

Opinion

EDITORIAL

A GRADE TRADE

The Faculty Senate Academic Affairs Committee on Monday reviewed the current grading policy for students who retake courses. The present rules allow for a student who received a C or lower in a class to repeat it and have the two grades averaged on their official University transcript. The new proposal would amend that to allow for grade forgiveness, where a student could retake up to three courses and receive credit for the higher grade.

Q-drops, however, would be eliminated. That is unacceptable. There should be no connection made between two completely different policies. Students should be allowed to keep their three Q-drops and should also push for the new grade replacement policy.

The Faculty Senate's recent review of a proposal to allow students to retake a course and replace the old grade with a new one has rightfully been met with great approval from students. It is crucial that the administration pay attention when students and faculty come to such an agreement and call for a long overdue, and necessary, change.

This is not a chance for students to get away with bad grades. There are limits to prevent abuse of the new system. It would be a second opportunity for students who understand their mistakes and make the effort for more success in class the second time. The students understandably favor an opportunity to rid their transcripts of a particular blemish. It is understood among Aggies that good grades are one factor in a successful job or graduate school search. A couple of mistakes in picking a class, however, are inevitable.

Administrators likely realize that when the Faculty Senate provides support for a change in policy, with many students in agreement, it is a good indication of a necessary change. Unfortunately, the Faculty Senate is insisting on connecting two completely separate policies. Why can't each be debated and considered on their own merit? Perhaps the underlying motivation is a desire to get rid of Q-drops altogether. If this is the case, then say so and begin a debate. Likewise, it is imperative that Aggies make their voice heard on this matter. From a student's perspective, having the option of both three Q-drops and the ability to replace a bad grade is an academic plus. Perhaps it is too much. But the matter should be debated honestly.

THE BATTALION

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The bad roommate

ResLife is not responsible for exposing sex offenders



CHRIS JACKSON

When assigning roommates to students, Texas A&M's Department of Residence Life does not consider an individual's past sexual offenses. Apartment complexes and apartment locators in College Station do not either, and this raises a question to anyone who is to be an assigned roommate. Should there be a system to screen past sex offenders from the roommate assignment process?

Screening for sex offenses when assigning a roommate is unnecessary, and can lead to complications involving misrepresentation of character. Sex offender screening would raise questions of how much more past information should be collected. If a pot-luck candidate is concerned about a potential roommate, then an inquiry into the person's past should be a private matter between those people, and not one for the school or any other entity to handle.

Classifying a person as a sex offender is dubious in itself. Certainly, individuals convicted of rape or aggravated sexual assault are members of a group rightfully marked dangerous to society. It is

known that sexual predators show repetitive criminal behavior, and that previous offenders are likely to strike again.

However, an 18-year-old can be convicted for indecency with a child if involved with a consenting 16-year-old, and will be labeled a sex offender by the state. In this way, a situation involving a junior and a senior in high school can be misconstrued to imply something criminal. Adding this information to a housing application would not correctly identify

unlikely for a student looking for a roommate through a finder service to be paired with a registered sex offender. Asserting that it is the service's responsibility to check each applicant's background information for a doubtful qualification is ludicrous.

When it comes to on-campus living, many freshmen go pot-luck for their roommate and are paired with a person they do not know. This is a different situation from pulling roommates from the Bryan-College Station area. Most incoming freshmen come from areas outside Bryan-College Station, where data on sex offender age may be different. Again, the responsibility of criminal screening should not be on the Department of Residence Life. It is not its job to search for convicted sex offenders, just as it is not its job to search for and bring attention to convicted felons.

There is no guarantee that a potential roommate will be everything they are expected to be. By using a roommate service or letting A&M pick, a student automatically assumes the risk that their roommate could be any type of undesirable person, including a sex offender. It is up to the student, if concerned, to find out personal information about a potential roommate for themselves. The chance of rooming with a dangerous felon is pretty slim.

Chris Jackson is a sophomore business administration major.

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the type of person it is describing. Though some sex offenders are harmless, many convicted sex offenders are legitimate dangers to society. This does not, however, give any more weight to the argument that roommate services should be responsible for finding and weeding these individuals out.

According to the Texas Department of Public Safety sex offender registration database, the majority of sex offenders in Bryan and College Station are over the age of 25, making it highly



MAIL CALL

Aggies need to learn some respect

I attended an informational meeting given by Shell Oil Company and left embarrassed and appalled at the behavior of more than half of my fellow students who were there. By the way these students conducted themselves, I would not be surprised if Shell shied away from hiring Aggies altogether.

Students showed up 20 to 30 minutes late. It is obvious that you are not interested in seeing the presentation; you only want to be there in time for the question and answer and eating parts of the session. Many wore sandals, jeans, t-shirts and sweatshirts. The invitation clearly stated that the dress was business casual.

Students who asked questions that someone else already asked or, worse yet, repeated a question they themselves had already asked. I overheard a recruiter say to one student, "you have asked me that question twice and I have given you the same answer both times. If you do not believe me, call our main office."

People took stacks of 3 or 4 pieces of pizza and wolfed them down like starving animals. There was more than enough for everyone, regardless of whether you ate one or three pieces at a time.

Please remember that the way you act at these events is representative of the entire Aggie student population. Is this really what we want recruiters to think is normal behavior for Aggies? Recruiters really do expect you to know these things in addition to the technical knowledge you have gained at A&M. Many of you do not think you need job search advice. Think again.

*Stacey Richter
Class of 2002*

Jensen criticism is unfair

In response to a March 6 mailcall:

It is our duty as citizens to question the actions of our government in order to improve its future policies. Apgar states that Jensen feels that we should "discard our 'plush' middle class lifestyles" as a solution to what he thinks Jensen feels is an abuse of American military power. No, Jensen did not suggest that we 'discard' anything.

He suggested that we reevaluate the way we live and develop more sustainable ways of existing in the world. Therein lies my problem with Apgar's response: it was not constructive, but derogatory. Let's talk about the issues.

*Joy De
Class of 2003*

Northgate parking causes danger



CATHERINE RICHARDSON

Complaints about Northgate parking meters have been floating around campus all semester. The meters have students and Northgate merchants in a frenzy and some are challenging the City of College Station to have them removed. The parking meters are slowing business and demanding more money from University students, but more importantly encouraging drunk driving.

Jon Mies, a fire marshal representing the City of College Station, said he believes the parking meters should assist businesses, but merchants in the area have quite a different viewpoint. Places such as Hole In The Wall and Fitzwilly's have found that business during lunch has slowed, and many students are choosing alternatives to avoid parking fees.

As stated on the meters, during daylight hours from 6 a.m. until 7 p.m., there is a 90-minute parking limit at \$0.50 an hour. From 7 p.m. until 2 a.m., there is a 4-hour limit at \$1.50 an hour.

Students obviously are being taken advantage of by the rise in nighttime cost, when Northgate attracts the most business. If Texas A&M was not located across University Drive, Northgate would probably not be as prosperous as it is today.

Northgate is a spot where students go to relax, celebrate an accomplished week, gather to watch entertainers or continue traditions such as ring dunking. The city realizes what a popular hangout it is and is trying to take advantage of its regular visitors.

Take a drive within the city limits and you will find that Northgate is the only public place with parking meters. If the meters are so necessary, they should be at all public sites, not just one.

Northgate was the first business district in town and

the need for renovations and enhancements are obvious, but installing parking meters will not bring more visitors and will fail to make the area more attractive.

The biggest issue pertaining to the parking meters is the encouragement of drinking and driving. All cars must be removed from parking meter zones at 2 a.m. Before the meters were installed, if an

The city is trying to take advantage of its regular visitors.

individual felt he or she had too much to drink, the individual had options such as call CARPOOL or getting a ride with a friend. Now the city forbids cars being left behind with threats of towing, causing more drinkers to drive.

In response to this issue, Mies said the Northgate parking garage is available 24 hours a day. But no one wants to pay up to \$10 to leave their car in the garage.

According to the December

2001 statistics posted on the City of College Station Police Department Website, there were 315 DWI/DUI arrests made in 2001 compared to 489 in 2000. DWI arrests decreased by 34 percent while DUI arrests increased by 41 percent. These numbers show violations have improved. It is important that the city realize the magnitude of this situation and cooperate to continue this decrease.

College Station and Texas A&M have had their share of grief with alcohol-related accidents. With a community-wide effort, citizens can keep these devastating accidents from occurring. This effort will include not only the responsibility of residents but also the help of city officials.

Giving Northgate visitors the option to leave their car parked instead of driving after a late night is the best solution. Northgate needs renovation, but the parking meters are a nuisance in more ways than one.

Catherine Richardson is a senior journalism major.