

EDITORIAL

CourierPolicy

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Writers can express their views in a letter to Letters to the Editor. All correspondence and letters for publication must be typed and signed with the author's daytime phone number.

The editor-in-chief may withhold the author's name on request. Deliver all correspondence to SRC 1560 between regular office hours, or mail to the Courier, College of DuPage, 425 Fawell Blvd., Glen Ellyn, Ill. 60137.

Letters also may be sent by e-mail. The subject heading to the e-mail message must read "Letter to the Editor." The writer's first and last names, street address, city, state and complete phone number with area code must be included for identity verification by the Courier. Deadline for letters meant for publication is noon Monday before publication. E-mail letters can be sent electronically to editor@cdnet.cod.edu.

Letters are subject to editing for grammar, style, language, length and libel.

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Improvements in communication needed when weather is bad

A neon sign hung over the SRC entrance notifying the 30,000 inhabitants of this academic city that class was in session would've been just as efficient as the methods the college did implore during last week's snowstorm—namely, a brief paragraph on the homepage declaring COD was up and running.

To blame the college for remaining open that day is sour grapes, but there certainly is room to improve the communication and definition of what "open" actually means.

Open and closed sounds as binary as off and on, but with an institution the size of College of DuPage, almost nothing is black and white.

One direction COD needs to head towards is a comprehensive web interface for handling the breadth of variables incorporated into daily life at COD. A starting model for the college should be www.emergencyclosings.com, a webpage dedicated to the open/closed status of various Chicagoland institutions.

Imagine a scenario where instructors, department heads, athletic coaches and student clubs could access a webpage on COD's homepage and update whether or not their events, classes and sports games would still be held, and what modifications have been made, if any.

Some students arrived to COD last week only to find

that their instructors could not. This proposed webpage would allow instructors to list their specific class as being cancelled, which students could then view online.

Another suggestion for the college is to update the college's open status every thirty minutes, even if the status is the same.

Last week, the college put its message on the homepage declaring the college open, and failed to update regularly, leaving viewers uncertain to the timeliness of the message. Even if the information were unchanged, a time stamp on the page would help immensely.

The groundhog might've declared the remainder of winter will be brief, but these additions will not only help in cases of snowfall, but also in the event of any other emergency, such as the flooding experienced earlier this year.

It is a huge undertaking to attempt to account for every facet of the College of DuPage that is affected by adverse weather or unexpected conditions.

However, the college is almost guaranteed to be put in similar scenarios in the future and should strive in each situation to improve on past actions.

So long as it does, we should reserve rushing to blame the college for taking the harder path by staying open.

Staff Editorial



Doug

Laciesha

Abraham

Chad

Karen

"When the weather is bad how do you decide whether or not to attend class?"

Karen Kozlowski, 18 *anthropology, Lombard*

"I'll call my friend and see if he's going. I won't make the drive if I can study at home."

Chad Torres, 18 *psychology, Darien*

"I'm a good enough driver that if the campus was open I would be here. Weather isn't a good enough reason for me not to go to class."

Abraham Alim, 21 *business, Glen Ellyn*

"Usually I wouldn't come unless I had an important test or assignment to turn in."

Doug Peck, 21 *engineering, Naperville*

"I would come if I had class, regardless of whether or not I thought the campus should be closed."

Laciesha Morris, 33 *nursing, Naperville*

"If the college was open and I thought that the roads were bad I would make a conscious decision not to go."

In Your Words

Presidential election 2008: issues or unprecedented diversity?

PointCounterPoint

Issues will take a backseat to unprecedented diversity in the 2008 presidential election.

Those who routinely place their votes based on issues will continue to vote on the affairs that are important to them, but the prospect of the first woman president or the first black president will bring out many new voters that are inspired by who the candidates are more than what the candidates stand for.

For many, politicians are all the same. Regardless of their political affiliations, many politicians generally look and act alike, which causes voter apathy. Republican, Democrat, what does it matter? At the end of the day, it's still just a middle-aged white male with a bad haircut.

Not this time, though. This time, there's a legitimate woman candidate and a legitimate black candidate run-

ning for office. How exciting is that? Not only is it historically significant, but it gives voters the ability to cast a vote purely at face value, knowing that one way or the other they're contributing to history.

It's also extremely entertaining to watch. Which candidate appeals more to the groups they symbolize? Which candidate can inspire

non-voters to get out and vote for them because of what they are? Which type of candidate does America want to see first...or at all?

Right or wrong, who cares if the issues are not what drives voters to the polling booths? So long as they show up to vote, it should be viewed as a success. Criticize those who vote not because of the content of a candidate's character all you want, but it surely beats the usual song-and-dance of voter apathy and low turnout.

Will the 2008 presidential election reveal our nation's progress against former discrimination patterns, or perhaps reveal a twisted version of prejudice based on the same external physicality that our forefathers couldn't look beyond?

Unlike past elections, this is the first in American history to consider both a non-Caucasian and a female candidate.

By no means is having a colored candidate or female candidate a discredit to our politics; however, I advocate looking deeper into a person to see what they are truly made of.

We are no different than previous generations if we ourselves cannot look deeper than the color of flesh or gender.

Candidates must stand on one and only one side of any

issue. If they do not hold firm convictions regarding the issues of our future, then their leadership capabilities are highly questionable.

It is every voters responsibility to analyze the pivotal issues and form an educated standpoint.

Issues of gravity for 2008 will undoubtedly include the war in Iraq, abortion, gay marriage, taxes, poverty and health care.

It really doesn't matter what race or sex your ideal candidate is, so long as he or she shares your convictions on the important issues for our future.

It is our blessed freedom to vote in this country. But with our right to vote comes a grave responsibility to do so with conviction and understanding.

With that said, I encourage you to vote with clear judgment on the most important issues and look beyond a candidate's skin color or gender.

Researched by Robert Bykowski, Editor-in-Chief

Researched by Bethany Duckworth, Correspondent

PointCounterPoint topics are selected, researched and written by the staff of the Courier and aim to reflect differing opinions on the same subject. The opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the author.

OPINION

Letters to the Editor

Time to remove troops from Iraq

I believe that President Bush should not send more troops to Iraq.

I think we should concentrate more on getting them out.

We have the bigger military, more firepower and way more technology. So, why send more troops in when we already overpower them?

This is very wide spread issue, with many people on the fence and a lot on both sides.

The one comment that really got to me that George Bush said was, "It may not seem like a good idea now, but wait and see."

What does that really mean? It makes me believe that President Bush does not completely know what the outcome of his decision will be. I will always be on the defensive because when a soldier's life is on the line for an unclear reason, I never think it's worth it.

Ryan Schillaci
Darien, IL

Driving age should be raised to 18

I really think it is important to change the driving age in the state of Illinois to 18.

I believe there will definitely be less accidents and injuries.

It seems to me that most teenage drivers currently take driving for granted. They find driving as a fun activity or necessity rather than a privilege.

If the age is changed to 18 there will really be a change on our streets. It will be a lot safer and the number of accidents will decrease.

Edward Sopala
Lombard, IL

Cell phones and driving don't mix

I can't believe that a law hasn't been passed yet banning cellular phones while driving.

I don't care if you have a headset, you are not smart enough to drive and talk on a phone at the same time.

Driving and talking on a cell phone are two completely different tasks and shouldn't be associated with one another.

Driving requires you to be alert and aware of your surroundings at all times, and if Aunt Beth is calling to ask you what time you are coming to Grandma and Grandpa's 50th wedding anniversary next week, you

aren't thinking about driving.

You are thinking what is due, what you need to get done, can you make it, etc. NOT what is in front of you, what's going on around you and your car; everyone and everything inside of it.

I've encountered so many ignorant drivers blabbing away on their stupid cell phones.

So many close accidents and people not even knowing the trouble they are causing. No matter where I am, I can always find this happening – College of DuPage campus, the highway, parking garages, etc.

Granted, I have a cell phone, but I turn it to the "silent mode" whenever I am driving. There should be a law that requires you not to be on a cell phone OR a headset while driving. Just like if you don't wear your seatbelt, police officers will be able to pull you over and ticket you. Maybe even TAKE AWAY your cellular device.

I repeat, you're not smart enough to drive and talk on a cell phone at the same time.

Chris Whaley
Darien, IL

No Child Left Behind faulty

The No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) is a great piece of legislation... on paper. It is an act approved during the Bush administration. It tries to improve the learning and knowledge of children who were once ignored and passed on to another teacher.

The biggest flaw to this act is the NCLB expectation out of students and teachers. It has set unrealistic goals. By 2014 it calls for 100% of students to reach the proficient or advanced level in both math and reading.

Some places like the District of Columbia still have nearly 70% at the below basic level. California had nearly 80% at or below the basic achievement level in 2003. The goal would be attainable if it wasn't so soon.

Another thing wrong with the NCLB is the fact that teachers and administrators are doing nothing to change what they are doing. Some schools have implemented a policy of a U or NG grade. If a student has missed 15 days or more in a semester they do not receive an F. They receive a U or NG that doesn't affect their G.P.A. Since the kids who miss that many days already are failing they found a way to trick the system into not including the kids who bring down the average.

Students are not learning more and teachers are not teaching better.

The final thing wrong with the NCLB is with who is running the program. Politicians have but a check on the teachers without any experience in the field. It is like building a house and rehiring your roofer to do the plumbing; even if he doesn't know what a ballcock is (A special straight thread size for fittings that connect to toilets).

Teachers and administrators should have some say in how the policy is being enacted since they know how it is in the trenches.

So please for the children go and contact your representative before this plan blows up in our children's faces.

Joe Soboleski
Glendale Heights, IL

Lightbulbs are a private choice

While perusing the internet website cnn.com, I came across an article that stated New Jersey Assemblyman Larry Chatzidakis introduced a bill which calls for his state to switch from incandescent to fluorescent lighting in government buildings.

I was disturbed to discover the fact that California Assemblyman Lloyd Levine announced that he would propose a bill to ban the use of incandescent bulbs in his state.

CNN indicated there are only two states that have even broached the topic, however where the seed is planted the tree springs forth.

How much choice are we willing to hand over to the control of our government?

How far are Americans going to let the government go in placing regulations on a private choice? Moreover, when did elected officials have a say as to the type of lighting that is used in buildings and homes?

Is that decision not at the discretion of the owners of buildings, and other residents? After all, the owners have to pay the electric bill, and homeowners are a part of the people who form this nation.

This choice is one that owners, renters, and dependents are entitled to, especially in light of the fact that fluorescent lights are not natural or healthy for all people.

Fluorescent lights contain mercury, which could be an environmental hazard if broken. Our government is in existence to do that which the people cannot do for themselves.

I know for a fact that I can make the choice of a fluorescent light bulb over an incandescent light bulb if I desire.

Lastly, considering the fact that California's annual murder rate is roughly the equivalent or a little less than the total number of soldiers killed in combat in Iraq, one would think that Lloyd Levine had more important things to legislate than lightbulbs.

Heather DeRuiter
Darien, IL

Focus on education needs to shift

In my opinion local areas need to be more concerned about what is happening within the walls of their education system than with the test scores coming out of it.

Since the United States compared our educational test scores to that of other countries and found us wanting our government has been on a tirade to reform schools and propel us ahead of any academically prevailing countries.

Recent developments, stemming from the need to beat all other countries, test scores, have brought about the No Child Left Behind Act.

Now, if this new program actually did what its title stated and left no child behind regarding education then we would have no problem but instead of helping each child reach their full potential they are merely creating more of a problem.

The No Child Left Behind Act mandates that public schools test children on their learning levels.

If the school does not meet requirements action will be taken against that school by the government.

Even if a school has improved and just does not meet the requirements in one specific area the school is still deemed poor.

By backing this Act the government is embracing the usage of "high-stakes" testing which has proven to be an inconclusive measurement of actual intelligence because some children are simply not good test takers or they don't understand the formats of tests.

Kids are now trained to take these tests, along with the ACT, SAT and many more from as young as pre-school. A child may be incredibly bright and simply because of a low test score be kept out of their dream school.

I don't think it is right that these tests govern the educational future of students.

Since the 1980's the amount

of homework children have has grown exponentially and when asked about the amount teachers generally say they are just doing what the government approved curriculum says they must teach.

The No Child Left Behind Act is contradictory.

It does leave children behind.

The children who have long since given up on themselves because of their inability to do well on a test or not being able to complete huge workloads of homework from every teacher they have.

In order to keep their jobs the teachers must make their school look good.

How do they make their school look good?

By looking at one of the only things the government looks at, test scores.

So now, teachers are no longer looking at students as individuals with different needs and unique intelligence, they simply see kids with little cartoon bubbles above their heads containing their test scores.

There's no time to teach little Johnny algebra in a way he will understand while all the other kids can learn by just doing their homework because the teacher must propel the class forward right away or else risk them not knowing an answer to a government mandated test.

The educational system was put together to help the United States educate its citizens not terrorize them.

So what if our test scores don't beat China's?

What does it matter when so many suicides are committed by school age children because of the stressful demands of their life?

All in all, I think the United States lost the big picture a long time ago.

Jennifer O'Neill
Glen Ellyn

New driver laws way too strict

Legislation is planning to crack down even harder on new drivers. I say, "Why?"

They have probably only heard too many of the bad crash stories that involve new drivers.

They only hear about it when it is bad, when in reality the drivers they hear about in crashes are only a small percentage that would not listen anyways.

Why punish one hundred percent just to hit the few that would not listen anyways.

Matthew Reed
Bolingbrook, IL