

# Changes detract from education

Less is expected of students on campus these days, as far as course and credit requirements are concerned. Unfortunately, the intentions of the University mean that students are getting less in return.

First came the elimination of the so-called "cluster" requirement, in which students were required to take a certain number of credits in related classes. Then the total number of credits needed to graduate was cut from 186 to 180. In the latest move, many classes worth three credits last year are now worth four, with no discernible increase in difficulty or work.

The looser requirements may help the University move students through their college career more rapidly, but the University will only put students at a disadvantage.

While these changes may help students leave college in the short term, they will hurt students in the long run. The changes may have been made to make it easier for students to graduate in four years, but the ever-decreasing requirements for a degree at the University reduce the value of that degree in the job market. Students may not get adequate training for the future simply by counting credits and leaving in four years.

Reducing the requirements expected of students may allow more flexibility for focused students set on a particular major. However, for those unsure of what they want to study in college, the lack of requirements may not provide a strong enough framework for students to follow to graduation.

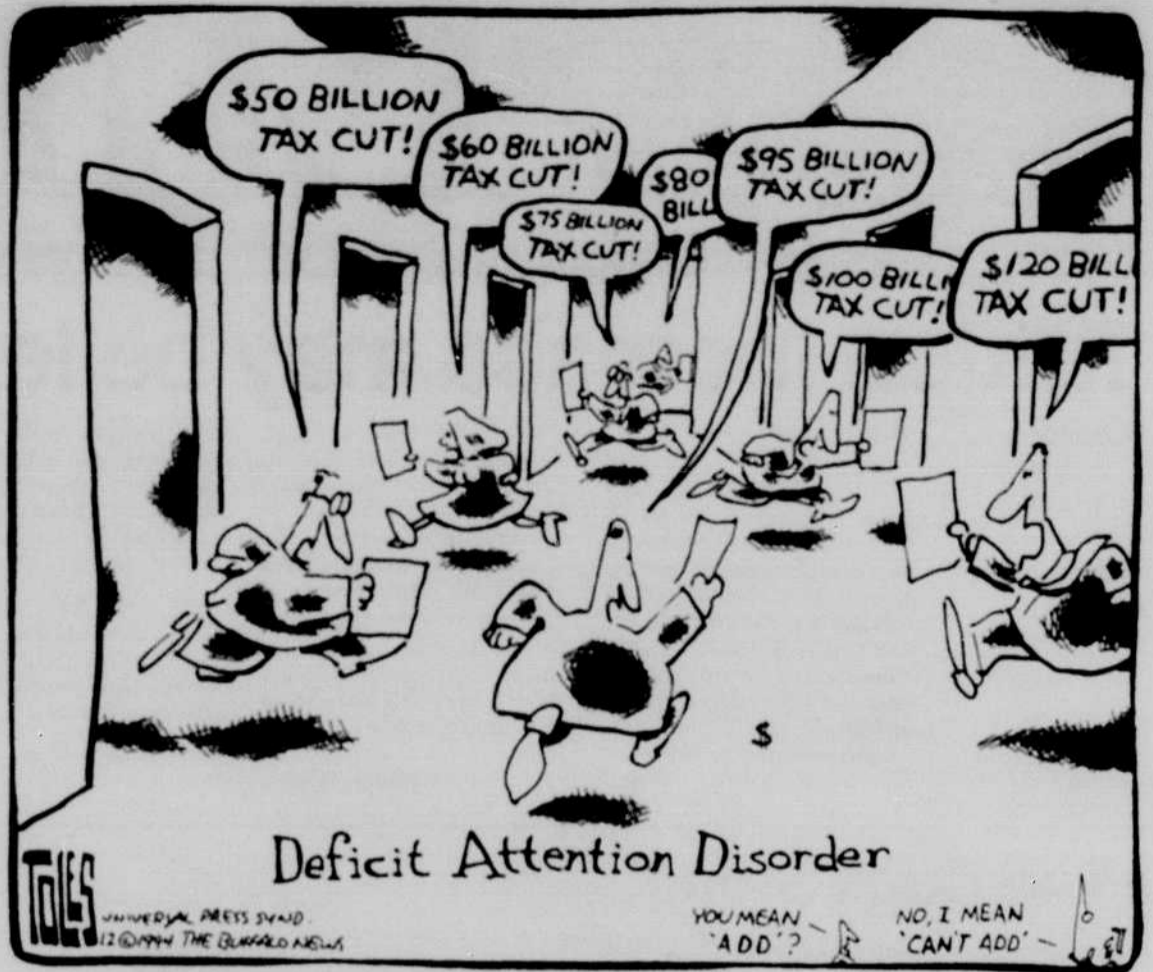
On a broader scale, the looser requirements represent a "dumbing down" of the education needed to get a degree. With stricter requirements, students leaving the University could justifiably tell a prospective employer that they worked hard. One day, will a student be able to come to the University, write a check, and leave with a degree that had no requirements attached?

Budget reductions will affect the delivery of education at the University. Regardless, the University must not be allowed to increase productivity of the institution at the expense of the quality of education for students.

The University should realize that reduced credit and class requirements do help students leave school "on time," but are of no assistance in helping the student succeed in later life. Employers don't count the days that a prospective applicant spent in college, but check the quality of an education that they received. This education is being compromised by the new requirements.

Some may worry about leaving college in four years. While many would like to leave college as soon as possible, University students should realize that the goal of attending the University is to get an education, no matter how easy it the University makes it.

**W**hile these changes may help students leave college in the short term, they will hurt students in the long run.



OPINION

## Pro-lifers don't agree with murders



BRIAN WOMACK

Dr. Ralph Robinson fears going to work.

In fact, he puts on a bulletproof vest each morning before he leaves for his job in Birmingham, Ala.

Robinson is a doctor who does abortions.

With continuing death threats and recent escalations in deadly attacks on those who do abortions, he finds this a very viable option.

Men like Michael Griffin and John C. Salvi III, who share three abortion clinic personnel murders between them, have brought these unnecessary fears to those who do abortions across the nation.

Continued justifications from some in the pro-life community make the doctors and the rest of the nation wonder who's next.

This is wrong. As someone who has been pro-life for as long as I can remember, I find these threats and justifications appalling.

To be taking the law into one's own hands and destroying another life is not going to win the argument for pro-lifers. It will only damage it as polls are beginning to show. It is wrong and should be stopped immediately.

Yet something else should be stopped immediately: those in the abortion-rights camp who are trying to take these travesties and use them as wide brush on the entire pro-life community.

Many of them are attempting to characterize these actions as part of the mainstream of the pro-life community.

Liberal Eleanor Clift of

*Newsweek* implied that more than just the fringe of the pro-life community are supporting the killings, but these ideas are encroaching into the mainstream of the pro-life community.

Interestingly, often when a report is done relating to the stories of the shootings, the fringe anti-abortionist explaining why killing off doctors is fine will be given two paragraphs or two sound bites.

Yet, the mainstream of the pro-life community, such as the National Right to Life, will be mentioned in passing as condemning the attacks.

Some groups that call themselves pro-life may sound like they're representing the mainstream but are doing anything but that.

Advocates for Life, for instance, which is based in Portland, has a history of condoning violence at abortion clinics.

*The Oregonian* has been very thorough in making sure this group gets its fifteen minutes of fame every time someone like Salvi gets active.

But these kinds of groups have little respect among pro-lifers and are written off as merely those way out on the edge.

I can see why some in the pro-choice camp would like to characterize the typical pro-lifer as a gun-wielding whacko bent on killing off anybody who does abortions.

This would help characterize pro-choicers as the rational, level-headed thinkers whose opponents are placing reservations at the state mental institution.

But this is about as fair as portraying the civil rights movement as nothing but a bunch of Black Panthers or saying every environmentalist has the same ideas as someone from Earth First!

Fringe elements of society exist in every group.

Some feminists believe all sex is rape.

Some parties have David Dukes.

Some in the peace movement have committed crimes that are anything but peaceful.

Despite the accusations, pro-lifers are and remain people who are simply concerned about the plight of the most defenseless members of our society.

A good example of this would be a recent story out of Chicago.

Gloria Sosa, a Chicagoan, was walking to a store when she heard something crying.

She explained, "When I got closer, I saw it was a baby. My heart just went down to the pit of my stomach."

The baby had been born to a 18-year-old unwed mother who had thrown the baby out the window of her apartment. The baby was found naked in the bitter cold behind the building while the mother was at school.

Those who take care of her at the hospital named her Zoe, which is Greek for "life."

The mother has been charged with aggravated battery to a child.

This tragic story exposes an irony we have here in America.

A baby is thrown away to die and, rightly so, we turn our heads in shock and disgust.

Yet moments before her short journey down the birth canal she could have been legally aborted.

The medical community has never defined exactly when life does start. We in the pro-life community believe that hoping it doesn't start until birth is irresponsible at best.

These ideas are what the pro-life community espouse, not murder.

If more whacked-out people who call themselves pro-life go off on a killing spree again, I will shudder for the doctors as I do for the unborn.

But don't label me or anyone else in the pro-life community as a condoner and supporter of murder. We don't.

We believe in what Zoe's name means.

That is all.

Brian Womack is a columnist for the Emerald.

# Emerald

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