

EDITORIAL

OUR VIEW

Writing and speech should stay separate

Of all the Liberal Studies Program requirements, of all the Modes of Inquiry, of all the classes every student begrudgingly takes simply to get that diploma, Student Senate wants to combine the two most important and most useful classes into a Freshman Seminar (see story, page 2).

The seminar would take aspects of Writing as Critical Thinking (ENG 190) and Public Speaking (COMM 170) and combine them into a first-year seminar that will cover writing and speaking. The Undergraduate Council will be the first group to consider Student Senate's resolution supporting the seminar course.

Combining aspects of two classes that explore the most useful material a freshman will encounter is going to be confusing, overwhelming and unproductive.

Some students never set foot inside a WACT classroom. AP credit or community colleges cover the basic writing necessary for college courses, and Public Speaking is one of the few requirements that students can test out of. So what happens if a freshman comes in with WACT credit but lacks public speaking, or vice versa? These are questions that need answers.

Learning the skills of college-level writing and public presentation all rolled up into one class could be overwhelming for students who aren't used to a rigorous academic program, and even more confusing for students who aren't as familiar with the language, like our population of international students.

Combining aspects of two courses, one of which consists of a heavy amount of writing, while the other consists of multiple presentations for each student, will create a hodgepodge of confusion. Between speeches and papers, when will these freshmen actually have time to learn in a semester-long class? There will be lessons that will fall through the cracks.

The logistics of this merger seem confusing. Who will teach the seminar?

A professor with a speech or with a writing background? Student Senate wants to keep both ENG 190 and COMM 170 as separate classes besides the seminar as well. If everyone has to take the seminar combining the two, who will take a separate class? That will take professors away from teaching upper-level classes that students haven't already taken.

If the UGC supports the resolution, it pushes it one step closer to becoming policy. The resolution sends mixed messages on the importance of the Liberal Arts experience here at Truman. As both courses are both part of the Essential Skills section of the program, one would think the two are, you know, essential. Trying to combine elements of two classes that are "essential" seems counterproductive. Why not merge Biology and Chemistry together? Not everyone on campus needs both. But, every single student, whatever major, needs to know how to write informative, snappy, well-researched papers, and every student needs to know how to use public speaking in meetings, presentations and professional life.

Although COMM 170 and ENG 190 are easier, comparatively, than other courses, they are supposed to be entry-level classes that will equip students with skills they will be expected to display in more difficult classes. The courses have different lessons and skills to teach and will foster interest in different disciplines. Maintaining these Essential Skills courses as two separate and required courses will enable professors to teach the breadth and depth necessary in each topic to help students succeed.

Combining these courses won't hold students to the high standard we've come to expect. Leaving some material out, and combining the rest doesn't reflect the "Truman Experience" our University is built upon. Truman should arm students with the tools to succeed in life. Hopefully the UGC will consider what they will be taking away from students before considering the resolution.

CORRECTIONS

To submit corrections or to contact the editor, please e-mail index@truman.edu, call us at 660-785-4449, or send a letter to Index, 1200 Barnett Hall, Truman State University, Kirksville, Mo, 63501.

- The roller hockey article on page 20 of the Nov. 5 issue of the Index referred to Joel Henrich as a freshman. Henrich is a senior.
- The football story on page 15 of the Nov. 5 issue said Truman hadn't beaten Pittsburg State since 1981. The year was actually 1989.

CARTOON

By Alex Boles



Letter to the Editor

Veteran's Day reminds us of service

Wednesday was Armistice Day, which initially commemorated the end of fighting on the Western Front of World War I in 1918. Today many nations refer to this day as Veterans Day or Remembrance Day, which commemorates the sacrifices made by those in uniform. As much of the Western World pauses to reflect and honor their men and women who spent their lives defending their country and national ideals, I wish to bring to the University community's attention to the service given by members of the Nepalese Gurkhas

who serve in the British Army at Shorncliffe Camp, not far from where I now reside. Even as the British Empire divested itself into the Commonwealth of Nations, Gurkha troops from Nepal provided their services to their country and the defense of Britain's friends in Southeast Asia. Even today, as British troops remain alongside American forces in Afghanistan, so too are the Royal Gurkha Rifles.

Earlier this year the British government, bowing to pressure from Gurkha families, announced that all Gurkha veterans who served at least four years would be allowed to settle in the U.K. This is a major step toward recognizing the efforts of soldiers who enlisted in defense

of a nation they wish to call home, who wish to seek a better life not only for their family, but also their homeland.

According to the International Student Office, Nepal remains the highest represented foreign population on campus with 102 students. I anticipate that several of them have family members or friends who have served, or now currently serve, in the Gurkhas. As both an alumnus of Truman and resident of a community that has flourished from the presence of Nepalese Gurkhas and their families, I write to express my gratitude for their service.

Kyle Hill, alumnus

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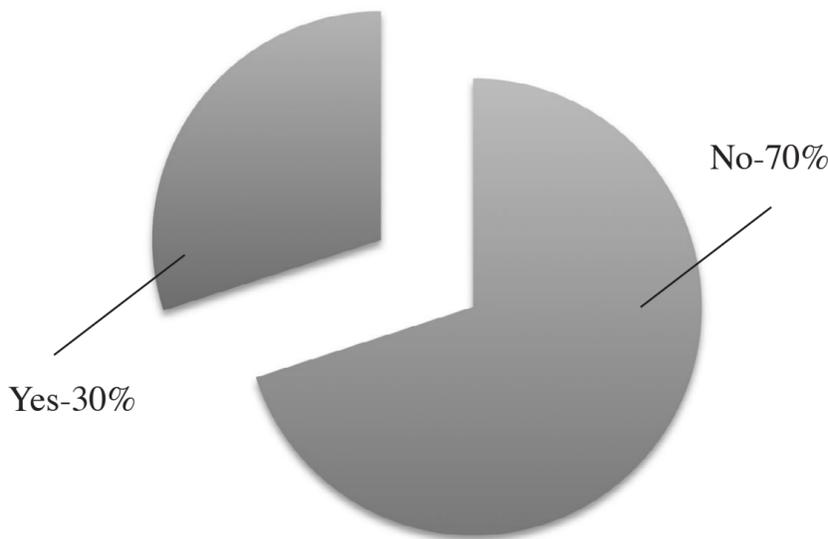
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