



LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Dear Sir:

I. Academic standards

A few weeks ago, the Hilltop carried a list of those students on the Honor Roll of the Academic Dean. Requirements are "a quality point ratio of 3.5 on a minimum of 12 semester hours and no grade below C". One hundred and eighty-six people were on that list out of an enrollment of 1464. The percentage of the student body on the Dean's List is therefore 12.7%. If we use the number that started the fall semester (1515), that percentage is 12.3%. The average of SAT scores reported in the ACE Profile for the class entering in the fall of 1972 was 847, and is not noticeably different for other years previous to 1972. Students here are obviously not of exceptional ability when evaluated by national standards, and yet that number on the Honor Roll still glares at me. As an outsider, I might think that the college is doing an excellent job with the material at hand. However, as one inside this system, I cannot agree. I know a fairly representative segment of the student body. I know the approximate amount of time my fellow students study. And I know that 186 students should not have made the Honor Roll when this college claims high academic standards.

The competency-based curriculum that is in the making may remedy this. The present system could remedy this, but at present the college is much more concerned with keeping enrollment up to profitable levels. I know that too many drop-outs mean too little income. I am well aware that the college has responsibilities other than those to the students, but what has happened to some of the goals in the college's Statment of Purpose? Which is more im-

protant, survival of the institution of effective education of students?

II. Co-ordination of the groups within the college community

If we divide the different parts of the college according to function five categories become apparent: administration, faculty, students, staff, and alumni. I realize that students are transitory to a greater degree than is any other group mentioned, but all groups must be considered when policies are formulated. The mechanism for reciprocal communication between student body and administration exists, but that mechanism is functioning poorly at present. "A well-organized Student Government Association . . . is the agency through which the students govern themselves and have voice in the management of the college." It is understood by this statement that the administration depends upon student government for indications of student opinion. The student handbook says: "SGA is your voice to the faculty, the administration, and those outside the academic community. **You have a duty** (emphasis mine) to support the organization and to communicate your needs to the elected leaders of the Student Government Association". In Article V, Section (C-4), the SGA constitution states a duty of the legislative branch: To ". . . pursue recommendations from the students of Mars Hill College." Unfortunately, SGA gets only trifling input from other students; we are notoriously apathetic. Even this spring's football controversy was short-lived.

The proposed competency-based curriculum can foster student involvement, but the embarrassment is that students have not participated more in the planning of this new educational approach. A few students on the Curriculum Committee

do not constitute student involvement; open forums held in each residence hall the week preceding fall break do not constitute student involvement. Cannot something more be done?

III. The quietus of traditional education

Recently, the foreign language requirement was eliminated and "culture courses" replaced it. The rationale seems to be that a knowledge of another culture can be attained without its language. The speech of a nation is an integral part of its culture. No amount of "culture courses" can replace a working knowledge of a language. The college affirms in its Statement of Purpose ". . . its commitment to liberal education . . .". This "liberal arts" college no longer requires courses in history, literature, music or art appreciation, philosophy, or public speaking. All of these subjects are worthy of attention in a liberal arts school. Two Human Societies courses and "at least one course in communication skills" cannot act as effective catch-alls for all of these disciplines. I fervently hope that the competency-based curriculum at least in part revives traditional education, for the present approach is a travesty of the stated goals.

IV. Conclusion

I am not a radical by any stretch of the imagination, but I sometimes feel the zealot's passion when I consider the corruption of education in this college. That there are better or worse schools is not at all the point. Mars Hill College can and should do a better job:

- (1) A new curriculum cannot alone raise academic standards. The faculty can solve that problem if allowed to demand satisfactory work without hints from the administration that the students must be allowed to pass.
- (2) I believe students will cease to be apathetic only when they have an honest expectation of being heard. Imagine the excitement if we felt we could truly share in policy decisions!
- (3) The competency curriculum can remedy some of the deficiencies now existing in this school's educational system. I commend you on a step forward if you do not again defect to the camp of mediocrity.

I expect this letter to accomplish very little. It is only my last plea for the administration to stop side-stepping problems that have been here for years. When I graduate this spring, I will begin to be less involved but not less interested. It would be gratify-

ing to the extreme to know, as I leave, that this letter has served a constructive end.

Sincerely,

Danny Wellborne

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

Comments on the editorial written by Ken Chamlee in the April 15 edition of the Hilltop.

Upon reading the article by Ken Chamlee and how he complimented the Elections Committee on their outstanding work, I feel I must speak for the Track Team, who would also wish to extend their gratitude to the Committee for not giving them the opportunity to vote. One must realize that the margin of victory was a mere 23 votes out of over 800 total votes.

I would also like to thank the Elections Committee for the response they failed to give when a legitimate protest was filed on behalf of the track team. I must agree with Mr. Chamlee, how could any committee have been any more fair?

Sincerely,

David "The Kid" Boschelli

LETTER TO THE EDITOR

This is written in response to the article appearing in the April 15th edition of the Hilltop written by Ken Chamlee. I feel an obligation to respond due to the inaccuracies and misrepresentations presented, which can not fairly go unchallenged.

Mr. Chamlee would have us believe that the campaign of David Boschelli for President was one of "slanted accusations" which gained the endorsement of a few misguided individuals. Lets look at the facts of the campaign, as painful as it may be for Mr. Chamlee.

In the first ballot for S.G.A. elections, position papers were issued by Larry Pike and David Boschelli. The Pike position papers came out before those issued by Boschelli. In short, Larry Pike did not know what positions David Boschelli would take when

his paper was released. Yet in the Pike paper he stated that his opposition were making "headstrong demands" which would not be heard by the Administration. He stated that his opposition were "radicals that would be the ruination of Student Government" on this campus. Mr. Pike was engaging in one of two things in my opinion; 1) he has an amazing ability as a seer, who can predict the actions of his opponent, or 2) he was using an old political technique of playing off your opposition as radicals thus trying to alienate the voters from that candidate, before that candidate can reach the voters with his real opinion. When the Boschelli paper did come out, I find it hard to believe that any reasonable person could realistically call it radical. Yet the damage had been done, and for the rest of the campaign Boschelli spent much of his time defending himself against the radical label, instead of devoting himself to the real issues of the campaign.

Mr. Chamlee tries to portray Pike as the victim of unfair accusations, yet David Boschelli only discussed the issues. I challenge anyone to show me anything that was put out under the Boschelli-Gardner ticket which was anything less than an attempt to put the issues before the Student Body. I can not say the same for the material issued by Larry Pike.

Finally, I think it is sad to think that we had a Vice-President for a year that thinks so many of the people he represented are "gullible people . . . that never think but only repeat criticism they hear", as hard as this S.G.A. may try, they can not write off 49% of the voters as merely "gullible people," many of whom had never been involved at all, but did so for someone they thought was really trying to do something for them. will not lose hope. As Robert Kennedy once said, "A ripple of hope can break down the mightiest wall of oppression," for many people on this campus David Boschelli was that ripple of hope, it is really a shame that he was so misunderstood by so many who never bothered to give him a fair hearing. But there is still much to be done and you are the only ones who can make it work.

Jim Ramsey



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LAUREL

TO ARRIVE

1st WEEK IN MAY

The '74 Laurel is scheduled to arrive from the printer during the first week in May. The eligibility of students to receive a copy of the book will be certified by the college business office, which will distribute (through the college post office) cards of eligibility sometime around the first of May.

Students who do not receive a card should check with the business office to settle unpaid accounts there, at the library, traffic office, infirmary and similar places on campus.

Faculty and staff members may purchase copies of the yearbook through the bookstore.



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