

Editorial

Rights and Responsibilities

In regards to the events of the last few months, a few things need to be made clear. At a Jan. 10 faculty meeting, a quote was made by a faculty member in reference to grading a student based upon actions made outside of class.

First of all, the comment was inappropriate, and should not have been made. A faculty member should not say, even in a joking manner, that a student's grade should be based upon conduct outside of class.

Secondly, a mistake was made by the Faculty Association by voting to not disclose information about the controversial statement. This only served to worsen the matter by fueling rumors that the Faculty Association had "something to hide." Although the Faculty Association has claimed that they have, "no interest in punishing students for their expression of ideas," the statement was made and then kept within the closed confines of the private faculty meeting. If they felt the issue was to be treated in a lighthearted manner, they should have treated it as such and answered inquiries in a complete and timely manner.

The initial concern about the inappropriate faculty comment was raised by a student, John Garvison, shortly after he was informed of the action. He *did* have a legitimate concern and was correct in attempting to bring it to the attention of others around him. Unfortunately, the method by which he did so resulted in some additional concerns. At a Board of Education meeting, Garvison falsely accused faculty member Linda Vogt of making the original statement. The statement originally attributed to her was not the actual statement made.

Currently, the person who made the controversial comment has not come forward to answer the numerous questions raised by those involved. Because of the misinformation, rumor spreading and accusations generated by this hot topic, it is somewhat understandable that the faculty member in question has not come forward into the "mob" of students, faculty and Associated Student Government members. However, now that the statement is known, the students have a right to know what the intentions and reasons are for the initial statement. To resolve this situation, an explanation is necessary.

As we at *The Print* continue in our learning process of news gathering, we have observed through several experiences that it is important to be responsible for ones own actions. Because of the freedom of speech, people *should* be able to say what they feel needs to be said, without censorship from others. With that right, though, comes a responsibility to maintain accuracy.

The Quotes:

In the Jan. 10, 1996 Board Meeting John Garvison paraphrased Miss (Linda) Vogt as saying: "If anyone has a student in class, then they should be graded down because of comments."

The actual quote was made by a male faculty member as yet unnamed. It was: "Ya, maybe a student's grade should be based on the number of factual errors in e-mail." The comment was followed by laughter. Joe Uris cautioned against censorship or the restriction of free speech, on the tape after hearing it.

Letter to the editor

Student makes apologies to Vogt

Editor's Note: John Garvison requested that this letter be printed verbatim with typographical errors included.

To the Editor:
"In our system, state-operated schools may not be enclaves of totalitarianism. School officials do not possess absolute authority over their students. Students in school as well as out of school are 'persons' under the Constitution."—Justice Abe Fortas, *Tinker v. Des Moines* (1969)

First of all let me begin by apologizing to Ms. Vogt for incorrectly attributing the comments that were made to her. I applaud her for wanting to let the tape be made public, which it rightfully should be. If she did not make those comments and she vehemently denied making them, then by her denial that proves that they were made by someone other than her. I understand the faculties reasons for not wanting to let these comments see the light of day, so why don't they just cut down the full tape and just release what was said about students taking responsibility for their speech.

I will take full responsibility for what I have said but why doesn't the instructor who said these comments take responsibility for what he or she said?

Also in response to the slander that I have been subject too, why haven't paid members of this college take responsibility for what they have said?

This is not about me. The only reason that I have signed my name to everything is because 'The Print' suggested that I was afraid to face the people that I was questioning about wrongdoings. That could not be more far from the truth. I have been to board meetings, I have had a personal meeting with John Keyser so I do not understand where 'The Print' gets their information. Where were they when I was at the board meetings? Where were they when I first posed this question to them last winter term? I was not the only one who complained about situations here at the college that

were done completely inappropriately.

If the paper is truly a students newspaper then maybe it should go out and ask the students who have questions and concerns about this college what their views are. I admit there are a few of you at 'The Print' that take the responsibility of being the watchdog of administration seriously. That is the job of the press, to get the true story and not the old company line.

In response to the person who implied that I am just here to get a diploma and leave, you could not be more further from the truth. I work forty-hours a week for our illustrious state government and I also am taking a full load of credits. So I find it very hard to see where someone who is not out there like the rest of us trying to make life better for themselves being the one casting stones. If you want to preach trust and appreciation between all of us then that is a two-way street not a one-way as some at this college would leave you to believe.

As for my criticisms of the college, last time I looked the college was run by public funds which everyone of us who is a taxpayer contributes to. As a great instructor I once had said, "It is our duty to watch over our government diligently and make sure that our money is spent the way that we not only voted for but how he have approved of." The board members are elected officials they work for us the taxpayers, not the other way around.

If you truly believe in free speech, which a college is supposed to then what I say should not bother you. You have the right to say what you want to as does every student at this college without fear of reprisal for political, religious, or other views. Did the college forget this somewhere?

Again I apologize for incorrectly attributing the comments that were made to Ms. Vogt.

Still a concerned student and taxpayer
John Michael Garvison

Letter to the Editor:

Positive feedback

Two things.
First, I strongly support the concept of a free and diverse press. Only in a wide open marketplace of ideas will reason prevail. And so I encourage the recent effort by some students to create an alternative publication, "The Underground."

I have two misgivings, however. While it takes courage to shout in opposition, it takes just the opposite to do so from behind a veil. I find it troubling, then, that the producers of "The Underground" remain anonymous. Also, as the writers of "The Underground" acknowledged in their first issue, the easiest path for the alternative press is to tear down the established media, in this case "The Print." Far more difficult, but more useful, is to recognize and appreciate the benefits of both and, in the case of a student newspaper, to acknowledge the honest efforts of hardworking staff members who are simultaneously trying to learn a craft and produce an entertaining and responsible newspaper.

That does not preclude the real opportunity for "The Underground" to build awareness of legitimate issues on campus. I just hope it doesn't become rooted in being little more than a hidden perch from which to throw tomatoes.

Which brings me to the more important point, which is to applaud some recent outstanding efforts by members of The Print staff. I'm thinking in particular of Pamela Sirianni's terrific account of Edward Albee's visit to campus. With two workshops, a news conference and the public lecture, there was a lot to report. When the news is both voluminous and important, the temptation is to simply empty the notebook into the computer. Pamela resisted this temptation and did a great job of boiling Albee's visit down to his essential messages. And she did so with remarkable accuracy and clarity.

In fact, the Feb. 14 issue was filled with entertaining and newsy stuff. The flood coverage, mixing liberal use of photos with stories and even cartoons, was terrific. The Valentine's Day page was fun and well-done, especially Amy Hanson's personal take on love. And Laney Fouse showed off some clever writing in "Changing Image of the Cowboy." To The Print: Keep up the great work. To The Underground: Challenge the establishment, but do it with class.
Dan McCue

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Letter to the editor

Department shows appreciation

Dear Editor:

The Publications Committee of the English Department, Tom Richards, David Mount, Diane Averill, and Kate Gray, would like to express our great respect for the professionalism of Linda Vogt and Jan Anderson. We offer our highest

praise for their experience as academics and instructors, we appreciate their dedication and devotion to students, and we commend their integrity.

Sincerely,

English Department
Publications Committee