

Will work for tuition

Students spend time working, not learning

Tuition increases cause agony for many students, but let it be known that a study has linked these fee increases to fewer students graduating on time and overall poor performance.

Obviously college administrators see a rise in tuition as a way to cover additional costs. Possibly they are not aware of the detrimental effect it has on employed students.

Colleges should encourage students in their efforts to get the most out of classes, not force them to struggle in order to survive.

How many of your parents talk about taking 18 or more hours a semester when they were in school?

According to a September CNN study, 34 percent of full-time college students held jobs in 1970. In 1993 that number had increased significantly to 46 percent. The increasing work loads have led to decreasing academic hours and scores. The primary contributing factor, according to the survey, is the increasing cost of tuition.

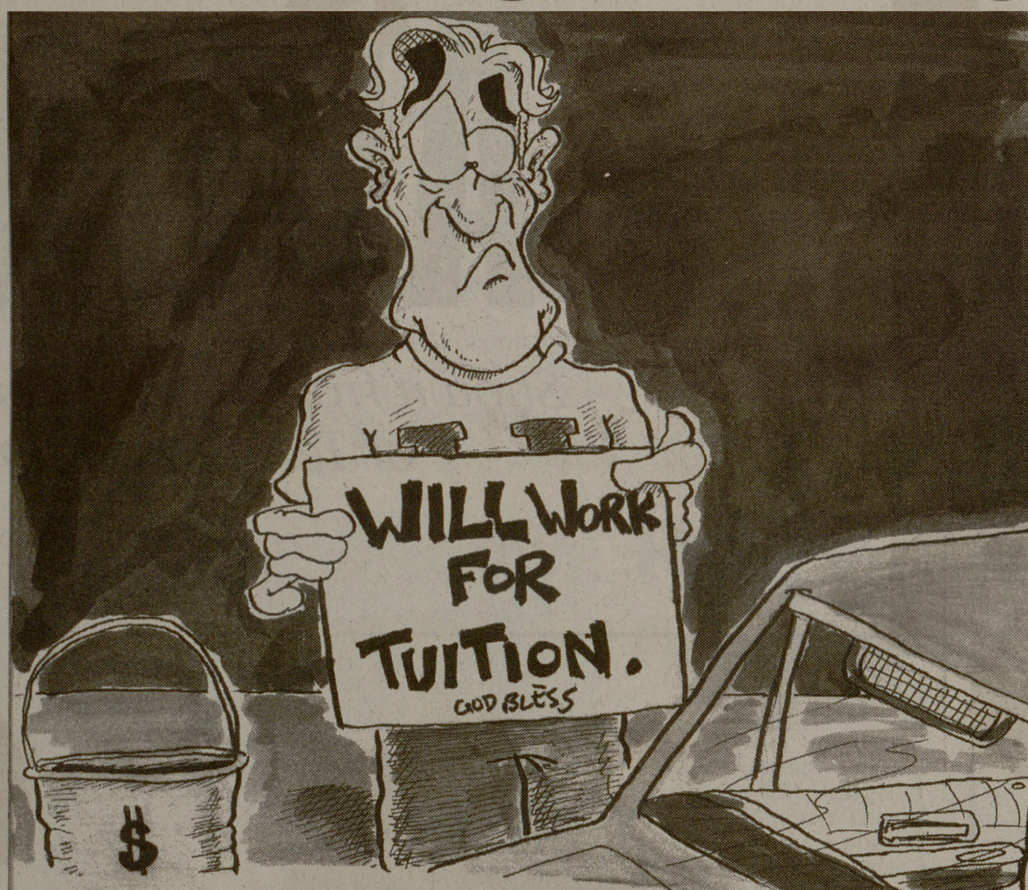
That's right, nearly one-half of college students need a job to afford tuition.

College used to be a four-year endeavor requiring only one-third of students to work. With roughly half of all students holding jobs today, extended stays at college have recently become accepted as the norm.

Who cares, right? Well, you might care if you are an employed student. CNN's study shows that students with jobs have disadvantages over those who don't. This just is not fair, and, moreover, it causes a separation of the student body.

Working students are separated from non-working students, yet they are judged on the same criteria. Students that work voluntarily may not have a problem with reducing their work load or quitting when times get too hectic.

For some students, though, working is not an option, but a necessity. The saddest part is that it is damaging their school work and, in the long run, their careers.



Simultaneously holding down a job and succeeding in school shows discipline.

That should make up for an extra semester and lower grades. True, employers are looking for discipline, but grades and activities are more or less as important.

College is a competitive environment. Students are compared to each other, especially when it comes time for interviews with companies and application to graduate, law, and medical schools.

A student active in many organizations on campus has an advantage. Work cuts in on the time a person can contribute to a student organization, creating yet another problem. Half of the students at college may not have the time to explore the eventual college life.

What can the system do about this inequity? For starters, base tuition rates for a full-time student on a reasonable amount of hours of work at minimum wage.

After all, the University makes far more from endowments than it does from tuition.

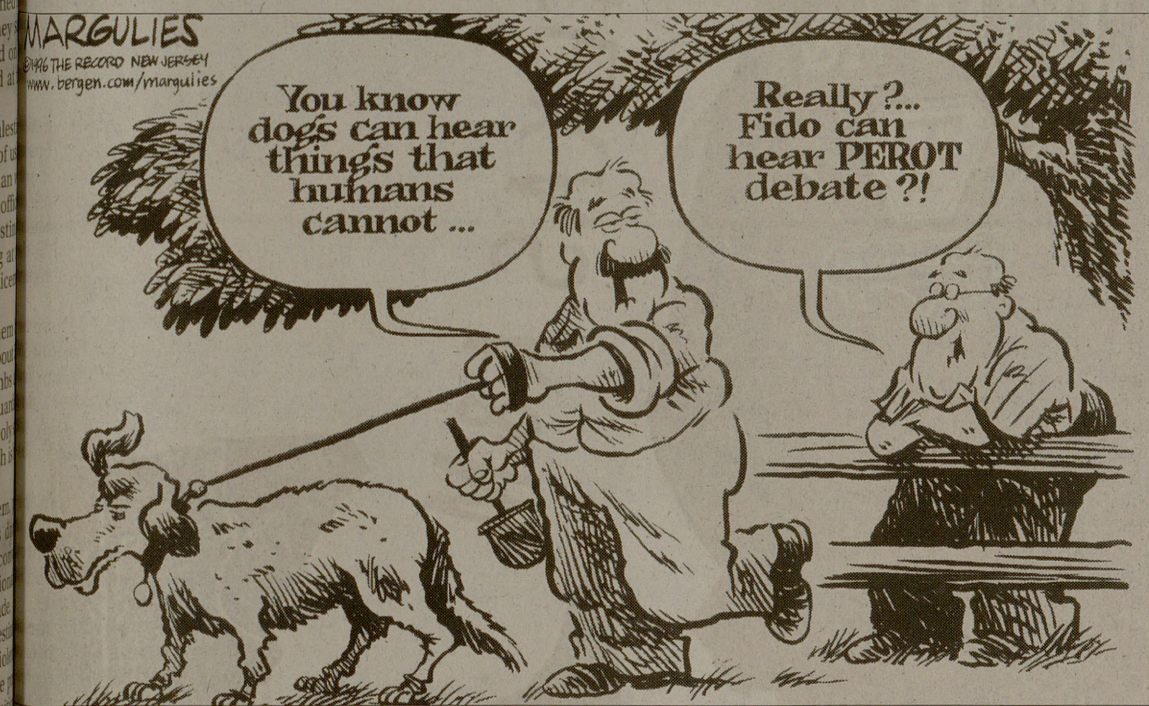
How about increasing the amount of smaller denomination loans to students so that if they still need to hold a job, they can work fewer hours? Even reduced work loads for students would help.

There are ways to put all students on an even playing field. Even non-working students should agree that it is unfair to have a built-in advantage over other hard working students.

If students want to distinguish themselves, they should have to make good grades and get involved in some of the organizations on campus.

People are being limited from enjoying the experiences and opportunities on campus — by the school itself.

With roughly half of all students holding jobs today, extended stays at college have become accepted as the norm.



Editorial Roundup

(AP)—A sampling of editorial opinion from Texas newspapers: *The Monitor (McAllen) on immigration and public schools:* Congress, at a stalemate over a wide-ranging immigration reform bill, could drop the provision that causing such a ruckus.

The issue of contention is a population granting states the power to deny public schooling children who can't prove legal residency. Most Democrats and the Republicans are against the measure, and the debate threatens the entire bill.

School districts along the border are certainly aware of the challenges associated with the education of students who are illegal immigrants, or who are the children of undocumented workers.

Every school year, school districts in the Rio Grande Valley absorb an undetermined number of children who are illegal immigrants, or whose parents will be here illegally.

Texas, fortunately, has avoided these sort of divisive measures. Texas Gov. George W. Bush

and U.S. Sen. Kay Bailey Hutchinson have expressed great concerns about denying schooling to the children of undocumented workers.

Bush and Hutchinson correctly point out the obvious: Denying these children an education would be a grave mistake since they are likely to live in the United States all of their lives, and will be a greater drain on society without an education.

Today's schools have a hard enough time ensuring that our children are getting the education they need to succeed in their adult lives.

Let's worry about that first, and spend less time worrying about whether they can produce their citizenship papers.

Abilene Reporter-News on oil imports:

As with Desert Shield and Desert Storm in 1990-91, the most recent round of military actions against Iraq's Saddam Hussein has brought forth a wide range of high-sounding justifications about re-

sponding to aggression and protecting our allies.

But let's be honest. The main threat Saddam's swaggering poses to our vital national interests is on the flow and price of oil.

Without questioning whether Saddam must be effectively contained, there is one issue that's been buried in the hubbub.

The noise from Saddam and the oil market jitters should remind us how dependent we have become on foreign oil and how far away our government remains from establishing policies to encourage domestic production.

More than half the oil used in the United States continues to come from imports.

And stretching back into the Bush and Reagan administrations, our government has ignored the need to balance import levels with oil produced at home.

As long as the United States remains so dependent on foreign oil, Saddam Hussein will be able to keep pulling our strings, while American oil producers are left scraping the bottom of the barrel.

Construction crazed

Imagine winning the lottery. Would it change your lifestyle? Would you buy a new house, a new car? When Texas A&M gets money, it goes hog wild, throwing money around like it's going out of style.

Last year, the Fightin' Texas Aggie Band performed an unusual half-time show in honor of the alumni's fund-raising. The University raised tons of money — \$500 million to be exact. How did they commemorate this monumental occasion? By marching in the formation of "500 million." For a world-class university, that's tacky.

Even more tacky is where this money ended up. The Board of Regents, once again acting in the best interest of everyone but the students, approved several major projects. It allocated little or none of this money to where it is needed most: attracting new, talented professors to replace gaps left by those whose retirements are drawing near, improving the content of the Sterling C. Evans Library (the desk doesn't count), or preserving and renovating our aging campus.

Instead, it began with the Reed Special Events Center, the skeleton of which can be seen on West Campus. The Special Events Center will obviously house special events, but seriously, how many special events will need the extra capacity that G. Rollie White does not provide?

The list begins with Muster and ends with commencement, with nothing in between.

The only way this Special Events Center makes any economic sense is if the University rents it out to a professional franchise. Hey — the Arena Football League is always looking to expand.

But the Board of Regents didn't stop with those two bank-breakers — it decided to add on to our aging library. But in their excitement, the regents forgot to add books to their wish list. Not that many of us use those things anymore, but the occasional literate freak shows up every so often. These projects



Columnist
Patrick Smiley
Sophomore
zoology major

have squandered much of the money, but there must be a little money left somewhere in the coffers. What to do with it must weigh heavily on the minds of the regents.

Well, in the spirit of irresponsibility, here are some insanely expensive suggestions.

The regents should shop around for a new transportation system to replace our archaic and oft-malfunctioning buses. Take a cue from Disney World and build a cool monorail train. Or, try converting the old steam tunnels into a subway system.

Some may ask why this money doesn't go to alleviate the real problems of the University, those concerning the students. Simpletons — that money was never intended to help the students, not after the regents got their hands on it. With all the money coming in, it is understandable why so little of it goes to repairing older buildings or investing in the future of our aging faculty by attracting quality replacements. History and quality are intangible, and cold hard cash is hard to pass up.

So what do the regents do? They take the money and build more buildings, which impress more alumni, who give more money to A&M — notice a trend developing? This philosophy of "build it and they will donate" excludes education because it is not readily visible.

With all the new buildings popping up, the campus will look pretty in the future. However, academic excellence better defines a university than all the enormous buildings in the world. Unfortunately, the only way the Board of Regents is willing to invest in academic excellence is through constantly increasing student fees.

Until the Board of Regents spreads the wealth to academic arenas of our University, instead of not-so special events centers and bookless libraries, our "world class" status will be merely physical.



MAIL CALL

Safety comes first at Aggie Bonfire

Regarding Danny Holwerda's Sept. 24 Mail Call, "Costs of Bonfire outweigh benefits:"

It appears that whenever a tragic event occurs in our lives, we have a need to know why it happened. When that reason does not justify our loss we point fingers to satisfy ourselves. True, this accident is a terrible loss and one that should not be forgotten.

A member of our Aggie family has passed away and we should all be sorry. However, do not blame Aggie Bonfire for this accident. It could have just as easily occurred after a game or yell practice. Should we then end Aggie Football? Aggie Bonfire takes an enormous amount of preparation to provide for safety at cut and stack. Maybe your friend that received stitches wasn't following the rules properly. Accidents are a part of life, but do not blame Aggie Bonfire.

If you believe Bonfire is unsafe, maybe you should take a long look at how much the redpots, yellowpots, buttpots and crew chiefs spend on the safety of others taking part in what is certainly the greatest tradition at A&M.

Aaron Flautt
Class of '98
Accompanied with over
40 signatures

Liberal leftists run amuck in The Batt

Am I the only one troubled by the fact The Battalion has become an unbalanced mouthpiece for the left?

I won't name names, but one writer thinks government should regulate free speech like a drug and believes that the product of an abortion, rather than the act itself, is "obscene."

Another is convinced that Bob Dole is nothing more than a reactionary bigot, despite that fact that if it wasn't for Dole, who owns an illustrious pro-civil rights record, the Civil Rights Act of 1965 may never have become law.

One columnist goes on a left-wing tirade about animal testing that was so erroneous, it proved to be more comical than informative. If he believes nearly one in ten children suffer a birth defect caused by animal testing, then he's probably been sold real estate in Arkansas.

Another get his kicks by trashing a mandated exercise of morality and thinks two men having sex is perfectly normal, calling an affirmation of common American values "a step backward."

These are those same "nattering nabobs of negativism" whose liberal propaganda undermines free and open thought, by slamming America's conservative principles and slandering such brilliant patriots as Barry Goldwater and Spiro Agnew, whose death was more than the tragic loss of an honorable statesman, but the passing of a great American hero.

The Battalion needs that same

voice speaking for our "silent majority" who supports free speech, respects human life, wants equal rights for all and special treatment for none and values the sanctity of God-ordained marriage.

We need a columnist who stands up for and advocates the common-sense conservatism so many of us treasure.

The Battalion needs a columnist who freely speaks our opinion, instead of parroting the shrill cries of the at ideological dinosaurs known as liberalism.

Donny Ferguson
Class of '99

Learn to respect others' differences

Regarding Thomas Meriwether's Sept. 24 Mail Call, "Homosexuals don't deserve equality:"

Once again, I was dismayed to see another Aggie fighting diligently to make A&M the most homogeneous campus in the nation.

Every time someone expresses an opinion that contrasts the popular majority they are fed the highly revered cliché, "Highway 6 runs both ways."

Perhaps since Meriwether just joined us at this fine University, he doesn't realize that some of the best lessons he will learn will be outside of the classroom.

College is a time to (yes, cringe at the thought) expand your mind. Meriwether and others like him should open their eyes and attempt to come away from A&M with more than a diploma.

Tonya Lee
Class of '98

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor. Letters must be 300 words or fewer and include the author's name, class, and phone number.
The opinion editor reserves the right to edit letters for length, style, and accuracy. Letters may be submitted in person at 013 Reed McDonald with a valid student ID. Letters may also be mailed to:
The Battalion - Mail Call
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For more details on letter policy, please call 845-3313 and direct your question to the opinion editor.