

COMMENTARY

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Editorial

University must notice needs of all students

For new students entering the University, the college experience may be overwhelming from the start. The University does an excellent job helping freshmen make the transition from high school to college life, but it does little to accommodate transfer and nontraditional students. Helping freshmen familiarize themselves with the campus is important, but the University annually neglects nontraditional students in its orientation efforts.

The fall Week of Welcome and other orientation activities are great for entering freshmen, but the University's efforts at integrating transfer and returning students fall short. This is detrimental to the University, especially now that more nontraditional students are returning to school. Budget shortfalls and a national recession mean the University needs all the revenue it can generate.

The University would go a long way toward improving its relationship with transfer and returning students by realizing that many of these students are adults who have already attended college, and not treat them like 18-year-old freshmen.

For example, the University could make an effort to be sensitive to the needs of nontraditional students during orientation sessions such as the Week of Welcome, instead of aiming most of the events at freshmen. Parents who work during the day and are planning to attend classes at night are often hard-pressed to take time away from their day jobs to attend Week of Welcome events, but that doesn't mean they aren't interested in participating in them.

The college could also make more of an effort to improve communication with Oregon community colleges, so the curriculum is equitable. Having to repeat courses at the University that have already been taken at the community college level is frustrating for everyone, and makes both schools appear as if they're not operating in the best interests of the students.

The University needs to be clear when defining what credits can be transferred, as well as objective in waiving prerequisites for equivalent work done at community colleges. Advising that covers both University and community college requirements would be especially helpful for those frustrated by the transfer process.

Besides the hassles of transferring credits, these students often have difficulty finding University scholarships. The University's Western Undergraduate Exchange (WUE), which pays 150 percent of resident tuition and fees for nonresidents from eligible western states, is only offered to entering freshmen. The opportunities for nontraditional students to gain University scholarships are slim, and more monetary options should be made available by the University.

Personal advising for nontraditional students during the first week is important for these students to make the transition to the University. Freshmen and international students receive their own University orientation, and the same courtesy should be afforded to transfer and returning students. With so many people expected to return to school in the near future, it is essential the University make the experience a pleasant one.

Letters to the Editor and Guest Commentaries Policy

This editorial represents the opinion of the Emerald editorial board. Letters to the editor and guest commentaries are encouraged. Letters are limited to 250 words and guest commentaries to 550 words. Please include contact information. The Emerald reserves the right to edit for space, grammar and style.

LEAVE PRINCE HARRY ALONE

GUEST COMMENTARY

Riley McDermid

this way we know he's trying to have a little fun.

And apparently, he's not alone.

A 2001 study by the Edinburgh-based Alcohol and Research center found that British youth are statistically more likely to have tried drugs and engaged in binge drinking than their other European counterparts, with more than a third of the 15- and 16-year-olds surveyed saying they'd smoked cannabis regularly in the last year.

Worldwide, marijuana is the second most popular drug used by adolescents. Alcohol is roundly the first. Forty-one percent of American teenagers of the same age surveyed by the World Health Organization said they smoke marijuana regularly, and teenagers from the Czech Republic to Israel to India indicated that they smoke it almost as much.

So when we make such a huge example of someone like Prince Harry, are we to believe that all these young people are bound for lives of crime and disreputable habits? Are we to honestly consider this increasing worldwide trend a genuine threat and danger to the lifelong productivity of these adolescents?

Or are we merely feeding into the international idea that if we pretend cannabis smoking doesn't exist it will eventually fade from our popular cul-

Last weekend's biggest news story in the United Kingdom was also one of the country's most frivolous in recent memory: the revelation that teenage Prince Harry has experimented with alcohol and marijuana in recent months, and apparently was a rather boisterous regular at a Wiltshire pub.

News of this experimentation brought the British press to a virtual frenzy. It garnered personal condemnatory statements from several members of Parliament and left the royal household in a state of total panic, with Prince Charles' office offering only a brief plea to "put this incident behind us."

Everyone from local radio commentators to the Queen had something to say about the issue, with the international media behaving only slightly less embarrassingly; they waited a few days to break the story worldwide, but responded with the same sort of hysteria.

Prince Harry smokes the chronic! Prince Harry likes an occasional pint! Prince Harry had a house party over Christmas break where teenagers acted like teenagers! And Prince Harry, obviously, is on the road to quick and vicious ruin.

But is he really? Or is this more indicative of international perceptions of marijuana and alcohol use than it is of any real danger to the young prince himself?

For what, after all, is the big deal?

He is 17 years old. He is young and wealthy and under a lot of unwelcome scrutiny. Frankly, I'd be worried if he hadn't experimented a little. At least

ture and lose the allure it seems to gain more of every generation?

I believe it is the latter. And I pity poor Prince Harry for having to become a poster child for reactionary drug policies and a target for malicious scrutiny that has nothing to do with the reality of today's youth and everything to do with the personal agendas of outdated social engineers.

As for Harry, he will be subjected to drug testing back at his high school, Eton, and has had his weekend visitation curtailed. Prince Charles responded by sending Harry to a suburban rehabilitation clinic to "observe and learn," a move that probably only exacerbated the perception of Prince Harry's escapades as dangerous forays into delinquency. And I am sure that Prince Harry is smart enough to draw the distinction between smoking the occasional joint and shooting up heroin on a daily basis.

All in all, there really isn't much left for the prince to learn from this episode except what the majority of the world's teenagers already know: If you try smoking pot or drinking, it's probably not a good idea to get caught.

Especially if you are a crown prince of England.

And you know that fair or unfair, the media will make you news hour fodder for days and days to come.

Editor's note: This staff column is courtesy of the University of Mississippi campus newspaper, the Daily Mississippian.

(U-WIRE)

Letters to the editor

Open for business

Springfield mayor Sid Leiken proudly proclaims it, while Jim Torrey, his counterpart in Eugene, bemoans that town's famous reputation

for the opposing attitude ("Mayor criticizes city's approach to business," ODE, 1/10).

However, when one considers what the leaders of both communities want to do to attract new (and preferably big) business — just a couple examples being huge tax deferrals

and massive infrastructure adjustments (the latter underwritten by those of us who do pay taxes) — perhaps a more accurate rendition of this unofficial motto would be: "We are spread for business."

Bill Smees
classified staff

Steve Sack KRT

