

PIONEER

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Times

Students, professors look for changes in classrooms; no attendance, less lecturing, increased responsibility

By Andrea Lopez
Staff Reporter

Reema Zahr became very sick while she was taking Approaches to Western Art and was absent nine times during the semester. She had a 99 average and expected that the work she did during the semester would count more than the absences. But her final grade was a B instead of the A she waited for and the difference still makes her angry.

With a new semester on the horizon, it may be worth asking how students and professors can be more satisfied in the classrooms they share. How should classes be structured so that they meet not only the teacher's expectations, but the student's as well?

For some students the first answer is a no brainer, get rid of

mandatory attendance — it should be a matter of choice — theirs. For professors the answers are clear — take responsibility for the work, show some interest in the class. And for an outside observer visiting campus for the year, the answer is a matter of communication — talk to each other, suggests Ira Shor, WPU's Visiting Distinguished Lecturer.

Shor suggests professors negotiate the syllabus so that courses include student choice.

"Ask students to suggest questions, issues, themes, and sub-

jects related to their experience," he said. "Integrate the course material into conditions of the campus, the surrounding community, and student issues."

But it's what happens before class begins that irritates some students — the taking of attendance.

"I think it is the responsibility of the students to show up," said Zahr, a senior majoring in psychology. "We are paying for them (professors). They are providing us a service."

Lisa Thompson, a senior, agreed. "Attendance should

Student Wish List

- ✓ No Mandatory Attendance
- ✓ Feedback on Papers
- ✓ Class Discussions
- ✓ Grace Period

Faculty Wish List

- ✓ More Student Responsibility
- ✓ More Class Interest
- ✓ More Enthusiasm
- ✓ On-Time

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WPU plans to add honor code next fall

By Erik Ortiz
Staff Writer

University officials plan to add a formal honor code at WPU in an effort to address cheating on campus.

Robert Ariosto, dean of students, said that his office, in conjunction with the Student Government Association, expects to apply a formal honor code by the beginning of the next academic year.

But Stacey Thompson, a communication major, doesn't believe an honor code will necessarily change attitudes.

"Cheating is a problem we learn," said Thompson, a senior.

"But I think having an honor code might make some people laugh. People continually lie everyday...Some people will always cheat, regardless of what a piece of paper tells them."

Cheating has become a tactical skill for some students who find it is just too hard to handle the rigors of academia. But with the induction of a formal honor code at many schools around the country, including William Paterson University, administrators want cheating to become a skill of the past.

A survey published earlier this year by Donald McCabe, a management professor at Rutgers University, found 68 percent of 2,100 college students from 21 campuses around the country admitted to cheating at least once during their college career.

The surveyed schools with the least cheating were ones with academic honor codes, asking students to agree not to cheat, or face consequences such as expulsion, and in some cases, an anonymous mention in the campus newspaper about their cheating exploit.

McCabe has found that cheating is a nationwide problem.

"Most of the trends I have ob-

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Candlelight vigil marks World AIDS Day

By Robin Kavanaugh-Charman
Staff Writer

The wind blew hard and cold but could not extinguish the fire that burned outside the student center on November 30. As part of AIDS Awareness Week, a candlelight vigil was held in Machuga Plaza to remember those who've battled the disease and to raise awareness.



The symbolic nature of the candlelight vigil is to light the darkness which HIV and AIDS have created, said organizers. It is a yearly event where those who have been personally affected by HIV

and AIDS, or those who just want to show their support, can come together.

"This is a good way to pay respect to the millions and millions who have died from this

horrible disease," said junior Laurie Michael.

Thirty-five people stood in the brisk night air under an alcove outside the student center and shared stories about why they came and about those who have affected their lives.

Joe Poletto, resident director for the North Tower dormitory and one of the leading organizers of this year's activities, read an excerpt from the book, "Chicken Soup For The Soul." It was an emotional letter from a father to his daughter who lost her life to AIDS. The letter brought tears to his eyes and silence to his voice; he handed the book to someone else to finish the reading.

Others participants shared stories of people they know who've either died of AIDS or are infected with the disease. Included was a poem read by Margaret Corney, a Resident Assistant at North Tower and key organizer of the vigil, about the symbolic gesture of wearing red ribbons in support of AIDS awareness.

"When wearing a red ribbon, you need to wear it proud. It symbolizes something so strong," said Corney.

December 1 marked the 13th anniversary of World AIDS Day. William Paterson University has marked the occasion for several years by sponsoring a week of guest speakers, free HIV testing, movies, and other awareness activities. Nancy Ellson, coordinator of Wellness Services, described the event as "conscious programming about AIDS and HIV risk reduction." The program is sponsored jointly by the Women's Center and the Health and Wellness Center.

This year the Residence Life Department joined the effort and not only organized the vigil, but distributed red ribbons and condoms, offered "Condom Grams" throughout the residence halls, and promoted the Red Ribbon Window Campaign where students, faculty, and staff were asked to tape pictures of red ribbons to their windows on campus to show support for AIDS awareness.

Music - Film - Theatre - Art

Entertainment

Holiday CDs deliver tradition, joy, disappointments

By Erik Ortiz
Staff Writer

The two big Christmas releases this holiday season couldn't be anymore different than their cover art already suggests. My Kind of Christmas (RCA Records), Christina Aguilera's third CD since her debut last year, is full of enough Christmas joy to be thankful it only comes around once a year.

Her interpretation of "Have Yourself a Merry Little Christmas" and "O Holy Night" are the uplifting highlights on the CD, with many of the up tempo tracks reeking a little too much of her usual teen pop. Lyrics like "You'll be my autumn leaves, my Halloween/The winter snow and everything that's in between" in the song "This Year", don't exactly make up a memorable Christmas classic. Aguilera's vocal prowess is on full display throughout the album, and there isn't one track where

she doesn't make sure you know full well it's her kind of Christmas.

The second big holiday release is the soundtrack to The Grinch Who Stole Christmas (Interscope Records), the movie features actor Jim Carrey and a score by composer James Horner, the man behind the Titanic soundtrack. The CD's first single, Faith Hill's "Where Are You Christmas?" is one of the better tracks written by Horner. Though none of the album's songs are close to becoming a traditional carol, Ben Folds Five's "Lonely Christmas" and even the eccentric Busta Rhymes/Jim Carrey collaboration "Grinch 2000" are good enough filler to make the soundtrack enjoyable. And for fans of the film, there are also a few snippets of movie dialogue thrown in between the songs and score.



"Rent" filled with great music; leaves audience with Goosebumps

By Bethany Smalling
Staff Writer

It's the holiday season when many people go to New York City to catch the traditional holiday festivities such as the lighting of Rockefeller's Christmas tree or the Rockettes at Radio City Music Hall. But doesn't a trip to NYC seem like the perfect opportunity to catch a Broadway play?

If you've already seen "Les Miserables" or "Miss Saigon" and want something fun and sobering, with a great music ensemble, head to the Nederlander Theatre to see "Rent".

Based loosely on the opera

"La Boheme" by Giacomo Puccini, Jonathon Larson's musical consists of a talented cast of 15 who fill the small theatre with such warm, inspiring music that the audience cannot help but participate in the soulful songs.

This play is unlike any other musical on Broadway. Its various plots are knitted around the themes of homosexuality, AIDS, and homelessness. But through all the chaos, each



Where the album falls disappointingly flat is on the most recognizable song from the cartoon, "You're A Mean One, Mr. Grinch". Mr. Carrey's version is a worthy attempt, but it's just not

as slyly cynical as the original.

If you're a sucker for the conventional Christmas classics, there's always Nat King Cole's version of "The Christmas Song", Whitney Houston and The Georgia Mass Choir belting out "Joy to the World" and Brenda Lee's "Jingle Bell Rock", all of which can be found on the numerous Christmas compilation albums which come out yearly. But there are some people whose holiday is never complete without the unconventional hits "Grandma Got Run Over by a Reindeer" by Elmo 'N Patsy, "The Chipmunk Song (Christmas Don't Be Late)," sung by The Chipmunks and "The Chanukah Song," Adam Sandler's popular parody. The holidays just wouldn't be the same without them.

character desires the same thing: to find love, and ultimately, to be loved.

The story takes place in a small, run-down apartment in New York City where the characters of Mark and Roger reside (Trey Ellett and Manley Pope), their old roommate, Benny (Stu James) is now their landlord to whom they have failed to pay their rent. If they can stop their friend Maureen (Cristina Fadale) from protesting Benny's plan to build a cyber-arts complex next door, then Mark and Roger can live in their apart-

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Campus Services Provide Help to Community

By Robin Kavanaugh-Charman
Staff Writer

S-T-R-E-S-S. It's a word we've all come to know and hate, but it takes on special meaning if you're a single parent. Let's face it; being a parent is hard even if there are two of you running the show. When one of you is missing from the equation, though, it gets even worse. When you're juggling work, family, and school stress can become too much to bear and often we lash out at our kids. But there is hope! William Paterson University and Wayne Township offer many places that can help you handle life's stresses constructively.

First is the university's Women's Center (ext. 2946) located in Room 214 in the Student Center. Open to all students, it provides a casual atmosphere to relax and explore women's issues and includes a women's discussion group that meets on Tuesdays at 3:30 p.m. The Women's Center also provides, individual counseling, financial services, educational materials, and information on childcare services and aid.

The Counseling Center in Morrison Hall is another place on campus where students can find support. Individual,

group, and family counseling is available and issues like stress, relationship problems, anger, and depression are handled by the professional staff. All conversations are confidential. Appointments can be made by calling ext. 2257.

The Wayne Counseling Center is an off-campus support center located on Hamburg Turnpike at the Church Lane junction. They offer a Women in Crisis program. This is a free program open to women who find themselves in transition due to a loss

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OP *editorial commentary letters*

What Should the Media Say About the Middle East?

On November 27 The Pioneer Times ran an essay in which Amal Elrafai charged that the American mass media's coverage of recent violence in the Middle East has been biased against the Palestinians. It is easy to hurl such accusations but far more difficult to substantiate them.

Her central contention is that print and broadcast journalists in the United States have shown too little outrage about the deaths of Palestinians and too much about the deaths of Israelis. To establish media bias one would have to have to show widespread violations of generally accepted journalistic principles, organizational barriers to fair coverage, racist imagery, or frequent factual errors in one direction. Ms. Elrafai does none of this. Her comments are best understood as a reflection of her own apparent political orientation and, more importantly, as part of an effort to delegitimize any sympathy Americans may feel for Israel's difficult predicament.

If the American media fail in their coverage of the Arab-Israeli conflict, it is by focusing too much on the day-to-day vents and too little on the historical and political context in which these events occur. Thus, media audiences see people dying on both sides, but acquire little sense of why the violence happened.

The latest bloodshed is very directly a consequence of Yassir Arafat's unwillingness to negotiate with Ehud Barak, an Israeli prime minister who has staked his entire reputation and career on

making peace. Barak offered the Palestinians nearly all of the West Bank, partial resolution of the refugee problem, and sovereignty of Muslim and Christian sectors of Jerusalem. All he wanted in exchange was the right for Jews to live in Israel in peace. Arafat not only rejected the deal, but refused to make a counteroffer. President Clinton left the Camp David meeting in disgust, placing the blame for its failure squarely where it belonged — on Arafat's shoulders. Israel wants peace and is willing to pay the price. Either out of fear of Muslim religious extremists or hate-filled ideology, the Palestinian leaders have refused to take yes for an answer.

Their anti-Jewish propaganda has so inflamed the populace that it is hard to envision returning to the optimistic atmosphere that prevailed following the Oslo accords. For Hamas and other Islamic extremist leaders whom Arafat has embraced, no offer from the Jews would be satisfactory save Israel's willing participation in its own destruction. Sheik Ahmed Yassin has recently ruled out permanent reconciliation with Israel under any circumstances whatsoever, forecasting Israel's end in the year 2027. He has, however, suggested the possibility of tactical truces in exchange for major Israeli concessions.

When the media report deaths among Palestinian youths, they frequently fail to ask how such youths turn up on the front

lines. Many analysts have suggested, quite plausibly, that this is part of a plan to elicit maximum sympathy among Western nations. Without doubt, however, many Palestinian leaders have consciously fanned the flames of anti-Jewish hatred, promising eternal martyrdom for those who die in the struggle. The New York Times even reports paramilitary teenage summer camps run by Arafat's psychological warfare experts; "campers" receive weapons training and indoctrination in anti-Israel ideology. Israeli soldiers do not encourage these youths to advance to the front lines hurling stones; their parents do. (Incidentally, the Israeli soldiers are also little more than teenagers though they are seldom described as "youths.")

Until Palestinian leaders show a willingness to return to good-faith peace negotiations, the United States must stand strongly and clearly beside Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East, in its quest for peace. That's what friends do in times of trouble. When Palestinians show sincere commitment to peace and a rejection of terrorist methods, America should extend its hand in friendship, helping to secure

their legitimate national aspirations.

The American mass media must be fair in its coverage of the conflict, but it must also avoid defining fairness as the position midway between two parties to a conflict. Absolute neutrality is neither possible nor desirable. Journalists must offer historical and political context and they cannot avoid making moral and intellectual choices when they do so.

Dr. Neil Kressel
Professor of Psychology
Author, *MASS HATE: THE GLOBAL RISE OF GENOCIDE AND TERROR* (NY: Plenum, 1996)

Letters to the Editor and Op-Ed Submissions

Letters to the editor and op-ed submissions are welcome. Op-ed submissions should be limited to 500 words. All submissions must include the name, address, phone number and e-mail address of the writer. The staff will contact writers whose work is to be used.

Writers may e-mail their work or send it to the Pioneer Times, William Paterson University, 108 Hobart Hall, Wayne, NJ 07470.

The Pioneer Times reserves the right to edit all submission for content and length.

Help with stress, cont. from Page 2

of support from a spouse. Services include, supportive counseling, vocational assessment, computer training, education counseling, scholarship for higher education, interview coaching, and resume writing, plus much more. For more information about the program, call 694-215.

With each passing day, the little things that happen pile up in our emotion bank slowly raising our boiling point to volatile heights. The best way to avoid a meltdown is to let some of the

pressure out. We all need support now and then. The hardest part is knowing when and where. Don't be afraid to seek it out. The difference is life changing.

STRESS

This is one in a series of occasional columns about issues facing students, faculty and staff on campus. Those interested in contacting Robin Kavanaugh-Charman with ideas or suggestions, may write to her at PioneerTimes@student.wpunj.edu.

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Special thanks to Laura Leach and the Art Department for their assistance in laying out and designing our last issue of the semester.

The Back Page

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served pertain to both big and small schools," McCabe said. "I think the key difference is that...it is harder to develop a true sense of community on large campuses...thus making it somewhat more difficult to implement something like an honor code."

Ariosto wants an honor code at William Paterson University like the ones in Princeton and the University of Virginia, minus the stringent and humiliating punishment.

"Cheating can be tough on students at places like VMI," admitted Ariosto. "Fellow students must report cheating, otherwise they're seen as cheating themselves- that's tough...you're trying to change behavior in those who cheat, not punish. Humiliating them by putting what they did for everyone to read isn't the right way to do that."

McCabe's study however, showed that 32 percent of the 88 percent of teachers who witnessed some form of cheating, admitted not doing anything.

"In our school, there are two ways to deal with students who have cheated," Ariosto said. "Either a teacher can decide whether to fail the student for the class or on the paper or test they cheated on, or there can be disciplinary action which leads to the student's suspension. Most faculty wants to deal

with the student privately. They don't necessarily want to take that next step."

Elizabeth Stroppel, a communication professor, handles cheaters on her own.

"I have an individual conference with the student who has cheated...and I usually just fail them for the assignment," Stroppel said. "It's unfortunate that I have to act like an Eagle Scout when I administer tests."

According to the study, the main reasons why teachers don't reprimand students are because of the added paperwork and possible litigation when families and their lawyers are involved.

"That's a poor excuse," Ariosto admitted. "It's like if you're caught stealing at a job. You would get more than a slap on the wrist, you would be fired. Teachers must do more and if there's an honor code, teachers should feel responsible to report dishonesty...As long as teachers remain inactive about cheating and students find new ways to cheat and not get caught, every student will be left at a disadvantage."

Though Stroppel believes an honor code is a good start, she is concerned that cheating will still continue.

"You can't expect students to sign an honor code and then believe they won't cheat," Stroppel answered.

RENT

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ment for free. The first song in the play is fittingly called "Rent." In the end, Benny strikes a deal with the roommates.

When the company's voices fill the theatre, it sounds like a gospel choir

The play focuses on a group of friends and three relationships. While this story line is unfolding, Roger falls in love with a 19-year-old junkie named Mimi (Loraine Velez). She knocks on his door and asks, "Light My Candle."

On the flip side, Mark's ex-girlfriend, Maureen, is involved with Joanne (Natalie Venetia Belcon). The lovers constantly fight and yet cannot get enough of each other. Their song, "Take Me or Leave Me," is a strong, soulful song that leaves the audience hot. The actresses' voices are tremendous.

Another relationship involves the character of Collins, (an ex-roommate of Mark and Roger), played by Michael McElroy, and a drag queen named Angel (Andy

Senor). This relationship is the most significant because Angel has AIDS, but unlike most of the characters in the play, she is the only one who doesn't die by the end. But prior to her death, she puts on a show in the song, "Today 4 U," where she dances around the stage in a short, Santa Claus dress, black-and-white tights, and high, black sequenced heels that finish the outfit.

"Seasons of Love," one of the most noted songs from the play, begins Act II with such a compassionate force that one is left with Goosebumps. When the company's voices fill the theatre, it sounds like a gospel choir; one forgets that the cast is made up of only a mere 15 members.

"Rent" is a spectacular musical with a touching story behind the originator of the play. Larson, who wrote the book, music and lyrics for "Rent", never saw the opening of the cast's Broadway performance in April of 1996; he died of an aortic aneurysm a month before the play opened.

The play received numerous awards including the Pulitzer Prize for Drama, and four Tony Awards, one for Best Musical and two for Larson (Best Book of a Musical and Best Score of a Musical).

Tickets for "Rent" range from \$40-65. For more ticket information call the Nederlander Theatre at (212) 921-8000.

CHANGES

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she said. "We pay to come here and it should be our decision."

However, there are students who consider attendance to be an important part of their education and believe that it should be rewarded.

"If you want to be in college and don't want to go to class then, why are you wasting your time and your money?" asked Cesar Cazales, a sophomore.

Balazi Kalimireddi, a junior, believes students benefit by attending classes. "Teaching is about teachers and students interacting," thinks Kalimireddi.

Many professors agree and stress the importance of attendance in the learning.

"If you don't come to class, you are not going to learn," said Peter Blitstein of the History Department.

Christine Kelly, a political science professor, likes to treat her

students as adults and confesses that she doesn't take attendance every day.

"It's their education and their responsibility," she said.

However, during the semester she gets to know who is in class and who is not; and after the third absence she warns her students. Kelly thinks that too many absences prevents students from performing well in class and professors should be able to frame their classes in such a way that attendance is an important part of them.

But attendance is not what only concerns students. Lateness is another issue. Many students complain that a dearth of parking and typical New Jersey traffic conspires to make them late to class.

"Professors should give at least five minutes for students to get to class and be considered on time," said Zoila Mora, a freshman. "Besides, teachers expect students to be on their

time and sometimes they don't have the right time."

As for professors, they too have a wish list of classroom expectations for next semester.

Marzia Porta, who teaches Italian, finds that some students have poor classroom habits, like when they get up and leave the room in the middle of a discussion or a lecture.

"I want them to behave more maturely," said Porta.

June Roberts and Barbara Suess, professors from the English Department, would like students be more involved in the learning process.

"Do not just sit in the class and have the professor do all the work," said Roberts. "Think and read more critically."

"Take personal responsibility for your actions," said Suess. "If you do something wrong deal with the consequences, don't make up excuses for yourself if you don't have an excuse."

Professors would also like to

see more enthusiasm from their students.

"Sometimes I feel that they are not touched by anything that is happening in class," said Christopher Weaver, who teaches writing and literature.

A lack of interest can be the product of having to take a required class, which is to say the student may not be particularly interested in the course.

Peter Stein, a sociology professor, thinks that professors have a responsibility to get the students involved in the class.

"It is a two way street," said Stein. "Teachers have to put special effort to reach the student, too."

One way to engage students, is to vary the teaching method, says students. Tanya Suarez, a freshman, would like to see more interactions between the student and the teacher.

"I like teachers that engage students in discussions," she said.