

Opinion

Prof. Sherrill could be off to bigger things

Two of the topics I covered last semester as a *Battalion* staff writer were the search for a new president and the appointment of Athletic Director Jackie Sherrill as a professor of athletics with tenure.



Richard Williams

When searching for a topic for my column I realized Sherrill had given me the best topic of all — why not make Jackie actually teach a class?

Jackie could teach any of several classes at Texas A&M that would draw on his expertise in one of several subject areas. The first, and most obvious, choice is to have the professor teach a class in finance. How about Finance 839 — How to survive in college with only two Audis to drive.

This class would be important for any unfortunate student who had to suffer through this terrible hardship.

Professor Sherrill could teach Finance 921 — 101 Ways to Ask Alumni for Money. A must for any college student who wishes to fund a proper college education.

Accounting 832 — Accounting for the College Athlete. Since a college athlete must pay taxes for things like room and board, scholarships, kickbacks (only if the kickback is discovered), car allowances and summer jobs for printing companies this class would be an excellent class for Professor Jackie to teach. (I would suggest that Jackie and Kevin Murray co-teach this class.)

Jackie could teach classes in ethics; however I'm not sure what classes would best suit his definition of ethics.

Professor Sherrill could teach a class in media relations. As Athletic Director, Jackie has been more than willing to open the door to the public. His relation with the media is outstanding.

An example. At Texas Christian University the Athletic Department released only the information that was re-

quested by the media. Press conferences were held and the the coach, Jim Wacker, even talked with most of the media outside an official press conference. Imagine the inconvenience Wacker put the reporters through. The poor reporters had to call Wacker constantly.

Jackie was better to the reporters. He held infrequent press conferences that allowed the media to spend time with other stories. Jackie also was almost unavailable to the press outside of the press conferences. This meant the reporters did not have to worry about calling him and having to add more to a story. Awful nice of him to spare the reporters of this extra work.

The professor also released more information to the press than they wanted. He was nice enough to release a report that included fire escape plans and dormitory layout.

Jackie could also teach Media Relations 666 — Ten Ways to Say No Comment and The Social Importance of Such a Statement.

If we can't allow Sherrill to teach a class then we should do an even braver thing. Make tenured Professor/Athletic Director/Head Coach Jackie Sherrill the next president of A&M.

Why? I'm surprised anyone could doubt the ability of Sherrill to lead this fine University to the point where our faculty could beat the hell out of any faculty in the country.

Sherrill would also be able to make all athletes at A&M full professors. Since the new professors would be paid by the University no one would have to worry about finding alumni to pay them to play. This would also make tax returns easier for the players to file.

As president, Jackie would probably build more parking spaces on campus to handle the overflow of new cars that the athletes/professors would be able purchase. Traffic on campus would increase, and President Jackie would find creating new roads a must.

A slight problem could occur when the academic buildings on campus inter-

fere with the much needed roads. Cause of this Sherrill could simply tear the buildings and hold classes outside.

Besides making the campus less cluttered with buildings, the new campus could be used to honor athletes and alumni. We could have Sherrill Street, Corrington Court, Roper Road, Parkway (in case Pavlas falls out of office) we could have Bucky Boulevard or good Overpass) or Livingstone Lane.

Sherrill could also probably appoint athletes to various positions of campus importance. Guy Broom could be named legal counsel for A&M. Kevin Murray could be placed in charge of transportation and Chet Brooks could be in charge of all speech writing.

However, as president, Sherrill would probably find a way to replace the editor of *The Batt*, and I would be out of a job. Maybe this isn't such a good plan after all.

Richard Williams is a senior agricultural journalism major and editor of *Battalion*.

Why don't we abolish our worthless ELI program?

In the past, a number of faculty members have spoken against the English Language Institute (ELI). However, not many students have come forward to discuss their experience as ELI students. As a victim of ELI last spring I intend to discuss my experience with this letter.

Mahinda Karunaratne
Guest Columnist

This interview was one of the most absurd and unfair things I had ever seen in the ELI system. If they are to do a reasonable evaluation, I believe that a student must be interviewed for at least the scheduled ten minute time, and all three interviewers should ask questions giving the student time to adjust for the interview and answer without tension.

The composition section is another disaster. The topic of my first composition was whether the development of individual minds or whole society matters more. It is for the reader to understand how difficult it would be for a student like me who has done only mathematics and statistics for more than ten years to write a composition on such a topic without any prior preparation. When I took the EPL exam the second time at the end of the semester, the topic of the composition was whether time or money matters more. It is hard to understand how a composition written on such a topic would ever show the writing skill required by a graduate student.

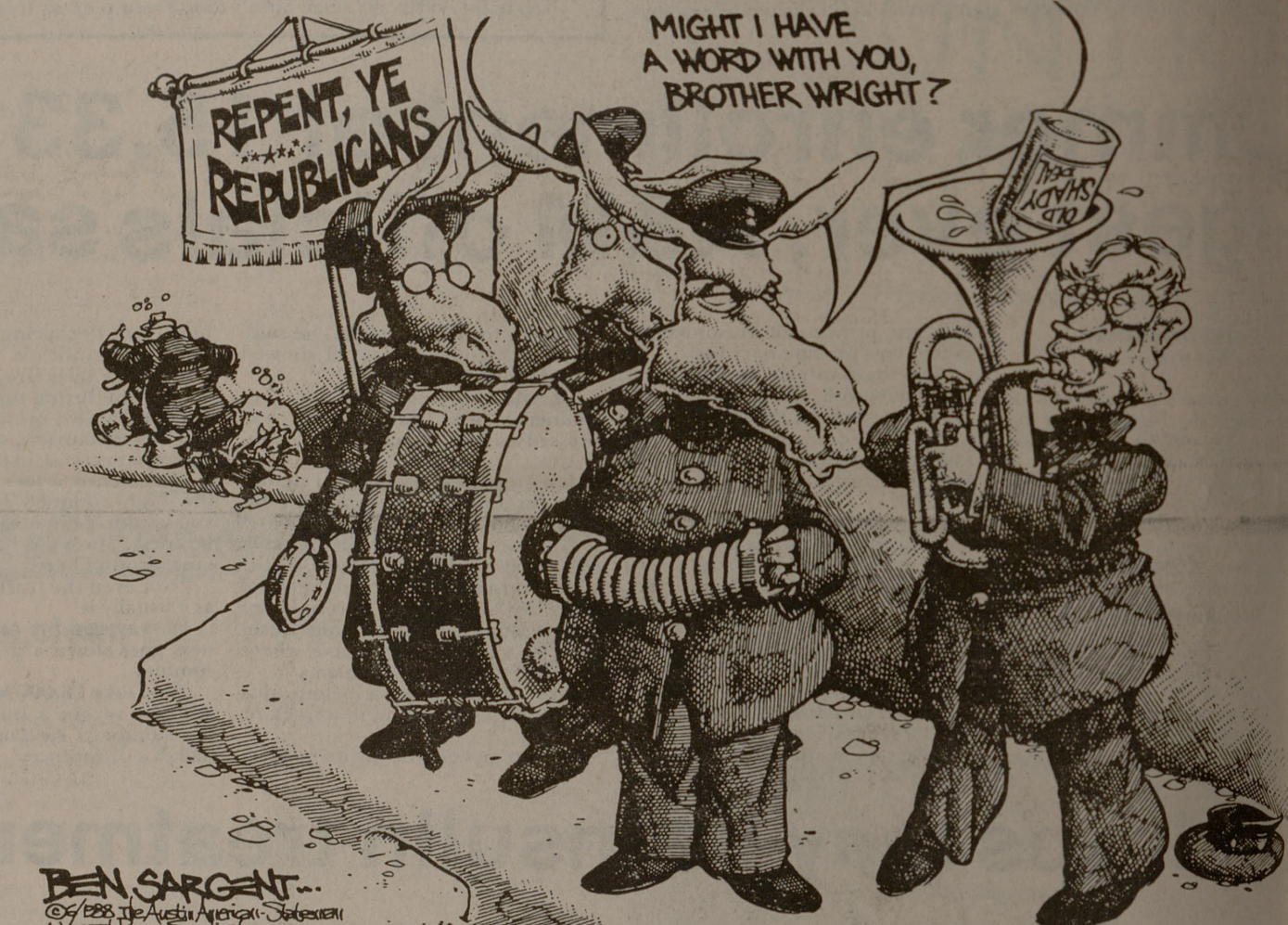
We never got our grades from the first test in our grammar class. When we asked for it, we were informed that it was only for the information of ELI. As far as I know, in the past some students were exempted from taking the course depending on the grades of such a test.

I presume that the refusal of giving the grades was due to doubt of being of forced to exempt students and hence losing money. However, it is against university regulations to withhold releasing results of any test.

The materials covered in grammar class were only a review of simple grammar I learned about fifteen years ago, and I could have done the same thing by simply buying any grammar book for a couple of dollars.

Oral skills class was nothing but a waste. The instructor spent many of the class periods simply gossiping and looking at his wrist watch at regular intervals. Such a nature was understandable considering that there was nothing much he could teach us about oral skill. The best way of acquiring such a knowledge is usual day-to-day communication.

The majority of foreign students



would be happy to be helped in their English proficiency. Instead of solving the problem, ELI creates a worse situation. Tuition charged by ELI is unbelievably high. For instance, the cost of the two ELI courses and the three regular courses was \$555 and \$350 respectively.

I ended up paying the savings I had kept to send to my old parents who are going through a tough financial time. \$555 approximately amounts to eight month salary of my occupation as an assistant lecturer back in my country, Sri Lanka. Hence it is quite natural for prospective student from Sri Lanka to choose any other school over A&M and avoid taking a risk. Several of my friends who asked me about the school have already done so.

Another disastrous feature of the ELP exam is that it is offered at the beginning of the semester when students are exhausted by long travels from their countries, looking for a place to live and trying to get adjusted to America.

Even though a score of 550 in the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL is the required standard for many higher educational institutions). Here, a graduate student with such a score has a very high possibility of being forced to take ELI courses, while he wouldn't have such a problem if he attended any other university. According to the brochure provided by the International Student Advisor, a student with a TOEFL score of 500-549 has a 65 percent chance of being required to take three to five ELI courses, and a student with a TOEFL score of 550-599 has a 75 percent chance of being required to take one or two ELI courses.

Apart from all these, the conditions concerning ELI mentioned in the letter of acceptance is so compelling that a student who receives this letter from the office of admissions would never experience the happy feeling of gaining admission to a university. I felt this difference very well since I remembered how

encouraging the letter I received from SMU was.

Almost all students who happen to take ELI courses end up with wasted time and money. I have yet to meet a single student who said that he or she gained anything worthwhile out of ELI courses. Many foreign students believe that the English Department could have a viable alternative for this problem.

While foreign students have been continuing to go through this hardship for a long time, it is a shame that those who are responsible have not been able to take necessary steps towards a desirable solution so far. Although I tend to talk about my own personal experience in this letter, I am sure that this is the experience of many foreign students who took ELI courses, and that they would agree with Biochemistry professor Ry Young's suggestion of abolishing ELI.

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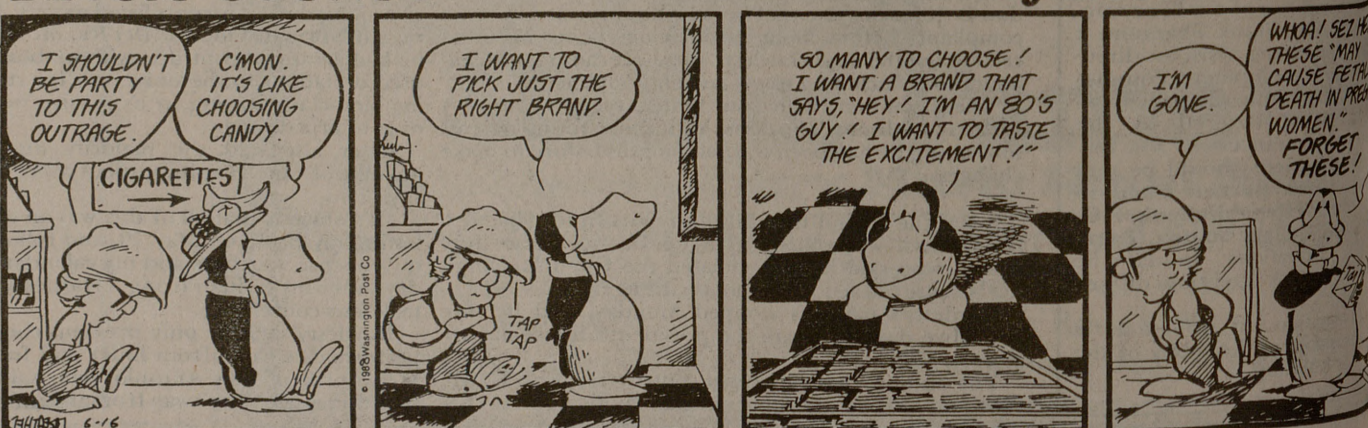
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