

Battalion

Putting a cap on learning

State legislature will end up hurting students in search of knowledge rather than slackers



ZACH HALL

legue as a pursuit of knowledge. To the credit of the legislators, they have responded to the criticism that has been generated since the passage of the bill. Currently, a bill is in the senate that addresses many of the problems of the original senate bill.

Authored by Sen. Teal Bivins, who also authored S.B. 1907, Senate Bill 345 would "grandfather" the original bill. This means any student who was enrolled prior to the Fall 1999, whether he has taken 3 hours or 173 hours, will be exempt from the 170 hour maximum.

Furthermore it takes into account the number of credit hours required for a student to graduate. The provision stipulates a student will be allowed 45 extra hours in addition to the minimum required for his degree plan; after the additional 45 hours, a student is required to pay out-of-state tuition.

However, the new bill does not make provisions for those who have withdrawn from school or have transferred hours from other state institutions that do not apply to their degree at the new institution.

Therefore, if a student has transferred with 60 hours, but only 20 count toward his degree plan, he still has 40 hours that count toward his extra 45 hours. That leaves him with only 5 credit hours that he may Q-drop, fail or withdraw from.

What the legislators do not seem to realize is that there are many more students who fall under this category than those who are "mooching off the system."

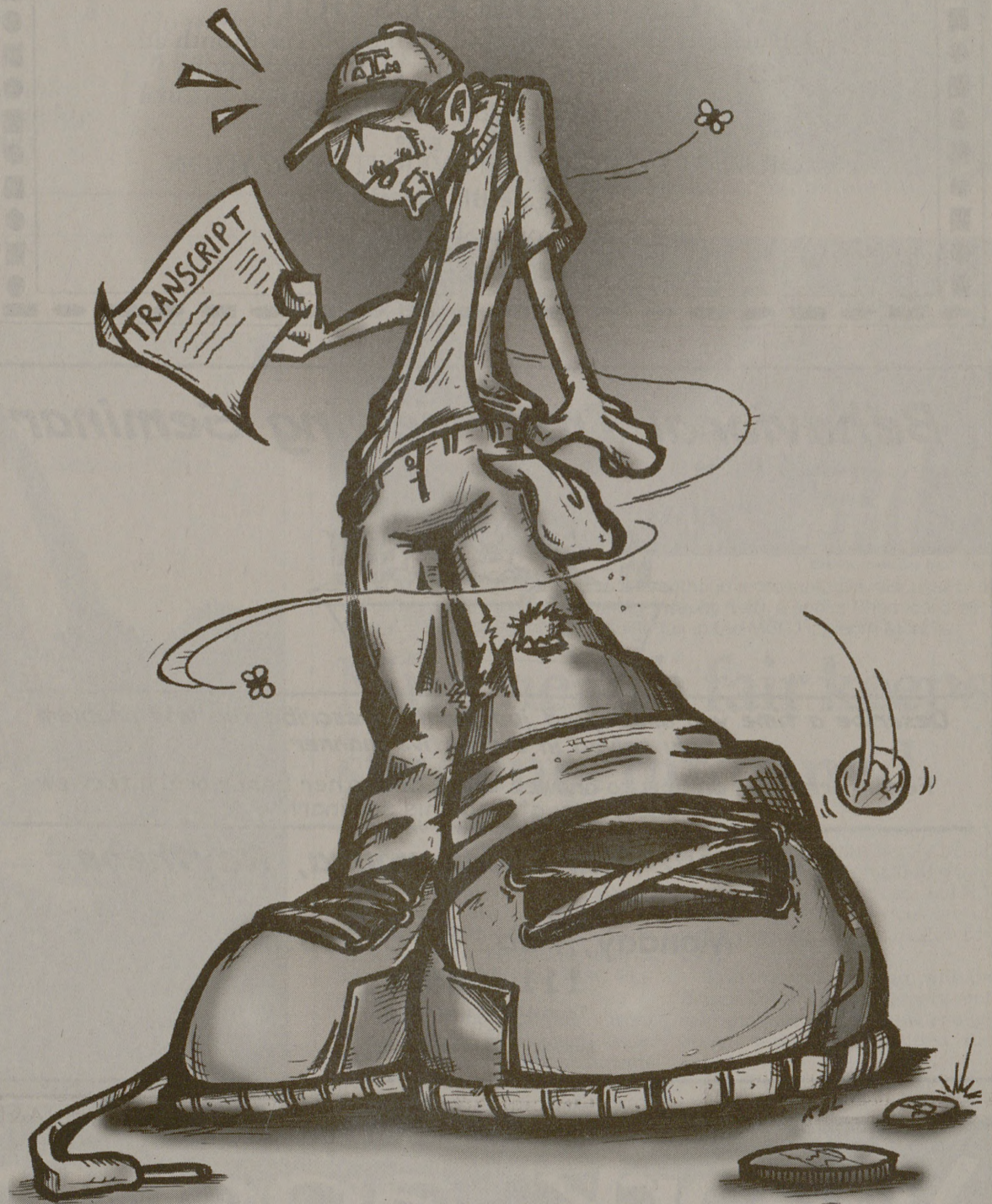
It is unfortunate higher education is seen as a production line of future money makers for the state and not as an institution for the pursuit and expansion of knowledge.

If the state wants to try and save taxpayers' money and hold career students accountable, then they need to mandate that each individual institution set its own policing system, instead of passing catch-all legislation that punishes the innocent.

Individual state institutions would be given the task of keeping track of how student's hours are accumulated. It would not be too difficult to find the students who have changed majors three or four times and hold them financially accountable. In addition, it would allow schools to make exceptions for students who have legitimate reasons for surpassing 170 credit hours.

The state legislature will make a step in the right direction toward modifying the "Slacker Bill" by passing S.B. 345, particularly with its "grandfather" clause. However, it must be careful not to damage higher education by punishing the whole to get to a few.

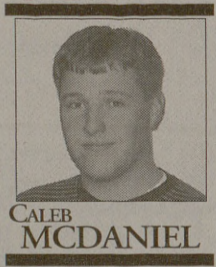
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RUBEN DELUNA/THE BATTALION

Commerce without morality leads to a ruthless American society

At the recent World Economic Forum Davos, Switzerland, United Nations Secretary-General Annan called for a new era of money morality. He called for a new morality in business to promote human rights, environmental consciousness and labor organization in countries where they invest. We have to choose between a global market driven only by calculations of short-term profit and one which has a human face," Annan said in a *New York Times* article. This and other clarion calls to reform the humanitarian side of economics are needed precisely because they are neglected. Far from wearing a human face, the face of the business community is often one of indifference to the common good. Uncle Sam especially has money on his mind and dollar signs in his eyes,



CALEB MCDANIEL

and unfortunately, the kindred foundations of capitalism and democracy have misled us to think the free market is always intrinsically worthwhile.

However, the assumption that market forces will make companies to behave themselves is naive at best and nonsensical at worst.

In a world where the touch of a computer key can move billions of dollars around the globe, eager investors can tromp through developing economies like a bull market in a china shop. The pursuit of profit can often devolve into greed.

Consequently, the United States must be careful not to commit what Gandhi listed as a cardinal social sin — commerce without morality.

Annan's concern about the need for socially responsible businesses is echoed around the world. There is a rising awareness, especially in the emerging world, that something is wrong with a global economy capable of erasing years of development because of the whims of market sentiment. Cutthroat competition can cut the

throats of Third World economies, and on the fast track to exorbitant economic growth, wealthy countries see more dollar signs than yield signs. On this highway, roadkill is not rare.

Ultimately, though, the problems of a global economy controlled by uncontrollable capital flows will only be solved when a greater sense of moral responsibility is born among international businesses.

Until then, corporations will often find they have a vested interest in not being interested in the moral dimensions of commerce.

They can take advantage of labor markets in countries where they do not have to pay a minimum wage or can legally hire children.

They can exploit speculative stock trading to wreck markets while bringing home the bacon.

They can reorganize themselves into gargantuan mergers and cut costs by cutting thousands of jobs.

In short, until businesses realize that their bottom line is not the true bottom line, corporate boards will continue to

cow-tow to clamorous investors.

Therefore, one way ordinary people can make a change is through socially responsible investing.

Whereas many economic advisors assume their only moral behavior is to maximize returns for shareholders, many investors are beginning to show they have complex goals and are not willing to sacrifice their personal values before a golden calf.

By investing in companies concerned with environmental protection, labor rights and social well being, investors can build portfolios that will force companies to a higher level of moral responsibility.

Hazel Henderson, an advisor for Calvert Social Investment Funds, said "it is possible to go much farther, to change today's global economic warfare into a win-win game in which most ethical countries and companies can succeed.

"In the largest planetary context, all our individual self-interests are converging toward the evolution of healthy human societies within nature's ecological capacity. With longer time horizons

in view, earth ethics and human morality simply become pragmatic."

Although many American companies are leading the way to this economic order with a human face, the United States still has a long way to go.

Politicians still chant the mantra of economic growth as if limitless wealth is inherently desirable.

Companies still lay off hundreds of employees with hardly a second thought.

And meanwhile, a growing division between rags and riches in this country desperately needs attention.

To combat these problems, commerce must be more stringently tempered by morality. People must be prioritized above profits.

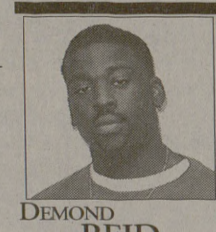
Eugene V. Debs, a monumental figure in American labor history, once said, "Money constitutes no proper basis for civilization."

Truly, it as the apostle Paul wrote, "The love of money is a root of all kinds of evil."

Caleb McDaniel is a sophomore history major.

People should be aware of audience lest misunderstandings occur

No man is an island unto himself. Each action a man takes either directly or indirectly affects other people. One in America lives in a glass bubble.



DEMOND REID

Before Howard could apologize, the train of public gossip was already in motion and the unintended offense railroaded him straight into Resignationville.

After the press reported the incident, Howard was tagged the worst racist since Archie Bunker.

However, Howard did not deserve to be forced into resignation.

He deserved noogies and an atomic wedgie for being such an oblivious idiot not to recognize the sheer mayhem that one word could cause.

Howard was stricken with a severe case of intelligent ignorance. It is great that he is smart enough to use "niggardly" in its proper context, but it is sad that he was not smart enough to not use the word.

Howard seemed unaware of the time and place he is living in. Washington D.C. has a dense black population.

How could he not even consider the word might be misunderstood by the constituents? These are the same people who reelected Marion Barry after he was caught with a prostitute smoking crack.

Communication is not only what is being said, but also how that information is understood. Howard failed to take into account his audience.

If any normal person had to make a speech in front of the National Organization of Women, it is doubtful that they would use the word cunnicularious, even though that word is not misogynistic in meaning.

Using those words would show an extensive knowledge of words but an intense ignorance of people.

If a person had to make a speech in front of the League of United Latin American Citizens, no matter how damp their posterior region became,

they would not dare to utter the phrase "wet back." Why? Because the racial climate in this country has gotten more tense than a disgruntled postal worker going through nicotine withdrawal.

Some may blame political correctness, instead of Howard, for the situation. However, political correctness, much like the Internal Revenue Service, is a necessary evil this country needs to publicly protect some groups from unnecessary ridicule.

Without political correctness blacks would be portrayed as criminals in the media, Native Americans would be used as mascots for professional sport teams and Pat Robertson would be able to damn all homosexuals to hell.

Howard is nothing more than a sacrificial lamb to the great god of political correctness, but he has nobody to blame for his situation but himself.

There were many other words he

could have used. But for some incomprehensible reason he chose the one word that could offend a large portion of the city.

He might have been able to get away with using "niggardly" in Minnesota, where the only black people there play for the Vikings, but not in Washington D.C. where a large portion of the population would be offended.

He had a position of influence but failed his responsibility to always consider the people who has hired to represent.

Howard should have taken the advice given by Jesus in the Bible when he said, "With great power comes great responsibility." No wait that was not said by Jesus in the Bible, that was said by Peter Parker in Spiderman.

Demond Reid is a sophomore marketing major.