

Editorial

# LAS needs leaders in the face of an uncertain future

A third public forum regarding the Blue Sky Task Force's report will be this afternoon, from 2:30 to 3:30 p.m., in 302 Catt Hall.

And we'd like to laud the efforts of the task force members, who were brought together to tackle an unwieldy challenge.

In fact, it's clear that their intentions were sound from the closing line of the report's introduction: "This report should be viewed as a first step to begin many conversations regarding the future of the arts, humanities and the social science programs at Iowa State University."

The task force approached the challenge with these factors in mind: intellectual synergy, content, scholarly culture, disciplinary breadth, research and teaching, and

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inter- and multi-disciplinary approaches.

In addition to several suggestions for changes to graduate programs, new master's and doctoral interdisciplinary programs, and pleas for institutional support for the coails sciences and humanities, what is likely the group's most notable suggestion is its plan to reorganize the college's existing departments.

The report generally suggests departments be grouped into two divisions: the Division of Social and Behavioral Sciences, and the Division of Arts and Humanities.

Within these divisions, then, the report generally suggests departments be fur-

ther organized into schools: a School of Psychological and Behavioral Sciences, a School of Social Sciences, a School of Humanities, a School of Creative Arts and a School of Literatures and Languages.

Task force members then tried to find homes for existing departments and programs within these divisions and subdivisions.

The report includes several variations of these divisions and subdivisions.

To many of our readers' disappointment, the report doesn't tackle the issue of undergraduate programs in much detail, boiling any discussion on the topic down to two paragraphs, and say-

ing simply "it was premature to make any assessment regarding redundancies and/or overlap in the curricular offerings."

And that leaves a great number of questions unanswered.

Are large class sizes inherent to a "state" school education?

At Friday's public forum, one student raised the concern of whether changes to structure within the college might affect future students' hirability.

In her words, "If an undergraduate or a graduate student has a degree that says 'Interdisciplinary Social Sciences,' does that even mean anything?"

As the University's largest college continues to grapple with a smaller budget through less and less support from the state's coffers, slow-

to-rise tuition rates — for which we're thankful — and the ever-looming threat of lower enrollment numbers, progress will come from, as the task force members suggest, continued discussion, but, too, from leadership exhibited by its administrators who are employed to make difficult, forward-thinking and comprehensive decisions in difficult times, such as these.

Dean Whiteford has said repeatedly in interviews with the Daily that he expects to see recommendations come before the Faculty Senate sometime around Spring Break.

We look forward to seeing those proposals, and expect many of you will be, as well, because the uncertain future of a beleaguered college and its faculty, staff and students hangs in the balance.

International

# Obama should support Egyptians

By Rick.Hanton @iowastatedaily.com

*U.S. administration needs to side with the people, not a dictator*

At this point it has been hard to miss the massive protests going on across Egypt, supported by normal Egyptians as well as the illegal opposition party, the Muslim Brotherhood.

Frankly, I can understand the motivation to finally get rid of a 30-year dictator. It doesn't seem like he has done a horrible job as president of Egypt over the years, which is one of the reasons he has survived so long. But the Egyptians want change, they want meaningful elections, and who are we to say that they shouldn't have that right we take for granted?

But wait, we're the United States, and while we supported the popular uprising in Tunisia to some extent, Obama has been hedging his bets on Egypt. Most of the experts that have been talking to the major news networks note that this is likely the beginning of the end for Mubarak. Yet Obama and the military don't want to see him leave.

I worry that this reluctance to condemn Mubarak and ask him to step aside will make any new leaders of Egypt more reluctant to work with the United States toward stability in the Middle East.

President Obama can work to force Mubarak to restore Internet access, but his real control is in the money that the United States provides to Egypt each year. I'm sure Egyptians would be thankful if Obama made an ultimatum with Mubarak and stated intent to withdraw the U.S.'s \$1.3 billion in military funding from Egypt until he promises to refrain from running in the next election, at the very least. Maybe Egyptians would be so thankful that they would keep up their close relations with the U.S. once Mubarak is replaced.

The dark nightmare of the Western world is that a popular



The Egyptian people understand and appreciate the United States' mutually beneficial relationship with Egypt. It is important for President Obama to take their views into account. Courtesy photo: Wikimedia Commons

revolution in Egypt will be like the popular revolution in Iran years ago. In truth though, Egypt is likely to be civilized in its democratic aspirations, and many experts note that Egyptian politics are not revolutionary and fast moving and hope that their very professional military will moderate any transition.

My point here is that Obama and the U.S. administration need to get on the side of the people in Egypt because right now the Egyptian people understand and appreciate

our mutually beneficial relationship with Egypt. As I saw on some protesters' signs the other day, Egyptians say, "don't make us hate the U.S.," showing they are not opposed to allying with America, but that they want to see more pressure from our government on Mubarak. It is true that the relationship may change and it may take time for the United States to get the same promises of help in the Middle East from the new Egypt, but by not supporting the Egyptians, we run a great risk.

Does it make more sense for us to support a doomed dictator who supports peace in Israel and Gaza, enraging his people, or to support his people in the hope that we can urge them to maintain peace in Israeli-Palestinian politics? It seems that these days the United States is willing to bend over backwards to support Israel, even when we disagree with some of their political decisions. We won't vocally support the Egyptian people because it creates risk for Israel, but in my study

of Israel, they seem to be able to take good care of their own country in times of turmoil.

I urge President Obama to take a chance on the Egyptian people and their ability to carry the country through this time of turmoil. Supporting a dictator who only agrees to appoint a vice president, send in the army and allow gangs and prisoners to roam the streets is a bad move. Cut his funding, get him out and allow the Egyptians to create a stronger democracy in their country.

Speech

# Don't be afraid to speak your mind, voice beliefs

By Darryl.DeLeon @iowastatedaily.com

It's a very coddled day and age we're living in. There is a constant debate between what is politically and socially correct. The way you talk around your friends would be considered grotesque by any other standard.

There's also the debate between who decides these standards — who is anyone to decide what is or is not appropriate to say. There is an unknown higher-up without a name or face, yet we all live by these standards that have been accepted as the norm. For the most part they keep people in a moral check, but it's still astounding to think these are followed so closely without ever knowing who instilled them.

There are reasons for most of this — revol-

ving mainly around derogatory terms. It feels as if racism will never die no matter how old it gets. People hate other people based solely on the color of their skin and not by the content of their character. Fine, I would hope Rev. King would be satisfied with the fact that people, for the most part, are able to judge only after getting to know someone and also be content with the fact that he could not convince everyone to share his sentiments.

People who harbor these feelings are few and far between, but still worth mentioning. Blogs give people another outlet for sharing whatever thoughts are running through their minds on any topic they want. Anyone in any

state, on any campus can share their opinion and berate a country's leader because it is within their rights. But people don't like hearing these opinions. These opinions are detrimental to harmonious living.

But what are people so afraid of hearing; someone speaking their mind? It doesn't matter who is doing the talking, what political side you lean to or what you do or don't believe in. Some higher-up somewhere wants you to keep your opinions to yourself. And the real reason why? Because silence is safer than confrontation. It's easier for everyone to get by if nobody talks to one another. We steer clear from debate and hope nobody sparks a conversation that is

going to lead to a quarrel of words. Some believe this way of living life is "peaceful" But peaceful doesn't necessarily mean better. It'll just be quieter.

The sad truth is this will never be the case no matter how hard people try. People will never be kept from saying what they feel or reporting what they deem worthy of print. All anyone can hope for is rather than spark hate in anyone's heart, these questions will instead start a dialogue for people to talk about the issues that matter most to them and have their words heard and emotions felt. And through this, hopefully, all the hate can fall by the wayside.