

Stress reduction plan: a step in the wrong direction

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The administration of the school is beginning to review problems with academic workload - a thing which needs a good amount of attention. Unfortunately, by attempting to increase standardization they seem to be falling into a trap that has snared too many of our educational institutions.

The plan as presented to the student body consisted of a schedule outlining how long the 'average' student should spend on his/her classes, homework, extracurricular activities, and even personal hygiene.

The plan is to attempt to ensure that out of class workloads remain safely within their allotted four hour time slots - with the option to apply for additional hours available for teachers if they feel their class deserves more time.

Additional changes being discussed include placing a limit on the number of classes and seminars students may take and possibly instituting a lights out policy.

We have a number of problems with these suggestions; one of the foremost is the huge diversity of students towards which this school is catering. With such a huge variance of skills, interests, and commitments, we don't understand how such a generic outline could possibly meet the needs of the student body. We'd be willing to bet it would be impossible to find the common '90%' of students this plan was supposed to represent.

Where do we draw the line between the "healthy

stress" that induces us to work effectively and "unhealthy stress" that has everyone so worried? This distinction seems extremely personal. One of the best ways to determine this would be encouraging strong relationships between students and their academic advisors - not a blanket, school wide policy.

Keep the surveys; accurate predictions of the amount of outside work expected for particular classes are valuable to students for scheduling purposes. But don't try to enforce limits on classes; list the estimated hours in the course catalogue, and let us decide, with the help of our advisors, what we can handle.

If Dr. Kolena and Dr. Allen want to join forces and teach a class that requires 25 out-of-class hours a week, good for them! They shouldn't have to apply for this privilege. If students are willing, let them push themselves. If someone balks at the time commitment for Physics with Topics, encourage them to take General Physics - don't slow down the Topics class.

Student academic autonomy is one of Science and Math's largest appeals. It is also important that, as students, we are allowed to push ourselves and take classes in which we are interested, with qualified and competent instructors who are trusted and respected enough by the administration to teach in the manner they think best.

In the words of one particularly verbose senior, "We came here to be challenged, to escape from dictatorial administrators with Napoleonic complexes and love affairs with hall passes and other

manifestations of bureaucratic red tape." Somehow, with all the talk of regulating our classes, homework, and sleep cycles, that escape seems a little less sweet.

Students who come to this school do so with the expectation that they will be challenged. It may mean we have to stay up until 4:00 AM every once and a while in order to take the classes we want and still get our work done. Personally, though, I think this is one of the best aspects of Science and Math.

We guarantee that, in ten years, we'll value the amazing education and experience we've had here more than we'll miss any lost sleep.

When we think about the changes being planned for Science and Math, we are concerned for the future of our school. Our experience here has been remarkable, but we fear that in our overzealous attempts to control every variable we encounter, we are jeopardizing the academic and social integrity of our school.

We think it's time that the movers and shakers of this school took a step back and decided what they really want: a school where there is no danger of anyone overreaching themselves, not getting enough sleep, or taking one too many classes because students are discouraged from pushing their limits, or a school where students are forced to learn how to manage time and stress, take utmost advantage of an amazing, motivated teaching staff, explore academically, and are unfettered by unnecessary, standardized regulations.

Our school cannot have both.

Lowering Standards

EMILY CURRIN

Sparked by the Project 540 words "shut up you whiney baby," many students at NCSSM have been complaining more than usual. Yes, it is true that we all have mounds of homework, that we don't always like the administration, and the attendance policy is not the best, but recently I heard a new complaint that I did agree with. Chris Haagen started a rant about how girls at NCSSM had high standards that the boys here (which are definitely below standard, as Chris Haagen said) could never meet.

Chris suggested that the female population of NCSSM needed to lower their standards. Just from an outsider's view I have seen many girls here who appear to be "lowering their standards."

It seems that girls have given up on our hopes of a tall dashing boy and are settling for shorter, less socially developed types.

There are others of us who may just be choosing not to settle and are hoping for a brighter, less computer-oriented type of guy in the future. These types of girls have become disillusioned after their tumultuous NCSSM experiences with boys. I do not know if many of them can be saved before they graduate.

Instead of making the girls lower their standards once again, I thought I could suggest a few tips:

1) First of all, boys, you should not be scared by a girl who wears a little bit of make-

up. Don't think we are trying to look nice for you; it's a personal self-confidence thing.

2) Remember that girls here look nice or at least presentable most of the time, but if you see us one time and we look exceptionally tired, sickly, or not our best, it is not your duty as a male to tell us so. "What's wrong with your hair?" and "Wow, you look really bad. Are you tired?" are not appreciated!

3) Also, it is very encouraging when a boy says "Hello, insert name here." This provides positive reinforcement. Now, if you happen to forget a girl's name do not just guess at what it could be and make yourself look like a fool. Instead say something like, "Hey, girl" - even the "what up, homey-g?" would work. Just do not use the wrong name.

4) Never let it get out that you a) want to hook up with someone or b) really want a girl-friend. No one wants to date someone who appears to be on the verge of desperado.

I suggest to Chris Haagen and the other boys out there that maybe you are looking for love in all the wrong places. I know lots of girls who would be interested in something; everyone wants to have a little fun now and then anyways, right? Boys, you need to change your whole attitude. It's not necessarily that the ladies here have standards are too high and that you just don't fit into these categories. You just need to take what you got and work with it. It's all about turning a 5.0 into a 10.0.

To: My Dearest Other Half
Although they would tear us apart. I know we will be together again soon. A bond like ours is eternal.
- East Hunt

I LOVE YOU MR. BATHAX! You are my fire! My one desire. With much love,
Hubert Liu

Samia -
Thanks for being so wonderful. You really are the greatest. I love you!!!

To: Andrea Clark
You know what you are to me, so I don't have to explain; but _____
Jay

To: Mr. Liu
You need a kick in the slats!
- Morrison

To: Alia, Sonya and Ivana
You three really are wonderful!
I miss you!
Love, Sarah

To: Emolie
I wrote your name in the sky,
but the wind blew it away. I wrote your name in my heart and there it will stay!
~Thien

To: Evan Ritter
Thank you for 17 great months.
Happy Valentine's Day.
I love you.
Love, Amanda

To: Lauren Wagner
Then let amorous kisses dwell on our lips, begin to tell a Thousand, and a Hundred, score a Hundred, and a Thousand more...

Devki -
you are the best! I am so glad that we are together. You are one of the few people that make me truly happy. Much love
- Keith.

To: Guiane Baker
U are my hero! Thanks for saving me from those 1E people. All the nights of Web Assign wouldn't be as magical without you! Dawgs 4 life -
Morgan

To: Terri
No crappy poem for you. I'll just say I love you.
- Jittorz

Dylan,
What did the kittens ever do to you? Love,
GG and AC

To: Ivana Vu
Much love to the greatest Jr. sister ever! Sorry I haven't been a better senior brother.
- Ben

My 4B girls, and my pseudo-4B girls (Jade, Leah, and Janet!) I love you guys so much. Thanks for making this year so awesome. Happy Valentine's Day!
Love, Angie