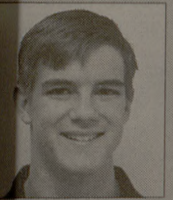


Massachusetts 1 - Educators 0

Majority of teachers fail to pass state-mandated certification exam



CHRIS HUFFINES
columnist

In 10 years, many who are now college students will have children, and these children will be in danger. They will not be in physical danger, but instead will be caught in the iron jaws of the public school system.

Tomorrow's teachers

and the chair of the Board resigned.

Saturday, the exam was administered again. Potential teachers either were confident they had passed or whining about how hard the exam was.

Justin Whitton, a graduate of Northeastern, complained that knowing such "obscure" English facts as the def-

ern classroom.

Another test-taker, Elizabeth Adkins, a graduate of Regis College who was tak-

material, such as the definition of a question, are on their way to get jobs.

They believe, after paying money to a university, it is society's duty to hand them the job of their choice, silver platter guaranteed. They believe the purpose of education is to pass their classes and get a diploma.

The truth of the matter is the purpose of education is to take advantage of the opportunity to learn.

Students in college are in the position to take advantage of an amazing array of opportunities that only can be found at a university.

The purpose of education is not to pick up a sheepskin and receipt on the way to the first paycheck.

The problem is too many students are not taking education seriously and are forgetting its true purpose.

The solution is to remember education exists so students can learn.

Exams, be they finals or teacher certification or even TAAS, test knowledge a student has gained.

Exams do not test how much information can be crammed into a skull and then regurgitated before it is quickly forgotten.

Those who did not learn failed the Massachusetts teacher examination. Those who did learn, passed it.

In 10 years, thanks to certification requirements like Massachusetts', America's children will be taught by teachers who have received a great wealth of knowledge and who can inspire the children to learn.

Anything less is inviting a poor level of education that will ruin the minds of the children of tomorrow.

Chris Huffines is a junior speech communications major.



inition of an interrogative sentence is not necessary in modern classrooms. It is difficult to believe interrogative sentences, more commonly known as questions, are unnecessary, especially in the mod-

the exam for the second time, said, "I paid \$80,000, and my piece of paper is worth nothing."

From these comments, the problem is apparent. Some students, students who do not know vital

will come from today's college students. Unfortunately, education is seen as another hurdle to get over before getting a job, which is the wrong attitude. Education is not a diploma. It is a chance to learn.

An excellent example of this comes from Massachusetts. Recently, the Massachusetts Board of Education decided to certify its school teachers, making it the 44th state to do so. The exam, which tests knowledge on a 10th-grade level, was administered earlier this year. Fifty-nine percent of the test-takers failed.

The Massachusetts State Board of Education moved to lower the passing score to allow an additional 260 teachers to graduate. Basically, it curved the exam so more than 10 percent of the failures could pass.

The governor, among other Massachusetts politicians, strongly objected. By the time the dust settled, the Board voted down the curved grades



MAIL CALL

Gun column misses mark

In response to April Towery's July 20, column:

April Towery's opinion suffers from a common problem: While condemning certain behavior for Christians, she fails to support her opinion with any biblical authority.

Instead, she sandwiches ad hominem attacks on the character and motivations of those with whom she disagrees ("fell off the turnip truck", "an excuse... to have a power trip", "stupid and irrational") around a polemic against gun ownership in general and the NRA in particular.

If she had researched what the Bible says about self-defense, she would find that the Bible supports killing in self-defense (Exodus 22:1-3).

If she is worried about interpreta-

tion or context, she could research the Christian or Talmudic commentary on these verses which state a criminal's willingness to use deadly force makes killing that criminal lawful. This is repeated in three separate places in the Talmud.

Neither the Bible nor Talmud require killing the criminal, but both allow killing the criminal in self-defense and in defense of property.

I refer primarily to the Talmud because the Talmudic writers were better acquainted with the cultural issues than many of the Christian writers.

The Talmud directly addresses the question of day v night. It is not that the thief might be identified, but that houses' occupants were certainly home at night and so any thief entering at night would be reasonably sure to have to fight it out with the members of the household.

This was not true of the daytime when errands would often take many of the individuals out of a house.

If Towery feels the Old Testament's restrictions are legalistic and wonders only "What would Jesus do?" then she need look no further than Matthew 21:12-13 (parallel with Mark 11:15-17 and Luke 19:45-46).

When Jesus found people in the Temple who were conducting what most people nowadays would call legitimate business, he drove them out. Does she think they went out

meekly and without complaint? More likely they left because they were in fear of imminent bodily harm. By Jesus' standard, these people were stealing from others while in God's house.

Should the ministers and elders disavow Jesus' example when the theft is more open and brazen?

Suggesting that those thrown out may have feared the crowd instead of Jesus begs the question of why Jesus would be willing to incite a crowd to possible violence if such violence was wrong. Threatening is just as wrong as doing.

Applying Jesus' example, the very people who should defend church property are the ones the Lexington law allows.

John M. Willenthal

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor. Letters must be 300 words or less 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:

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Credit card companies entice college students into debt

When students look to credit card companies to provide an extra income, they set themselves up for financial chaos.

Melinda Tscappat, former banker and author of *The Pitfalls of Plastic Credit Cards*, said credit card companies target students because they will be good future income producers.

With this in mind, companies give financially struggling college students the opportunity to buy things. Students accept these offers based on their want or need to buy things.

Unfortunately, students are guilty of accepting these offers without the proper knowledge of handling finances.

Financial literacy is vital to successfully and responsibly avoiding debt.

Credit card companies prey on college students by enticing them with the powers to purchase and possibilities of plastic. Tscappat reports that over 2 billion credit card solicitations are mailed out each year.

Students are attracted to the "Buy Now, Pay Later" overture of the offers. This causes students to indulge themselves and spend money that they do not actually have.

When purchasing, credit cards create the illusion that there are no immediate consequences.

Credit card users do not see money flying from their wallets or checkbooks; therefore, students begin overcharging and exceeding their budgets.

"This nightmare starts from spending \$10 on school supplies or \$20 on a new pair of pants for an interview or a date," Tscappat said.

Charge cards allow students to entertain their consumer fantasies.

Students begin by supporting the sacred shopping binge, frequently going out to eat and using their credit for entertainment purposes.

"I have been in the habit of paying off large chunks off my cards, then charging them back up the following week," Michael Thompson, a senior history major, said.

Thompson is one of many students who are



ALISON LACKEY
columnist

thousands of dollars in debt. "I have charged stereo stuff for my car, a lot of Playstation games and a lot of clothes," Thompson said.

The National Association of Consumer Agency Administrators reports that credit purchases should not exceed 15 to 20 percent of net income. However, often times in cases similar to Thompson's, purchases do exceed a student's income.

The NACAA also suggests card holders should spend no more than what can be paid off in 12 months. College students also need to understand that amounts not paid in full each month mean paying interest on interest. Paying interest on interest easily can be the cause of future debt.

According to U.S. News and World Report, teenagers 16 to 19 influence their families to spend \$109 billion for consumer products. Students who live a lifestyle supported by parents sometimes have trouble making the transition to the economic lifestyle of a college student.

This is why it is important for parents to guide their children to making independently responsible decisions regarding credit. Students who are not properly educated about finance will abuse credit cards and relinquish themselves to bad credit history that is sometimes beyond repair.

Credit card companies are hopeful that parents and guardians have not had the "credit talk" with their kids.

Therefore, financial literacy is an important responsibility every college student should acquire.

There are places for students to get help in acquiring this knowledge.

The National Foundation of Consumer Credit, National Institute for Consumer Education and the Jumpstart Coalition for Personal Financial Literacy are examples of agencies with Internet sites offering educational programs and counseling for students.

Students and parents should take the initiative to educate themselves about credit. Doing this makes it possible for students to avoid future problems — namely drowning in debt.

Alison Lackey is a senior English major.

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