaggers packing. We must get our Republican Party working instead on valid concerns such as crime, education and jobs. The OCA's (Phelps, Neet & Co.) obsessive anti-gay agenda has torn our party and our state apart.

Denny Smith took the right, just stand in opposing Ballot Measure 13. Let's remember that the OCA now turns against Smith on one issue. Precinct committee workers should especially remember this when the time comes to elect new leaders. Mainstream Republicans should get involved so that our party may never be afflicted again with the destructive, divisive ill-doings by extremist, single-issue narrow groups like the OCA. We have far better concerns to address.

Carol Berg
Eugene

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