

## OUR VIEW

### Policy for attendance needs strong changes

Let's have a little bit of storytime – but this isn't your average fairytale.

Let's imagine a diabolical little fable in which both a professor and a student are required by Truman to attend conferences that take place on five Fridays of one semester. If they don't go, neither receives their respective pay or scholarship. But let's look at what happens when they do go.

The professor, needless to say, just takes the five Fridays off and plans around it – the University doesn't penalize him or her, because clearly it required her attendance. But the student could suffer at the hands of another professor who doesn't think the conferences are all that necessary.

Sound bogus? Well, it is. As the current attendance policy is set up, if the professor who didn't think the conferences were necessary had put into a syllabus that nobody would be allowed more than two absences, then there's nothing the student could do.

Of course, if a student went into the class and knew she'd have to miss, you'd think that she would just switch to a different professor. However, some classes only are taught by one professor, and sometimes classes are only taught in the semester of certain events.

But in the end, that misses the point: Students shouldn't have to circumvent the system. That's especially true for athletes, who often receive scholarships to play at Truman. Students deserve an attendance policy that reflects the realities of being a student.

It's also important that professors retain authority in their classes. However, something must change when professors use their authority in ways inconsistent with both the University mission and the University's policy on awarding non-academic scholarships. An attendance policy that only affects students also is not the place to take

out frustration with a policy of non-academic scholarships, either.

For students, it's a wretched real-life Catch-22: Either a student loses athletic scholarships for not going to games, or a student loses academic scholarships for not going to classes, but the student

must choose which one he or she values more.

Change could be effected by putting ultimate power of review over an instructor's attendance policy into the hands of an unbiased arbiter.

They both know the professors and the plight of students. They are distant enough to remain impartial, yet they have ears close enough to the ground to know when students are trying to pull a fast one.

Of course, there must be caveats. Chief among these is the stipulation that certain reasons for missing class – such as varsity athletic games, hospital visits or planned forensics team events – absolutely must never harm a student's grade. Some people might be concerned that their group isn't included in the caveat list or about favoritism toward athletics or forensics.

Yet it is not a show of favoritism to acknowledge a problem and to take action to fix it. We will never be able to anticipate every event or need, but this should not prevent us from taking on the challenge of what we know needs to be fixed now. If the deans are not the right people, surely the right ones are out there. If athletics, forensics and hospitalizations are too controversial, perhaps we should start with just the idea of a policy. Faculty Senate, take up this issue at your next meeting and break the deadlock. It's imperative to right these wrongs.

Change could be effected by putting ultimate power of review over an instructor's attendance policy into the hands of an unbiased arbiter.

They both know the professors and the plight of students. They are distant enough to remain impartial, yet they have ears close enough to the ground to know when students are trying to pull a fast one.

## CORRECTIONS

- A headline for the article titled "Truman to cut link to Darfur" on page 1 of the Feb. 14, 2008 issue of the Index was inaccurate. The headline should have reflected that Student Senate passed a resolution urging the Board of Governors to cut links with companies that invest in Darfur. Also, information about the Weatherford International company being listed as a "Highest Offender" was incorrect. As of Dec. 17, 2007, Weatherford International was moved to the Ongoing Engagement category as a result of its commitment to cease operations in Sudan (and Iran and Syria) within 12 months.
- A graphic on page 11 of the Feb. 21, 2008 issue of the Index was incorrect. The total cost of the Europe in Transition Program for 2006 was \$4,580, and the total cost for the program for 2007 was \$5,250.
- A photograph outline on page 1 of the Feb. 21, 2008 issue of the Index was incorrect. Junior Nick Zotos is not a Student Senator, he is an organizational representative, and the photograph was taken by Mark Hardy, not Brian O'Shaughnessy.
- A teaser score on page 15 of the Feb. 21, 2008 issue of the Index was incorrect. The men's basketball team defeated Missouri Western 73-68, not 73-69.



### Amendment 2 legal battles don't reflect reality of lack of cloning



Phil Jarrett

My distrust of clones began shortly after seeing "Jurassic Park." Chomped-off limbs, victims of cloned T. rexes and raptors taught me the dangers of this line of science. And that was before I saw "Star Wars."

In November 2006, Missourians passed Amendment 2, an amendment called the "ban on human cloning." It seemed the Show-Me State finally was taking an aggressive stance against potential armies of evil clones. The sad reality: The amendment was about preventing the blanket outlawing of stem-cell research. Pro-life groups across the state began an aggressive campaign to enlighten the public to this fact, including a commercial starring Jim Caviezel (you know, Jesus in "Passion of the Christ") saying in Aramaic (the language Jesus spoke), "Father forgive them. They know not what they do."

The real Jesus said that, but I doubt he was talking about stem cells.

I digress. The amendment passed by a slim margin and really did not change any ongoing practice other than silencing a few nutty legislators who had tried in the past to criminalize stem-cell research. Nobody was birthing human carbon copies, which was how the amendment defined cloning. However, a line of stem-cell research that was allowed to continue was called Somatic Cell Nuclear Transfer, the same technique used to create Dolly, the evil clone of a sheep. The horror!

Last week, Cole County Circuit Judge Patricia S. Joyce ruled that the summary of the amendment on the ballot written by the Secretary of State Robin Carnahan was "insufficient and unfair." I agree. The amendment was less about banning

the duplication of people and more about protecting a field of scientific research. However, the bearer of the lawsuit against Carnahan, a pro-life group called Cures Against Cloning, is not trying to expose the true intentions of the amendment. Rather, the group is trying to spin a patch to the amendment that will use the same sci-fi fear-inducing rhetoric.

The proposed changes to appear on next November's ballot: "'Clone or attempt to clone a human being' means create or attempt to create a human embryo at any stage, which shall include the one-cell stage onward, by any means other than fertilization of a human egg by a human sperm."

This effectively would kill SCNT research in the state of Missouri, which is a bad thing.

SCNT involves one unfertilized egg with the nucleus removed. DNA from the patient receiving stem-cell treatment is injected into this egg and manipulated, essentially fertilizing an egg that can then grow into a blastocyst. The stem cells are harvested, an act that destroys the cluster of cells. Pro-lifers have called the method clone-and-kill, which is about as unbiased as me referring to the destruction of a cluster of cells in the prior sentence. Obviously, this is where the science gets tricky.

Embryonic and SCNT stem cells are harvested three to five days after fertilization. The blastocysts have no central nervous system, no cognitive thought, no form remotely recognizable as human. In fact, they are doomed from conception if they are not implanted in a human womb. To put this into perspective, nearly half of the conceptions that occur in a human body do not result in a pregnancy, largely because of the vast number of fertilized eggs that simply fail to implant in the uterine wall.

I would argue, as would many researchers in the stem-cell field, that considering a fertilized egg human is not really accurate and would be a tragedy given the inefficiency of our own bodies to save all these eggs. What makes us human is

something more profound: our ability to experience, to feel, to think and to overcome suffering.

SCNT research is promising because patients with spinal cord injuries, Parkinson's, diabetes or many other ailments potentially could receive treatment in the form of their own DNA, genetic material that is rightfully their own to use without fear of complications from their bodies' rejecting foreign tissue.

Although SCNT technically is cloning, it cannot legally produce clones in any practical sense of the word in the state of Missouri. Our paranoia of a sinister clone invasion should have ended after Amendment 2. We have no carbon copies, no velociraptors, just cells that could save lives.

The Missouri Coalition for Lifesaving Cures, the original sponsor of Amendment 2, is considering an appeal to the court's decision. Meanwhile, Cures Without Cloning and the Missouri Baptist Convention are expected to try to collect signatures for their amended amendment by using tired rhetoric about exploitation of women for egg donations (paying for egg donations was made illegal in Amendment 2, and the procedure is far less life threatening than childbirth), stem-cell research producing no remarkable results in humans (true, but it is only a matter of time, like most medical breakthroughs, until amazing results in animals are duplicated in people) and the murdering of babies. These are distortions from a marginal worldview trying to impose belief on Missourians who should have the right to choose their own stance on this promising science.

Forget Hollywood clone paranoia. A signature against clones is a strike against autonomy and advancements in health.

*Phil Jarrett is senior communication and philosophy major from Chesterfield, Mo.*

## INDEX

Serving the University community since 1909

### Staff

<b>Managing Editor</b> Jessie Gasch	<b>Editor in Chief</b> Nathan Becker	<b>Opinions Editor</b> Daniel Glossenger
<b>Sports Editor</b> Joe Barker	<b>Features Editor</b> Jessica Rapp	<b>News Editor</b> Julie Williams
<b>Assistant Sports Editor</b> Blake Toppmeyer	<b>Assistant Features Editor</b> Alex Boles	<b>Assistant News Editors</b> Chris Boning Diane Poelker
<b>Sports Staff</b> Joe Bell Brent Foster Arron Hustead Corey Jaros Jack Nicholl Ben Yarnell	<b>Features Staff</b> Harry Burson Franklin Cline Mark Couch Ryan Dalton Stephanie Hall Julia Hansen Dylan Herx Michelle Martin Lauren Miller Ryan Moore Laura Prather Kanna Taylor	<b>News Staff</b> Renee Cella Caitlin Dean Jean Kaul Charlotte Keenan John Moenster Kelly Schute Heather Turner
<b>Photo Editor</b> Mark Hardy	<b>Design Chief</b> Nick Wilsey	<b>Copy Chief and Cartoonist</b> Megan Kleo
<b>Assistant Photo Editor</b> Brian O'Shaughnessy	<b>Designers</b> Andrea Bailey Avishek Banskota Antionette Bedessie Leah Bowring Will Young	<b>Copy Editors</b> Bradley Bartlett Matt Butler Jennifer Calandra Sara DeGonia Kelsey Landhuis Zoe Martin Kelly Schute
<b>Photographers</b> Mayank Dhungana Erin Lee Givarz Krista Goodman Blake Peterson Beth Rolf	<b>Advertising Manager</b> Ashley Hancock	<b>Circulation Manager</b> Justin Dildine
<b>Online Editor</b> Mike Solomon	<b>Advertising Designers</b> Kelley Hulse Tina May	<b>Distribution</b> Aaron Ely Kyle Oesch
<b>Business Manager</b> Chris Vernaci	<b>Adviser</b> Don Krause	
<b>Assistant Advertising Manager</b> Adam Arredondo		

### Letters Policy

The Index welcomes letters to the editor from the University community. Letters to the editor are due by noon the Monday before publication and become property of the Index. Submissions are subject to editing, must contain a well-developed theme and cannot exceed 500 words except at the discretion of the Editorial Board. All letters to the editor must be typed, double-spaced, signed by at least one individual and include a phone number for verification. The Index does not publish anonymous letters to the editor. Letters to the editor also may be submitted by e-mail at index@truman.edu or on our Web site at www.trumanindex.com. Include the words "letter to the editor" in the subject line of the e-mail. No individual may submit more than one letter a week.

### Editorial Policy

The Index is published Thursdays during the school year by students at Truman State University, Kirksville, MO 63501. The first copy is free, and additional copies cost 50 cents each. The production offices are located in Barnett Hall. We can be reached by phone at 660-785-4449. The Index is a designated public forum, and content of the Index is the responsibility of the Index staff. The editor in chief consults with the staff and adviser but ultimately is responsible for all decisions. Opinions of Index columnists are not necessarily representative of the opinions of the staff or the newspaper. Our View editorials represent the view of the Editorial Board through a majority vote. The Editorial Board consists of the editor in chief, managing editor, news editor, copy chief and opinions editor. The Index reserves the right to edit submitted material because of space limitations, repetitive subject matter, libelous content or any other reason the editor in chief deems appropriate. Submitted material includes advertisements and letters to the editor.

### Advertising Policy

For up-to-date information on current rates or to inquire about the availability of classified ads in the Index, contact our advertising department at 660-785-4319. Our fax number is 660-785-7601, or you can e-mail us at indexads@truman.edu.

### What was going on in the

# INDEX?

50 years ago ...  
Friday, Feb. 19, 1958

"Even 14 degrees below zero weather can't keep Missouri State Teachers College students from their classes, but there is a noticeable absence of smiling faces as the scholars brave the cold."