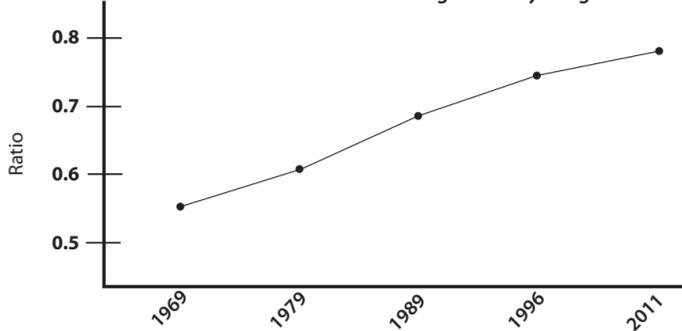


April 17 — National Equal Pay Day

Ratio of Female/Male Average Weekly Wages



for every dollar men earned in 2011, women earned **77.4¢**

*According to the White House Council of Economic Advisers

Importance of holistic college experience



Connor Stangler

The semester now draws to a close, and for some Truman State students, that means the (temporary) end of academic concerns and homework-induced stress. Except for the summer warriors, we can take a break for a few months, knowing due dates and papers can't follow us home.

The same is not the case for Truman State University and its besieged steward, University President Troy Paino.

Last week, he sent out a student-wide email updating us on the work of his Guiding Coalition. Since the beginning of the Great Budget Crisis, he and the administration have used a helpful metaphor to illustrate the urgency of the situation: a melting iceberg. In this latest email, Paino alerted us to a second iceberg. The difference is that when this one melts, we can't simply hop to another one. As he put it, these changes will be "even more fundamental" than a state funding reduction.

Paino references a current educational trend that threatens what we know as the college experience: the "disaggregation of the degree." It's a fancy term for the modern tendency to split up our education and make it more efficient and less centralized through online courses, AP credit and streamlined learning. To further the metaphor, this is the global warming of higher education. It's a silent killer that was borne of supposedly benevolent forces and manifests itself occasionally but in the worst ways when it does. Truman might eventually have to succumb to forces beyond its control, but Paino should do everything he can to halt the melting of this second iceberg.

When humans realized the power and potential of industrialization, we got carried away. We could increase the world's standard of living and make more goods and cheaper goods for everybody. Our factories and smokestacks worked overtime to increase the size of our economic pie, turning our wallets green while blackening the air we breathed. Now, we are paying the consequences. Sure, we can better afford luxurious technology and designer shoes now than we could 20 years ago, but rising sea levels and temperatures threaten to punish us for centuries of giddy accumulation.

Higher education has revealed evidence of similar patterns. Elite colleges now offer free curriculum online, while YouTube videos can deliver the same product as a college calculus or history course without the mind-numbing discussion or pointless class time. It's the great democratization of education. We've eliminated many of the barriers that previously had limited college to the privileged few.

However, as Paino points out in his letter, now that we have broken down the conventional degree into thousands of smaller pieces, we might have gotten carried away. Increasingly, students lose the holistic university experience. A democratic education means a personal education. Whereas before college could wrench us from our assumptions and preferences and realign how we think, now we can study what we want, when we want, and reduce the risk of consciousness-shattering exposure. In his book "God and Man at Yale," the late William F. Buckley, Jr. points out that, outside the classroom, undergraduates reaffirm established interests through voluntary activities: clubs, peer groups and relationships with professors. It is inside the classroom that students are challenged and questioned, where their worldview is subjected to a process of inquiry that ultimately makes them better people, where they're pushed past habitually comfortable intellectual and social boundaries. If we lose the holistic experience, we risk sacrificing this process.

This is a potentially fatal assault on the liberal arts. A personalized and "disaggregate" education is an attractive option for most students because it caters to their interests and time. Paino is right when he says Truman must "strategically take advantage of this push toward openness without threatening that which makes us effective in fulfilling our mission." For the next school year, this should be the focus of our attention and the object of our rescue plan because it's getting warm — fast.

Connor Stangler is a junior English and history major from Columbia, MO.

Women deserve equal pay



Lauren Kellett

If you haven't lived under a rock for the past few years, you know our nation has slowly been trying to recover from a deep recession. Unemployment rates steadily have been decreasing, with 2.3 million jobs added during the recovery. Unfortunately, only 12.3 percent of those jobs went to American women, according to the National Women's Law Center. At these jobs, women only make 77.4 percent of what their male counterparts earn, according to pay-equity.org. Men, if you don't think this is relevant to you, remember these are your sisters, wives and daughters being discriminated against.

April 17 was National Equal Pay Day, which President Obama commemorated with the statement, "We must keep striving for an America where everyone gets an equal day's pay for an equal day's work." National Equal Pay Day marks the number of extra days women would have to work during 2012 in order to earn, on average, as much as their male counterparts did during 2011.

Equal Pay Day was originated by the National Committee on Pay

Equity during 1996 to make the public aware of the gender wage gap. Women then earned 73.8 cents for every dollar men earned, based on Census figures of the median wages of all full-time, year-round workers. Today, 16 years later, that gap has increased only one percent.

Much of the blame for higher unemployment rates for women lies with the steep loss of government jobs, particularly with local school districts, where women dominate, according to an April 2012 CNN article. The reasoning for lower women's wages is a bit less clear-cut. The most recurring argument is that women often have less experience because of years spent at home raising children, and will never reach their full professional potential without giving up the home values they cherish. Employers will not want to pay women as much because they will require time off for maternity leave. Another is that women simply choose lower paying jobs, thus should be content with the meager earnings.

I don't know about my fellow females, but these reasons just do not cut it in my book. Government jobs in school districts should not be at the top of job cuts in America, as education is the groundwork for our civilization. I never have understood why teachers traditionally are paid lower wages in the first place. Dr. Bonnie Mitchell-Green, Truman State sociology professor, even stated that she thinks early child development teachers probably should be getting paid more than she and her college-

level colleagues, as they are the ones shaping the basic foundations for children to grow and learn to contribute to society. Many women choose jobs like teaching and nursing because of their typically nurturing character. Putting this characteristic to good use should not be considered detrimental as parties against equal pay claim.

The excuse that women should be paid less because they eventually will take maternity leave is simply inexcusable. Many would agree that being a mother is the most important job of all, and should not be a reason for loss of pay. The idea that women are almost punished for bringing life into the world is not terribly far from the truth. Maternity should not be a factor in the wages of a woman performing the exact same job at the exact same level of her male counterpart.

To wrap things up, I will end with President Obama's closing statement from National Equal Pay Day: "Equal pay will strengthen our families, grow our economy and enable the best ideas and boldest innovations to flourish. Let us resolve to become a nation that values the contributions of our daughters as much as those of our sons, denies them no opportunity, and sets no limits on their dreams." My hope is that all of America will soon hear and respect this sentiment.

Lauren Kellett is a freshman communication major from Florissant, Mo.

What are your summer plans?

"I plan to stay in Kirksville and work over the summer."

Keller Ryan
sophomore

"This summer I plan to go to Colorado and visit my future graduate school."

Sadie Dahle
junior

"I plan on spending time with my family and getting a job."

Michaela LaBarbera
freshman

"I'm doing an internship at a publishing house in St. Louis and hanging out with my friends."

Miranda Babb
junior



AROUND THE QUAD

Outgoing Opinions editor bids sarcastic farewell



Molly Skyles

This is my farewell column, and while Truman State and the Index have been life-altering experiences, I'm not sad about leaving. I don't plan on using these 700 words to reminisce about my experiences or to give advice to the incoming opinions editor — although, I wish you the best of luck, Bob.

Rather, I want to go out with a bang, to say the things that have been kept politely under-wraps since I began as opinions editor during the Fall 2010. This might turn into a bit of a rant, and for that, I apologize. I will try my best to keep you entertained. So

please, keep reading, because this pertains to you.

As an opinions writer, I've experienced negative feedback and even personal attacks because of what I've written — shout out to the girl who called me ugly because she didn't agree with a column I wrote. While it wasn't always an easy journey, I've learned not to take it personally and not to fight back. I had my black and grey newsprint platform to tell you what I think, and rather than get upset by discrepancies, I channeled your feedback into my favorite form of humor — sarcasm — something everyone needs to learn about.

Oscar Wilde once said sarcasm is one of the highest forms of intelligence but the lowest forms of humor. He might be right. I'm not a comedian. Give me a microphone and put me on stage and I might start crying out of sheer panic. I'm also an easy target, as my roommates and closest friends who frequently poke fun at me might tell you, but sarcasm — I can handle that.

We, as Truman students, are intelligent. There's no question about that. You're at the Harvard of the Midwest, after all (cue sarcastic chuckle). Somehow, though, we don't all understand humor. We don't have

to agree about what's funny — I think Louis C.K. and Aziz Ansari are hilarious, but I would rather lick newsprint for seven hours than listen to even a second of Dane Cook or that guy who stands on stage playing with his crude puppets in a pitiful attempt to make me laugh.

However, we should be able to differentiate between a sarcastic joke and seriousness. After all, sarcasm is more than a form of humor. It is a means of social survival. Think of your group of friends. If you are like me, your friends consist of equally sarcastic people who aren't afraid to dish out jokes or even witty insults. If someone doesn't get your humor, you likely aren't friends, and that's OK. Humor, and therefore sarcasm, both connects and separates us.

Think how dull the world would be if everyone shared the same humor. We would have no one to make fun of or dislike. Yes, I want a peaceful world full of rainbows and hugs just like the next person, but we need something to be angry about or we'll go crazy. I need those awful "Yo momma" jokes to complain about to appreciate "real" humor.

My column purpose is simple. I want you to broaden your horizons, open your eyes

and calm down. Your time during college is meant for experiencing new things and learning new ideas, not shutting yourself into a hole of close-mindedness. And for goodness sakes, laugh a little.

You don't have to think I'm funny. Frankly, I don't care what you think of me, but I want you to recognize the existence of humor (successful or not). Textbooks are great, but don't let the presence of the red-brick and ivy-covered University halls force you into a state of stoicism. Read the Onion, or anything by David Sedaris, or truly listen to Willy Wonka from "Willy Wonka and the Chocolate Factory" (he is far more than a guy in a purple suit making chocolate). Sarcasm is everywhere, and necessary. So put down that biology book and soak up the world's humor. After all, as I made pretty clear earlier this semester, science is just a hoax anyways. Or was that just sarcasm? The world might never know.

Molly Skyles is a senior communication major from St. Louis.