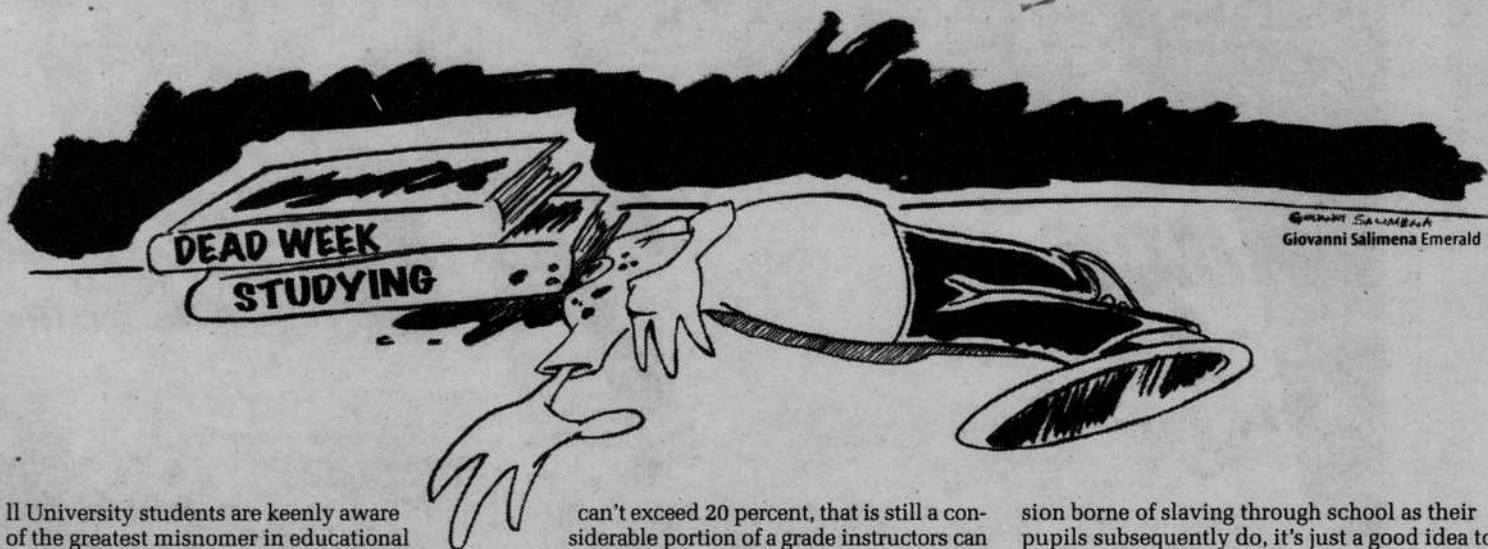


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# Perspectives

Oregon Daily  
**Emerald**

## What's in a name?



All University students are keenly aware of the greatest misnomer in educational history: dead week. The classical idea of a quiet, uneventful week of study is absent at this institution, and the title shouldn't even be used.

Pressure and stress are two constant companions during this week of finals, and the impression one might draw from the fact that the University employs a "dead week" is that students have a chance to adequately prepare for their tests with all that free time. The idea of limiting the importance of exams and the assigning of major projects seems like a good policy, but it doesn't work very well in practice.

While the theory of dead week is nice, there are plenty of ways that students feel the squeeze and lose valuable preparation time. Because the policy says nothing of major projects due during dead week if assigned on the original syllabus, it is an ordinary occurrence to witness scrambling youngsters trying to complete important tasks while being forced to ignore the upcoming final test for the class. And even while a test during dead week

can't exceed 20 percent, that is still a considerable portion of a grade instructors can require during a very busy time.

Seeing as how the policy of dead week is good in nature but flawed in practice, there are plenty of debatable remedies.

One of the more radical proposals would require a week of no lectures, discussions, tests or projects at all. This sort of practice is common at other schools, often referred to as a reading week. The possibility of a completely empty week seems attractive until one examines the likelihood that most students would use the time conscientiously. Besides the odds that the time would be wasted by a majority of students on more social activities, the extra week each term would have to be added onto the term to avoid degrading the value of a University education, cutting down drastically on vacation time, a prospect no student should be for.

Another possible idea would be to cut the idea of dead week altogether and allow professors to assign study material and tests as they choose. While most instructors would have the compas-

sion borne of slaving through school as their pupils subsequently do, it's just a good idea to keep a restrictive policy in place to reign in the occasional demonic professor bent on student destruction.

The policy currently in place seems to be acceptable, but calling it dead week is offensive and offers an incorrect connotation. It's definitely good to have the amount of restrictions on testing that we have already. And since the alternative of lengthening the school year isn't very appealing, the policy should remain the same. But there's no reason to call it dead week and give the false impression of a calm before the storm.

The only decent way to go is to unname, not rename, dead week but keep the policies still in place. There's no need to give a catchy nickname to such a terrible week, but there's no good alternative to actually change the week.

So, to recap: Long live unnamed, second-to-last week of the term.

This editorial represents the view of the Emerald editorial board. Responses may be sent to ode@oregon.uoregon.edu.

## Joining WRC important step for University

In the recent student elections the students voted by a 3/4 majority for the University to join the Worker Rights Consortium (WRC). The WRC is a monitoring group that would act as the intermediary between universities and the workers who produce university apparel. Developed by United Students Against Sweatshops (USAS) in consultation with workers and human rights groups, it consists of a system to verify and inspect conditions in factories producing apparel for colleges and universities.

The aspects that separate the WRC from other monitoring groups are standards such as womens' rights and full public disclosure. The WRC works to ensure that workers are allowed to unionize. The WRC puts labor groups, non-governmental organizations and universities in front of business to determine the best way to run the organization or monitor conditions. The WRC seeks to open up conditions in the apparel industry to public scrutiny and to respond to the needs of the workers sewing licensed products for institutions of higher education.

Students seem excluded from the decision-making process at the University. The only influence students have is to sit on advisory committees to the University president. Even then students only have influence in-

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Laura Close  
&  
Randall Newnham

stead of decision-making power. Student voice is marginalized to the extent that a democratic decision by students to join the WRC is readily discounted by the administration. In order to legitimize the results of the election, a coalition of student leaders has demanded of University President Dave Frohnmayer that he be accountable to the vote and have the University join the Workers Rights Consortium by March 31. Without the accountability of the administration to the students there is no true democratic system on our campus. Our vision is not an intangible one; the suggestion presented here is that the decision making process be shared between faculty, students and staff.

Furthermore, by joining the WRC, the University would be taking an important step in using the power of the University to influence workplace conditions around the world. The student election has proven that this

is a critical issue on campus, and the voices of the students who voted in support of the WRC cannot be ignored. Students at the University began working on anti-sweatshop issues over a year ago when we realized that by working with students at colleges and universities across the country, we had access to a convenient handle for addressing sweatshop conditions in the apparel industry. The connection between universities and the apparel industry is through collegiate sweatshirts and T-shirts, by which the University licenses its trademark to companies and receives a royalty from the sale of these products. The University licenses its trademark to over 300 companies, including Nike, Gear for Sports and Jansport. The University receives more than \$450,000 annually from these contracts.

The University administration's response to student concerns in the past has been to deter our efforts by forcing the anti-sweatshop issue into a lengthy bureaucratic process. This fall, Frohnmayer established a committee composed of students, faculty, administrators and alumni charged with working on a code of conduct. This structure is not democratic for the following reasons: It is an advisory rather than a decision-making body; all members except students were selected by a single administra-

tor, Vice President for Public Affairs and Development Duncan McDonald, who also chairs the committee; and student voice on the committee is consistently marginalized.

As students and citizens of an institute that models itself on the ideals of a democratic society, the time has come to challenge how democratic our system really is. Is the system set up to be responsive to the decisions of the voting student body? Or should all decisions be under the jurisdiction of the president? We as students must stand up for ourselves and challenge the system so that our voice be legitimized. Students, faculty and staff, let's work together to make the University work for us.

Laura Close and Randall Newnham are members of the Human Rights Alliance. Their views do not necessarily represent those of the Emerald.

### CORRECTION

The story "Bijou's Oscar party" (ODE Pulse, March 9) gave incorrect information on the theater's plans for the March 26 Academy Awards. Due to possible construction delays, the Bijou will not finalize plans for the benefit event until March 17. Tickets will go on sale that day.

The Emerald regrets the error.

### THE WEEK IN THUMBS



#### To playing in front of a friendly crowd

The women's basketball team, seeded sixth in the West region of the NCAA Tournament, will play in front of its own fans in Eugene. The selection was announced Sunday afternoon.

#### To expanding food stamp access to Oregon's needy

Expanding state office hours, funding an outreach program and assigning enrollment staff to charity food banks are all part of Gov. John Kitzhaber's promise Friday to improve access to food stamps in the state.



#### To the proudest monkeys ... or at least the most violent

A farmer watering his cattle in drought-stricken Kenya was stoned to death by a group of thirsty monkeys. The man died of severe head injuries, and while there was no definitive evidence as to the species of monkey, baboons are notorious for throwing objects when angry.

#### To the lowest a thief can get

The tip jar from the New Day Bakery was stolen last Monday evening. The contents of the jar amounted to less than \$5. Joseph Airon Masters was arrested and charged with first-degree robbery.