

Replicating tests is a sign of professors' laziness

Some professors are just too lazy to do it. Maybe all the hard work they put in to get their Ph.D.s has finally worn them out.

Drama bogged down a communication class at the University last year. The professor found that a good number of students had past tests and were passing theirs with flying colors.

The skies fell, controversy ensued, and the professor made threats. "You have to fess up," he declared in a mass e-mail to the students. Everyone talked about it.

The professor was happy when a couple of students admitted they had access to past tests. He was happy they owned up. He was happy his threat to go to the division head worked. He never admitted he was wrong. Not even once.

Some professors can be strange creatures. First, they slog their heads off to acquire their Ph.D.s, then they decide to behave more stupidly than the students who admit they were wrong in having past tests. They talk about hard work and decide not to change one question on a test. They rant about academic integrity, and they play a major role in helping students meander as far away from it as possible.

Seriously, how long does it take to change a few questions on a test? How long does it take for someone who has written umpteen thesis papers for his or her Ph.D. to set a mid-term exam?

A few office hours a week, three classes, some students to advise and papers to grade – isn't that mostly what professors' workload is all about? So how can they justify using the same paper they used a



Prajwal Sharma

decade ago and have the audacity to accuse students of academic dishonesty?

OK, I admit you need to put the important questions on tests. I admit chances of repetition of these questions are high. I admit no matter how much you change a test, prospects of its looking very different from a previous test are low. Important questions need to be on the test, come what may.

But allowing the students to take a test that is a total replica of what you have been using for years? Is that not a dead giveaway that the professor might be attaching a little too much importance to getting his or her book written on time than on shaping young minds?

Professors should understand that students having past tests causes problems not only for professors. (To be honest, I will delightfully clap and cheer if I do find a professor being stressed out about students getting past tests. He or she deserves it for being more in lust with attending conferences and seminars than

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helping students, but that's beside the point.) It causes problems for students who do not get access to past tests. It's natural for these students to feel betrayed. They do not deserve to be at the receiving end of their classmates' social connections or their professor's lack of motivation.

Scott Ellis, dean of the science division, said instances of student complaints are not entirely nonexistent.

"I've had complaints from students about how other students in the class have easier access to the tests," he said. "I think the best thing to do is take it up to the faculty member and let him know about the problem."

Yeah, that might just be the right option. And if professors still keep the tests the same after that, we know they might just be too busy to not do the one thing they are paid to do.

Prajwal Sharma is a senior communication major from Gangtok, Sikkim.

Tale of Bulgarian students calls into question meaning of America

Until one week ago, the only America they knew relied on horse-drawn carriages instead of cars and encouraged visitors to check reality at the ferry dock.

Then they came to Kirksville and encountered an America with which they had yet to be acquainted.

Vladimir Tsvetkov and Zhenya Mavrodieva temporarily left their university lives in Bulgaria to find work and adventure in the United States. With the help of a cultural exchange program called "Live the Dream," they found themselves placed on Mackinac Island, Mich., a two-by-three mile pleasure island floating in the Great Lake waters where cars are outlawed in favor of the horse and buggy, fudge is more plentiful than bread, and bottomless glasses never extinguish the endless flow of wine.

Every time a cultural pattern seemingly would present itself to Vladimir or Zhenya, leading one or the other to make a blanket observation about this strange country, one of their American co-workers would chuckle, dismissively shake his or her head and reply, "You don't have any idea what America is. This place is not America."

Zhenya and Vladimir endlessly puzzled about this inevitable retort, wondering what mysterious, crucial piece of America their experiences lacked.

Then the dream began to sour. First, management began cutting hours, foreboding the nightmare that was to come. Eventually the hotel where they worked no longer needed their help, and they were informed that they had to move out of the employee housing within five days – two months before the termination date



Katie Gilbert

of their employment contracts.

Armed with two plane tickets useful in late October and no job prospects, Vlado and Zhenya truly had no choice other than to jump on a Greyhound bus and head south to Kirksville, where they would find shelter with a friend they'd met up with on Mackinac during the summer. Perhaps in this new place they also would discover the elusive America they'd traveled so far to see.

On their first night in town, seated around a kitchen table with six or seven Truman students, Zhenya and Vlado again heard the subject of "real" America being discussed. The group marveled at the irony of two Eastern Europeans journeying so far and serendipitously ending up in Kirksville.

"Kirksville is not real America," one of the students heartily assured their visitors. That was it. Finally, Vladimir had to demand clarification.

"Mackinac Island is not real America, Kirksville is not real America. Someone please tell me: Where can I find America?"

The group fell silent. Autopilot answers rose to each set of lips, but they were

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choked back when each individual realized he or she had never even seen the example he or she was ready to offer. Stating what America wasn't certainly appeared to be much easier than stating what America definitively was. At the end of this line of thought, however, the group would be left to one conclusion: Their country was nowhere to be found.

Each time we find ourselves whittling down the definition of our country to rid it of the facets that seem out of place on American soil, perhaps we should question the rules of exclusion we've placed on that soil. Zhenya and Vladimir will form a conception of America that includes not only the dreamy but the nightmarish as well. Are we going to tell them they're wrong?

An affirmative answer begs the question: If someone showed you the America in your description, would you even recognize it?

Katie Gilbert is a senior psychology major from Lenexa, Kan.

With change comes inevitable variable of stalled progress

It is funny the things you think of when you drive home every weekend during the summer semester. You begin to wonder why Highway 63 just can't be completed already. Remember that nice aerial picture in the Index a couple of weeks ago showing the four-lane progress? It sure looks pretty from the air, but pretty isn't going to get me home faster. In fact, I wonder what would happen if I started driving on those roads that are supposedly "closed." I mean, a lot of sections look finished. According to an article in the April 7 edition of the Index, the expansion is supposed to be completed in October. All I know is some parts look finished, and I am looking forward to the day it goes to four lanes. The speed limit should be adjusted accordingly.

Of course, something similar happened when I came back this fall. I swear the sidewalk between Magruder and the Physical Plant moved sometime between the end of July and the end of August. There I was, the first week of classes, trying to figure out where the sidewalk went and why it suddenly got so close to that fence in front of Magruder. By the way, those metal stands on the ground that hold the fence up are dangerous. I have seen people trip and fall. Not only should there be a map to get around the Physical Plant, but they also need warning signs.

This brings me to my next point, though. Why isn't Magruder finished? I was a student ambassador last year, and on all my tours, I would tell prospective students that Magruder would be finished



Katie Stuart

by the time they got here. Maybe I am gullible, but I believed it, which is why I said it. Now, if any of those students on my tour decided to come here, they probably think I was lying, and that might make them ask themselves what else I was lying about in regard to Truman. I mean, it's possible not to ever get bored with shopping at Wal-Mart, right?

During the summer, I cheered the moving of bike racks to the perimeter of campus. Truman really is a walking campus. I mean, once you get here from your apartment, it is really necessary to bike from Baldwin Hall to Ophelia Parrish? I can hear all you bike riders out there saying you ride your bike from building to building so you can leave from that last class to go off campus. But would it really hurt to bike around, not through, campus? And if you live on campus, honestly, what do you have a bike here for anyway?

But, again, how stupid of me to think moving the bike racks would solve the problem. I couldn't help but notice walk-

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ing on the Dobson Hall side of Violette Hall the other day, how many bikes were chained to trees and the guardrails. For a little more than three years, my life has been flashing before my eyes every time one of those "silent" bikes come speeding up from behind me. You know what I mean: If you hear the bike coming, you can get out of the way. Prospective students and their parents would ask me about campus safety. Yeah, things are stolen, books disappear, but the true threat to your bodily safety is the bikes you don't hear racing up behind you.

Truman makes progress, putting new plans and rules into place. We look forward to the new science building, then the new dorm and celebrated the opening of OP a few years ago. We create new rules and take them away. But with progress come some pitfalls. Truman is certainly not exempt from those.

Katie Stuart is a senior business administration major from Maryland Heights, Mo.

Around the Quad

This week's question: "How safe do you feel walking around campus alone at night?"



A.J. Barks senior

"While I do feel relatively safe, I think we have a long way to go on campus in our attitudes toward assault."



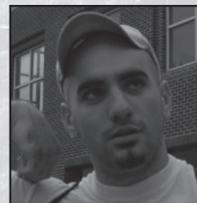
Rachael Mangiore sophomore

"Last semester I walked around alone at one in the morning on campus, but I was always on the phone. I felt fine."



Derek Wilhelm sophomore

"I feel totally safe. Generally you see other people walking around, too, and it's pretty well-lit."



Mike Rybak sophomore

"Pretty safe because I have enormous biceps."

Truman's ties with Boeing are troubling

According to Truman Today, the University's weekly public relations flier, the Boeing Company recently gave Truman \$50,000 to be divided among annual scholarships for the Division of Business and Accountancy and the Division of Mathematics and Computer Science, and for general use in the Division of Education for the Master's of Education in Teaching. Boeing is this University's second-largest corporate sponsor, and its most recent gift brings the total amount of donations to more than \$220,000. We should be receptive of the funds given by Boeing, which is a respected and honorable corporation, right?

Wrong. As reported by CorpWatch.org, Boeing is the Pentagon's second-largest contractor and a contemptible one at that. Through its business relationship with the U.S. government, Boeing knowingly sold faulty, less-costly aircraft parts that have "led to thousands of unnecessary landings and at least one fatal crash," according to CorpWatch. Although Boeing has paid tens of millions of dollars for these underhanded deals, it could never repay the debt owed to our soldiers, whose lives were jeopardized by Boeing's attempts to increase its profit margin.

Boeing did increase its profits, and that money has since been given to the University, which enthusiastically flaunts its alliance with the corrupt corporation. Still, the blood of American soldiers is not the only substance tainting the money accepted by Truman.

Boeing is an integral sponsor of both Truman and the U.S. military-industrial complex. Boeing's profits from selling military products, faulty or otherwise, surpass its commercial endeavors by \$5 billion a year. Clearly, Boeing's primary business is war, and because it has its hand on the puppet strings of the Bush administration, business is good these days. Where Halliburton profits from rebuilding, Boeing profits from destroying.

In addition to making F-15 fighters and Apache helicopters, according to CorpWatch, Boeing administers the Pentagon's missile defense programs and provides the U.S. military with highly popularized "smart bombs," which have "repeatedly missed their targets in Iraq and Afghanistan, hitting both civilians and U.S. soldiers."

Boeing is exceedingly intertwined with the White House, where the division between corporation and government increasingly is blurred. Boeing spent at least \$1.6 million on campaign contributions in 2004 and \$1.5 million in 2000 but paid mildly for its influence-peddling in December when CEO



Chris Matthews

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Philip M. Condit was forced to resign after costing taxpayers \$10 billion in a shady deal with the Air Force.

Further solidifying its authority in government, according to CorpWatch, Boeing has appointed several ex-politicians to positions of power in the company including retired Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff John Shalikashvili, former Deputy Secretary of Defense Rudy de Leon, former Sen. Bennett Johnson, former Rep. Bill Paxon and former Ambassador Thomas Pickering.

Suitably, positions of power in the Boeing corporation are not solely reserved for former members of government. Richard Perle, the Air Force's General Ronald Fogelman and former Navy Admiral David Jeremiah all are members of the Pentagon's Defense Policy Board and also work as consultants for Boeing, according to CorpWatch.

Fascism is characterized by an excessive entanglement of corporate power and government at the expense of the well-being of the people. There can be little dispute that the current U.S. government is, at the very least, showing several of the key signs of a fascist regime. And residing at the crux of this pro-fascism administration is Boeing.

So, for sheer greed, Boeing negligently kills American soldiers and Iraqi and Afghani civilians by selling defective and inefficient military supplies to the U.S. government, and Truman whole-heartedly accepts its partnership. Boeing's dirty money has smudged Truman's image, and only an official condemnation of this company's policies could cleanse our University's collective conscience.

Chris Matthews is a senior communication major from St. Joseph, Mo.