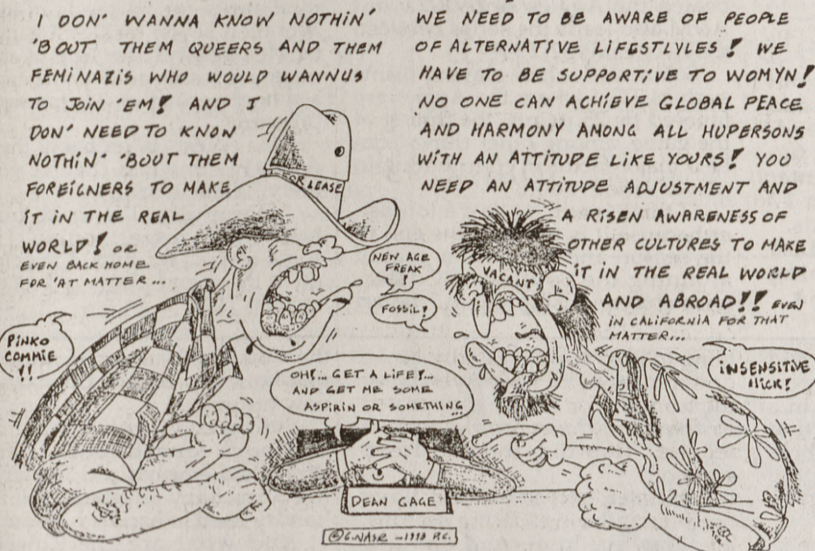


PRO CON

Does Texas A&M need the multicultural requirement?



AGGIE DEMOCRATS

JOSEPH THOMAS

COLLEGE REPUBLICANS

BRIAN BECKCOM

The Faculty Senate voted 45 to 27 in favor of U.S. cultures and international requirements additions to the University's Core Curriculum. The Student Senate passed a similar measure earlier this semester calling for a 3-hour multicultural elective.

This sends a strong signal that both students and faculty as a whole approve of the concept of multicultural education at Texas A&M. There is only a small vocal minority who disagree. It is important to understand that these are not multiculturalism classes. These courses teach about specific cultural backgrounds, histories, and the economic conditions of individual cultures and countries with over 130 courses that meet the requirements. A multiculturalism class would attempt to focus on several cultures and their collective interaction in one course.

Major corporations hire trained professionals who specialize in educating their fellow employees about diversity issues. Additionally, many professional organizations are requiring graduate programs to include multicultural education in their curriculums. The business world of today and tomorrow is vastly diverse and an exposure to other cultures is extremely important in order to ensure success in business relations of the future.

Some groups on campus are attempting to label multicultural education as an attempt to pursue a political correctness agenda or project false information in the classrooms. Nothing could be further from the truth. All courses which meet the requirements of the U.S. cultures and international cultures requirement are currently being taught at Texas A&M. If any professor even attempts to pursue a political correctness agenda or mislead his or her students, there are proper channels already in place to take care of the situation. Take a moment to look at the classes, decide for yourself which ones would enrich your own education and make that decision for yourself. You may be surprised by what you learn.

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It is my hope that the Texas A&M community will look at the actions of the Faculty Senate, Student Senate and over 22 organizations composed of over 1200 students who stand firmly behind the concept of multicultural education. Texas A&M is viewed as a world-class institution of higher education with rich traditions.

Well, in keeping with that world-class status, it is important to embrace positive changes to the curriculum which will ensure that every Aggie receives a well-rounded education filled with a rich knowledge of the world around them. Texas A&M is taking a major step forward into the 21st century and enhancing its academic reputation.

Take the time to realize that multicultural education gives you a chance to realize what someone else's background and heritage means to them and how rich your own cultural background is with history.

The College Republicans at Texas A&M would like to issue a call to arms to all free-thinking Aggies. The armies of political correctness have invaded our campus in a multi-cultural Trojan Horse.

They have joined forces with the liberal arts faculty and have defeated an outmanned Student Senate. We must join forces to halt these insidious individuals and defeat the Orwellian army before it is too late.

Perhaps this is a bit of an exaggeration, yet free-thinking Aggies must realize the importance of these proposed requirements. Texas A&M stands as one of the last bastions of free thought and our uniqueness is in dire straits. If we do not voice our opinions, we will be forced to join the ranks of "multi-culties," who utilize required courses to mold formative minds to a particular political path.

True multiculturalism is a noble concept. Yet, we must consider two points before blindly endorsing the proposal for mandatory courses. The leaders proclaim it broadens minds. In fact it narrows minds.

Harvard has recently been held up as a model of multicultural mastery, yet closer examination proves that "multiculturalism" is deceptive. Harvard has offered an introductory "women's studies" course with required readings which include Betty Friedan's "Feminine Mystique" and Betty Hooks' "Margin to Center." All of the books are quality works by quality authors, yet not one of them is even slightly critical of the feminist perspective. Harvard deceives students and offers them a far left perspective on women's contributions to American culture.

True multiculturalism is a noble concept. Yet, we must consider two important points before blindly endorsing the proposal for mandatory courses. The leaders proclaim it broadens minds. In fact it narrows minds.

In the words of Dinesh D'Souza (an Indian immigrant), "... today's multicultural curriculum manipulates and amputates the Third World ... it subordinates the understanding of Asia, Africa, and Latin America to Western ideological prejudices ... it reflects a new cultural imperialism no less narrow and bigoted ..."

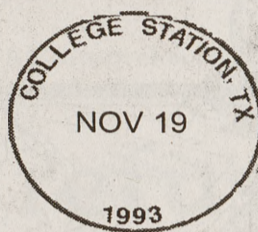
Proponents of the curriculum are using minorities and multiculturalism as pawns in order to indoctrinate students into a particular political viewpoint.

We must develop skills that are applicable in a highly competitive job market. Cultural enlightenment is a valuable character trait, but will a civil engineer build a better bridge if he knows the contribution of Rigoberta Menchu? Will a doctor be better equipped for surgery if he reads "The Color Purple"? We are paying thousands of dollars to learn job skills, not to be sensitized by some holier-than-thou professor.

Multiculturalism is aiming in the wrong direction. We must concentrate on similarities, common experiences and future goals, not on dividing our campus into a group of tribal enclaves. We must join together to respect, tolerate and embrace the diversity at Texas A&M as a bipartisan, multi-racial, multi-ethnic force aiming towards a common goal: the continued success and prosperity of Texas A&M University.

Joseph Thomas is president of the Aggie Democrats

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MAIL CALL

For friendship's sake, don't drink and drive

Friday night some people gathered at a local bar. There was a great drink special that night and they all drank, danced, laughed and enjoyed life. We've all done it.

It's time to go. Someone asks, "Who's driving?" "A friend," comes the reply. Stop! Did you ask if the friend had been drinking? Did you make sure they had a safe ride home? Is it your responsibility? I had to go to a funeral this week because I had a friend that went to a bar and had a good time.

Two girls climbed into a car and headed for home, only four miles away. They never made it.

I didn't get to tell my roommate goodbye. I want to scream at her, be mad at her, tell her how stupid it is to drink and drive or ride with someone who has been drinking. I want to tell her she should have had a designated driver, or called a cab or called me to come pick her up.

Yeah, I wouldn't have been happy about getting up at 1:00 a.m., but I could have slept late Saturday. Instead, I was awakened to learn that my friend had been in a car wreck and died.

I beg the world to listen the next time there's a commercial on television or on the radio saying, "Friends don't let friends drive drunk."

I want to tell my dearest friend how much I loved her or how much I'll miss her now that she is gone.

You never know when your last conversation with a friend may be.

Please don't put family and friends through what her family and friends will be going through for a long time.

Don't drink and drive!

Melissa Wilkerson
College Station

Bonfire originally for the freshman class

It seems that Cynthia Hernandez, Barrett Fromme, and the Class of 1994 need to take a little history lesson. While their sentiment in inviting the Class of '64 back to campus for this year's Bonfire is certainly a kind gesture, and old Ag will tell you that the class of '64 is the wrong class to be inviting.

Bonfire for 1964 was cancelled (in retrospect perhaps a bit unwisely, but it was an emotional time) due to the assassination of JFK, but Aggie tradition has always stated that Bonfire belongs to the freshman class for the year it is built.

In other words, Bonfire 1964 was really the bonfire of the class of 1967, and the Class of '67 is the one which should be returning to campus. My uncle was in the Class of '67, and he along with other old Ags always refer to the Bonfire as freshman Bonfire.

With all the privileges that the upperclassmen have always received at this university, it was viewed as one of the few freshmen privileges to help build Bonfire and call it theirs. (Remember, 30 years ago when the Corps composed the huge majority of the student body, the seniors barely even worked at all at the cut site; the freshmen and sophomores did almost all of the grunt work.)

I'm surprised no one in the class of '64 has brought these points up, but I

suppose I wouldn't argue either if someone decided to honor me with a bonfire. Anyway, regardless of the Class of '94's mistake, I hope everyone at this year's bonfire has a great time, and that we can beat the hell outta t.u. the next day.

Brooke L. Small
Class of '94

U.S. firms must enter global marketplace

In many parts of the world, Americans tend to have a bad image. They are seen as ignorant and boastful — always trying to impose their views on others and claiming American culture is superior.

After having lived and studied in this country for more than three years, I know that this stereotype is wrong. Many Americans are enlightened, and almost everyone I have met is curious about other countries and interested to learn about my culture.

However, after reading the latest opinions expressed in Mail Call, I see there are still people left that fit the stereotype. It amazes me how strong the resistance is against learning about other cultures. I would worry about the future of American enterprise if everybody had opinions like Mr. McElwain's in the Nov. 10 Mail Call.

The attitude he portrays is the exact attitude that has led to other nations taking over in the world market. And to Mr. McElwain, who claims that if you are going to work for IBM you only need technical skills, I would like to say: Believe it or not, Mr. McElwain, there is a world outside of the U.S. border. If you would like to work for IBM (Hint: the I stands for International), I would start learning about it right now!

Ninety-five percent of the world's population is outside the U.S. border, and still only eight percent of U.S. firms sell outside the U.S. Luckily, this is changing as U.S. firms are beginning to realize that the world is becoming smaller and that they soon have to be able to compete internationally.

This is reflected in that colleges are offering more and more international business and culture classes. Students should welcome the opportunity to have their minds broadened and to learn about other cultures.

As for those who are afraid of having professors impose their viewpoints on them who may, God forbid, claim that other cultures may be just as good as America's, you should have been away from Mom and Dad long enough to be able to form your own opinions and be thankful for a chance to get educated.

Jan Tore Klepp
Class of '93

French resisted Nazis in Second World War

You probably have read the column by Robert Vasquez in the Nov. 9 issue of the Battalion, discussing the attitude of French people toward Nazi occupation during WW II. Like all French students at Texas A&M, we had to work very hard not to lose our temper while reading this column.

We are very surprised to notice how many slanderous ideas, which may de-

velop hate among different countries, are contained in an article written by an A&M senior in journalism. We are also surprised how a future journalist can base his comments on facts he obviously did not check beforehand. Let us state some basic truths that have been distorted:

Not all German people of that day were Nazis. France never built a concentration camp, although one is located in France.

The overwhelming majority of French people of that day were Nazi opponents. Most of them joined resistance groups which suffered heavy losses fighting Nazis. They also helped U.S. troops during the Normandy landing.

Our grandfathers were in the Resistance during WW II. We are not going to tell them that someone in America wondered whether "the French wanted to exterminate the Jews in gas chambers as the Germans did."

Gilles Perry
Florian Racine
Graduate students

Not everybody wants to be awakened early

Now that Bonfire is almost built for this year, the yellow pots and crew chiefs will soon stop having loud wake-up calls. Thus Chad White, the freshman biomedical engineering student, will not be disturbed.

But, beginning in the spring semester, the dorm chaplains and I will blare Christian music for Church wake-up on Sunday at six in the morning. Hey, we will even run down the hall and beat our bibles on the door. Hmmm, would this make us bible beaters? I am sure that all Aggies would appreciate this service.

Hey Ags, before you fill my answering machine with crude remarks, let me explain my sarcasm. First, I am not Against Bonfire or Christianity, not am I trying to make everyone go to church.

However, I am trying to make you see that some Aggies don't build Bonfire. Thus, they don't want to be awakened by loud music. And, if you don't participate in early services, I am sure that you don't want to be awakened every Sunday at six in the morning. Finally, for the slow Ags, No, I am not going to wake you up at six in the morning next semester!

Thanks Ags, and erect the expletive outta the log stacks and vanquish the Devil's home outta The University of Texas at Austin!!

Gene Kim
Class of '96

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Columns, guest columns, cartoons and letters express the opinions of the authors.

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