

OPINION

College curriculums dangerously weak

Texas A&M Faculty Senate's academic affairs committee is on the right track.

A subcommittee of the academic affairs committee is recommending a required core curriculum for all A&M students, regardless of major. The recommended curriculum would require each student take — in addition to already required history, political science and physical education courses — six hours of speech and writing skills, mathematical/logical reasoning, cultural heritage and social science and eight hours of science. The committee also recommends each student take one course in computer science and two semesters of a foreign language.

The subcommittee's report on core curriculum, discussed during Monday's Faculty Senate meeting, is on par with a report released Sunday by the Association of American Colleges.

The association's report, prepared by a panel of 18 educators after a three-year study, expressed great concern with the quality of higher education in the United States. The report said American college and university curriculums have slipped into a state of "disarray" and "incoherence." The report blames weak curriculum requirements, lack of emphasis on good teaching and faculty members who are more interested in research than in teaching.

To better prepare college graduates as professionals and "individual humans" the report suggests a "minimum required curriculum" — similar to the one proposed here — designed to cover the "intellectual, aesthetic and philosophic experiences" necessary to an educated person.

The idea that one of the most powerful nations in the world could be turning nearly illiterate incompetents loose upon the business world, vying for positions of power and leadership, is frightening and inexcusable.

American colleges and universities have gone soft, and all of us associated with these schools — students and faculty alike — are getting pretty thick around the middle ourselves.

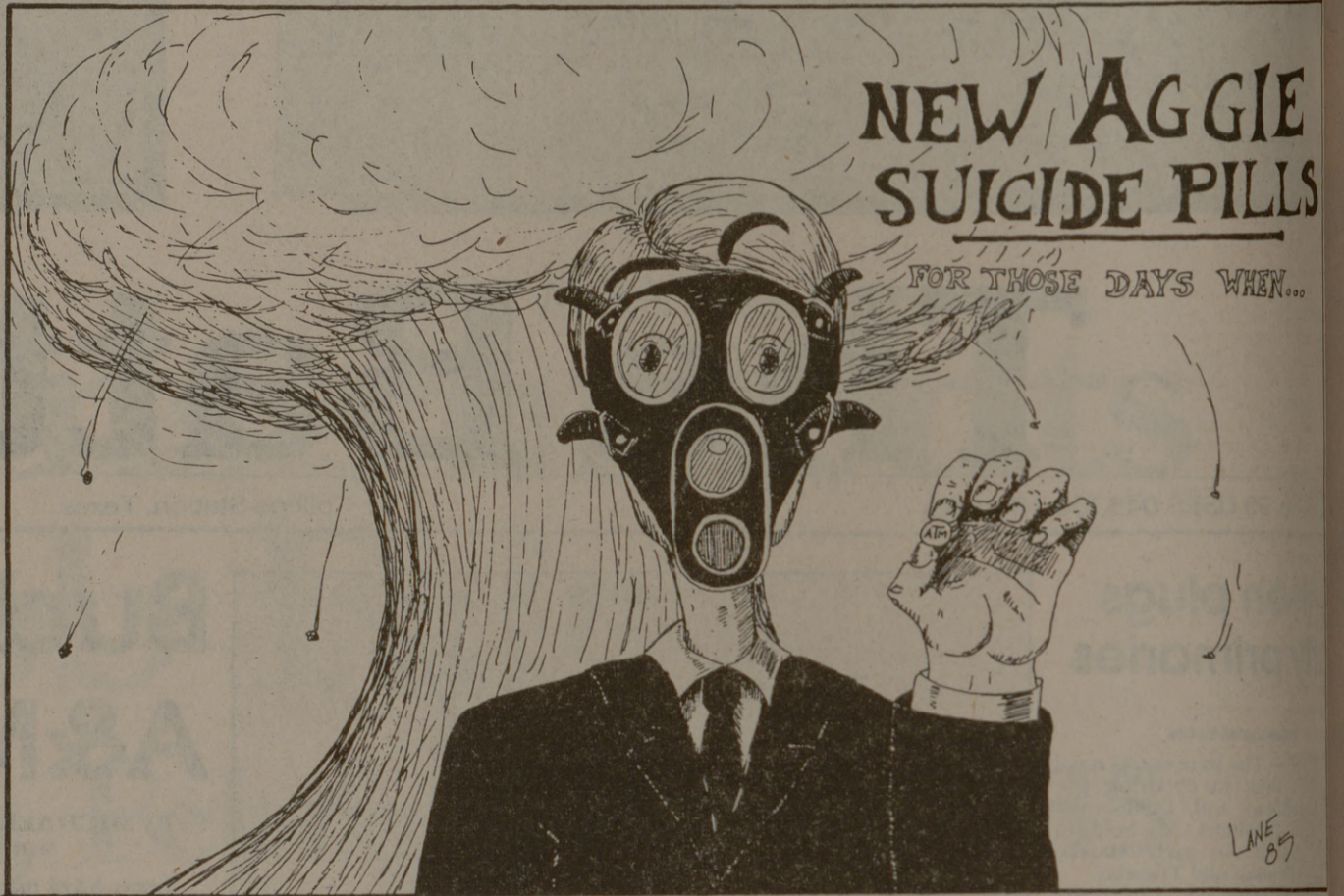
As the association's report said, we live in a rapidly changing world and to keep pace it is essential that tomorrow's leaders have broad, well-rounded educations.

We need people who can understand our advancing technology. We need to be able to communicate with other nations — we can't always expect everyone else to speak English. Otherwise the rest of the world will pass us by. No country can continue to be a world power without educated, cultured people in charge.

A healthy education system is as vital to national security as is a strong defense — and educated defenders are essential to ensuring that defense and security.

If Texas A&M does indeed have visions of becoming a world class university and turning out future leaders, it must offer its students a more well-rounded, versatile education. And the core curriculum proposed is certainly a step in the right direction.

The Battalion Editorial Board



Finding the perfect match not easy feat

'Mate game' like checkers

Three of my best friends are getting married. One in March and two in June. Usually when the word marriage comes up (especially if my name is involved) I make choking noises. But not this time. All three guys have found their perfect mate — a feat often attempted, seldom accomplished.



Kevin Inda

Finding the right mate can be long and adventurous or short and painful. Probably both. It's nothing but a colossal game in which people are the playing pieces. For most men, the object of the game is similar to checkers — to jump as many of the opponents as possible before finally gaining the win (a wife). I never did like checkers. But, there is a little more to the game than that.

Finding "the" girl is not easy. I've been playing the game on and off for 23 years. Most people don't realize it's a complicated game — I'm planning on

making the winning move when I'm about 35. Maybe I didn't realize how much I do like checkers.

Most guys think of the ideal girl as tall, blond, blue eyes, etc. (You know, the kind you always see on the beach and never see at A&M.) Oops, I shouldn't have said that. I apologize. Girls loaded with that kind of optional equipment do exist at A&M, but are usually one-owner models. Maybe I shouldn't have said that either. Physical characteristics aren't everything — almost — but not everything. There are other prerequisites as well as warning signs in selecting the right mate.

I'm weary of girls who wear a lot of makeup. So weary, I won't go out with them. God knows what's under all that mascara and blush. When a girl removes that conglomeration of cosmetics from her face and lips, I want to see the same person — not some monster from my scariest nightmare. Arrhhhhh! A girl that looks as good in the morning as she did in the evening is a prized possession.

Adventurous, spunky, spontaneous girls are also hard to find (that is if

you're looking outside the Quad). And proper girls are boring. Girls with a sense of adventure, spunk, and spontaneity are in a class by themselves. I girls with these characteristics "chick." You know, the ones that look like Madonna. Chicks are crazy. Anything you do with these girls — well, almost anything. These unique individuals of the opposite sex know how to have fun with a body, anytime, anywhere.

Intellectually stimulating girls also enhance a relationship. Who likes to go out with girls that just sit, look pretty and smile a lot? Not me. If I enjoy that kind of company I'd go buy a mannequin from Dillard's. One girl I occasionally spend time with is the epitome of unusual conversation. Shannon often talks open-mindedly about topics that would send a normal person in to convulsions — I'm not normal, so I love it.

The "mate game" is complex one. The players play differently. Some go the win quickly, and some don't.

I'm still reading the rules.

Kevin S. Inda is a senior journalism major and a weekly columnist for The Battalion.

Sexual stereotypes deny opportunities

A national survey released Saturday says boys still do better in science courses than girls.

The Second International Science Study — based on the study in 1983-84 of science pupils in the fifth, ninth and 12th grades — warns that unless more women enter the field of science, the United States will fall short of its goal to provide the finest level of mathematics, science and technology education in the world by 1995.

Our society continues to be plagued by sexual stereotypes. We are bombarded by television commercials showing women cooking dinner and cleaning house, "mom-approving" cereal and toothpaste and being offended when they are told they could get their family's laundry cleaner.

From birth, girls are dressed in pink and given dolls; boys are dressed in blue and given toy fire trucks.

Even school books still have pictures depicting males and females fulfilling stereotypical roles.

Girls are encouraged to write poetry, boys to dissect frogs.

Why should it matter if girls are not encouraged to follow different paths as long as they are free to make their own decisions?

It matters because there is a real distinction between 'not encouraging' people and discouraging them.

Texas A&M supposedly has never discouraged women from joining the all-male fighting Texas Aggie Band; women just were never encouraged. Same thing.

The fact is women at A&M — through social pressure and, now, court cases — have been strongly discouraged from joining.

Our society is gradually drifting away from that sort of mentality (certainly, few places discriminate to that degree so openly), but stereotyping and discrimination still do exist.

Given equal encouragement and equal opportunity to develop interest, not all women will choose to go into the field of science — not all men do — but as long as we continue to exclude more than half the population from certain areas of interest we deny ourselves the opportunity to be the best we can possibly be.

The Battalion Editorial Board

LETTERS:

LSG asks students for survey response

EDITOR:

Legislative Study Group, Texas A&M's voice in the state legislature, will be mailing out questionnaires soon to a cross section of students.

These questionnaires will ask for student's opinions on such issues as tuition increase and the drinking age. These opinions are of vital importance to our work. We are asking that all of those who receive the questionnaires fill them out and drop them off in boxes located at the MSC, Commons or 219 Pavillion.

If you do not receive a questionnaire and would like to express your opinion, stop by 219 Pavillion and pick one up.

Mark Browning
Legislative Study Group

Meese's opponents afraid of tough stand

EDITOR:

A man enters his home and finds a visiting friend beaten to death. The man is subsequently arrested, tried and found innocent of murder due to lack of evidence (in fact a would-be burglar entered an unlocked door, surprised and murdered the friend and fled) but due to having been charged with murder is deemed unfit to serve on a parole board. So goes the reasoning of the Battalion editorial board regarding the nomination of Mr. Meese for Attorney General (Feb. 7). Presumably, the homeowner is unethical for having appeared as a murderer.

There are two levels of opposition being forwarded by Meese's detractors; that of ethical conduct and that of ideology. The question of ethics is being ad-

ressed in terms of "appearance of unethical conduct" since Meese was fully exonerated of any legal wrongdoing. If appearances are sufficient to disqualify someone for public office, a far stronger case can be made against Senator Metzenbaum D-Ohio (the most vocal opponent of Meese) on the basis of a \$250,000 exchange between Metzenbaum and a business concerned about some pending Senate legislation. (Metzenbaum subsequently returned the \$250,000).

The "appearance" issue is a smoke-screen to cover the real ideological opposition to Meese's tough approach to law enforcement. Meese supports mandatory sentencing, capital punishment and victim's rights legislation which are also supported by a majority of Americans but are opposed by his detractors. It wouldn't be good politics to oppose Meese on these grounds. Appearances are deceiving even on the "appearance" issue.

Remember, next time you open your calculator during an exam, it may appear to the instructor that you have a crib sheet within.

Douglas G. Duncan

Lost wedding ring has sentimental value

EDITOR:

A friend of mine lost a diamond ring while attending the A&M-Baylor basketball game at G. Rollie White last Wednesday. It is a wedding ring and has great sentimental value. Please call me at 845-3315 and leave a message if you have found it.

Charean Williams

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The Battalion also serves as a laboratory newspaper for students in reporting, editing and photography classes within the Department of Communication.

Letters Policy
Letters to the Editor should not exceed 300 words in length. The editorial staff reserves the right to edit letters for style and length but will make every effort to maintain the author's intent. Each letter must be signed and must include the address and telephone number of the writer.
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