




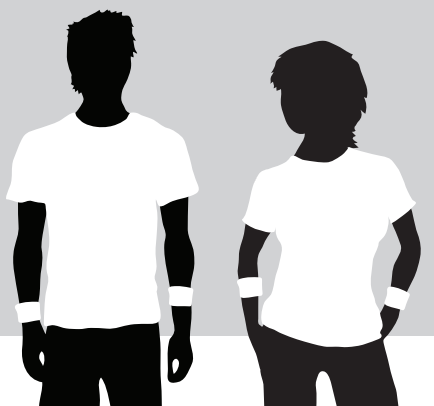


ATHLETES AND CRIMES

-  A 3 year study shows that while male student-athletes comprise 3.3 percent of the population, they represent 19 percent of sexual assault perpetrators and 35 percent of domestic violence perpetrators.
-  1 in 3 college sexual assaults are committed by athletes.
-  The general population has a conviction rate of 80 percent while the conviction rate of an athlete is 38 percent.
-  A new incident of athlete crime emerges once every two days. This figure does not include crimes that were unreported by the media.
-  83 percent of the public believes college and professional athletes are committing more criminal acts now than compared to 25 years ago.

*according to <http://www.ncava.org>



Truman State not ready for DQP program



Connor Stangler

A specter is haunting Truman State — the specter of the DQP.

If you haven't heard of the DQP, you will before long. According to its creators, the Lumina Foundation, the Degree Qualifications Profile is a comprehensive series of "reference points" every liberal arts degree candidate should meet before receiving a diploma. The difference between this assessment program and the one Truman currently uses is that it's outcome-based rather than means-based. Instead of completing a required number of credit hours, under the DQP, students would meet benchmarks — or, "specific learning outcomes" — that prove their competence. University President Troy Paino and other administrators have announced Truman is planning to switch to a modified version of the DQP during the near future, but I doubt the school's readiness.

The move toward a competency-based system is a sign of modern times. In a March 6 opinion piece, New York Times columnist Thomas Friedman preached the good news about the system as it applies to online learning. Discussing the virtues of MOOCs — Massive Open Online Courses — Friedman quotes professors and education experts to substantiate his point that we must shift to a "stuff learned" model. Because websites and search engines afford us easy access to information previously acquired through memorization and cramming, "the world does not care what you know." Instead, "the world only cares, and will only pay for, what you can do with what you know." It doesn't matter how you get the information, only that you got it. Note-taking and lectures are moved to the Internet while class time is reserved for proving you learned it. It's a slim and sexy model that combines everything the 21st century human prizes — efficiency, autonomy, hyper-connectivity and the allure of virtual reality.

Some universities have excelled with applying these techniques. Friedman points to the strides prestigious institutions have made through online learning. For example, Harvard University and Massachusetts Institute of Technology have made their courses and exercises available to students and professors at other schools, while "Harvard Business School doesn't teach entry-level accounting anymore, because there is a professor out at Brigham Young University whose online accounting course 'is just so good' that Harvard students use that instead." These schools are learning every day how to expand and improve the online education community.

Here at the Harvard of the Midwest, however, we seem to lack the same moxie as our namesake. During University Conference Day, I attended the information session on the DQP and what its implementation would look like here. Instead of informed confidence, I sensed trepidation in the stuffy McClain Hall classroom packed with concerned professors and, regrettably, zero interested students. I had the feeling the Truman administration was less leading the charge toward modernization and more being yanked by leash down a dim path they didn't fully understand. Administrators aren't sure who would evaluate students, and professors aren't sure how they would do it. There is time to figure these details out, but if Truman is planning to use these new assessments as a replacement for its funding formula, then there will be pressure to modernize quickly.

The DQP fundamentally will alter how Truman educates. Benchmarks will become integral elements of classes rather than just parts of a final, senior-year evaluation. Evaluation will shift from an emphasis on the process to an emphasis on the product. The potential is great, but the threats are greater. Truman must be prepared for implementation.

Thus far, students have not been properly prepared for the change. The university faces a brave new world but has not done enough to illuminate the future. It should overwhelm students with information, have weekly forums about the DQP, encourage feedback and publish transparent plans about every aspect of the new system. Even if the specifics aren't available, we should have a rough idea of how this will affect us. Neither the school nor students should be in the dark.

The problem, however, is not limited to implementation. In my next column, I will discuss how the DQP, and competency-based systems in general, threaten academic excellence and Truman's liberal arts mission.

Connor Stangler is a senior history major from Columbia, Mo.

Assault must be taken seriously



Lacy Murphy

Americans live in a rape culture. We are surrounded by everyday phenomena like jokes, television and music centered on rape and sexual violence and these crimes are trivialized and perpetuated. This culture assumes only promiscuous women get raped and it doesn't take accusations seriously. It focuses on teaching individuals how not to get raped, not teaching rapists not to rape. Rape is not caused by a victim's dress, mental state or history. What causes a rape? A rapist. Rapists like the two young men in Steubenville, Ohio, who recently were convicted during the controversial rape trial last week, according to a Jan. 13 Huffington Post article.

What almost appalls me more than the raping of a 16-year-old girl? The fact that students stood by and watched this horrifying event take place. They not only didn't try to stop it, they took videos and pictures and uploaded them to YouTube and Twitter, according to the Huffington Post article. One such video uploaded before the incident featured male Steubenville students discussing the event. One of the young men recalled the victim was so

drunk she appeared to be dead. They said she was so non-responsive that even after they urinated on her she didn't move, according to the Huffington Post article.

So let me get this straight. Instead of helping someone who was in obvious need of assistance, they decided to rape her, urinate on her, photograph it and post the evidence for bragging rights? This shows the arrogance of these individuals and how rape culture led these students to think the situation was humorous.

This horrific event illustrates the issues of accountability America has instilled in my generation. Who does the blame belong to? Everyone. First and foremost, rapists must be held accountable, but so should anyone who stood by and allowed this heinous and despicable act to take place. The students who witnessed these crimes and did nothing to interfere and the parents who let their underage drinking teenagers run around during all hours of the night deserve consequences. They must be held accountable.

We as a society also must feel responsible. None of us interfered directly, but society has become more lackadaisical about rape jokes and sexual violence. In fact, I am sure there is someone out there who is rolling their eyes at my statements and saying I'm taking this matter too seriously. It's time for apathy toward this matter to end.

The two convicted in the Steubenville rape case were athletes. They were members of the community and therefore it makes sense for that community to wish to protect them. Society needs to realize individuals that age know and understand the implications of their actions and still committed a crime, fully aware of the consequences. Yes, they were someone's brother or son, but the victim was some-

one's sister or daughter.

Many people don't care about crimes like this because they don't happen locally. However, University of Missouri-Columbia basketball star Michael Dixon recently attained notoriety for his multiple rape allegations. The same day the second rape allegation was documented, Dixon announced his decision to finish his college career elsewhere, according to a Nov. 2012 Kansas City Star article. Dixon, who had become an integral player for Missouri's team, was defended by students of the university. Student reactions on Twitter blamed the accuser and supported Dixon using the hashtag #FreeMikeDixon, according to a Nov. 2012 USA Today article.

It is not wrong to defend someone who is wrongly accused, but people should not willingly defend someone when they know nothing about the incident. They are choosing sides based purely on their loyalty as fans. They are the reasons we have so many women who will not come forward after being raped — simultaneously keeping rapists on the streets. It saddens me to see students and Missouri sports fans using this tragic accusation as an excuse to create jokes and victimize someone.

This is not a laughing matter. It is our duty as citizens and as fellow human beings to condemn these types of remarks. The Steubenville community, a town not much larger than Kirksville, always will have its reputation marred by this unfortunate event. Kirksville residents should bear in mind the consequences of something like this if it happened here and should take action to prevent sexual misconduct and an apathy to sexual abuse.

Lacy Murphy is a junior French major from Springfield, Mo.

Do you perceive that athletes receive special treatment in criminal cases?

"In most cases, yes — it's not a good thing, but we see it a lot."

Dylan Pyles
junior

"Sometimes. The athlete who commits a crime is probably more well known than someone else who commits a similar crime. Perhaps athletes' crimes are just more publicized."

Laura Stark
sophomore

"It's hard to keep the news away from jurors. Athletes' case outcomes are more volatile than your everyday individual. It may be in the athlete's favor or it may not."

Jacob Sells
senior

"I think so. A lot of actors and politicians also receive special consideration because of their positions."

Esther Fris
freshman



AROUND THE QUAD

Group biases can create difficulties and dangers



Sarah Muir

When I'm on campus, my level of school pride is average. When I meet with friends from different schools, this changes dramatically. During Midterm Break, I hung out with a friend from William Jewell University and we discussed our schools and their reputations. She casually referred to William Jewell as "the Harvard of the Midwest." Before this moment, I don't think I really thought Truman State was the Harvard of the Midwest, but I definitely did

as soon as my friend claimed William Jewell was. I passionately defended my school and its unofficial title. I've never had more school spirit than I did during that moment.

Later I tried to understand why I suddenly felt so strongly about my school. It was because I identified as a Truman student and thus was a member of one of my in-groups, whereas a William Jewell student was a member of an out-group. While this particular situation is a harmless example, our social identities can be the root cause behind conflict and recognizing this is key to reducing the conflicts.

Until we learn to understand and identify with each other on the basis of our common humanity, we will never be able to work together.

An in-group is a group you consider yourself to be a part of, while an out-group is one you don't, according to a Dec. 2010 Psychology Today article. There are endless ways of identifying ourselves when it comes to groups. We can identify as Truman students, Missourians, Nebraskans, Tigers or Jayhawks fans or members of different sororities, fraternities, clubs or majors. On a much broader scale, we can identify as a member of a country, race or religion.

Being a part of a group leads to in-group favoritism, or the tendency to view your own group favorably, according to understandingprejudice.org. Out-group bias is the tendency to view anyone outside of your group negatively, according to understandingprejudice.org. Differences between groups might be minimal or entirely arbitrary and still result in group biases. This presents a problem when people start discriminating against others because they aren't part of a group.

In the current political climate, people generally will classify themselves as Republicans or Democrats and consider themselves a part of the party's in-group. While we like to think our beliefs are fact-based and the other side just doesn't understand, the truth is group bias is at work. A Republican typically will agree with the Republican party platform because in-group favoritism dictates their group is more intelligent. Meanwhile, out-group bias will lead them to believe Democrats are wrong because they are dumb or illogical.

Both sides exhibit these biases and often resort to name-calling and overall dislike. This prevents cooperation because no one wants to

work with someone they think is wrong. What's left is the current situation in Washington, D.C. where political gridlock prevents most action that collectively could help the country.

Even worse is when group bias exacerbates a civil conflict. During the 1994 Rwandan Genocide, the perceived differences between the Hutus and Tutsis created a deadly war, according to unitedhumanrights.org. Group bias made it easier to stop seeing the other side as human.

Recognition of how powerfully group bias affects behavior is the only way to overcome it. During situations where you think negatively about a group, you have to explore why. It's likely group bias is at least partly responsible.

Strip away all the small groups and what's left is the universal identity of being human. Acknowledgement of our shared similarities is the first step to overcoming difficulties and problems throughout the world. Though if you ask me, Truman is still the real Harvard of the Midwest.

Sarah Muir is a freshman political science major from Lee's Summit, Mo.