

Editorial

Larger class sizes mean less face time

Larger-than-ever numbers of freshmen here at Iowa State put us in a difficult dilemma. As public funding shrinks while the student population rises and more class sections become increasingly necessary, more strain is placed on professors and students. As a result, we're forced to increase class sizes, which leads to students losing a valuable part of their education: contact and attention.

In the back of the auditorium, it's easy to let your attention drift. As the distance between you and the professor increases, so does the mental bridge between class and everything else. Students distract themselves with Facebook or by making their plans for after class. Besides the lack of available attention, students lose the opportunity to question and interact with the professor and one another.

Expressing yourself in class isn't just fun — it's a valuable part of your education. However, it's exceedingly hard in a large class where being seen or heard is difficult, even if you can conquer the sheer intimidation of speaking in front of two, three or perhaps even 400 students. This also applies to professors; it's no easy matter to participate in a class of 200 students, let alone teach one.

Large classes make it difficult for a professor to know all of his or her students. They're already swamped with research and curriculum development, so it adds stress to them and diminishes the quality for us as they give less time with each student and less focus to the issue at hand.

There is no single or simple solution. Teachers' research is a primary source of funding; if we diminish that in the expectation of greater course loads, we're only making the problem worse for ourselves. Graduate TAs are a good solution, but their salaries are part of the funding problem, and no one would advocate limiting student admissions.

The only solution should be a compromise. Students will have to deal with those larger classes and take more initiative on their own. Professors may have to teach an additional course each semester in order to limit class size and offer more sections. Some departments have begun to utilize undergraduate TAs for discussion groups. And the Legislature will have to keep funding at least constant, if not restore it, if the people of Iowa want to live in a state with a good education system that keeps high school students around for another four years.

Iowa State continues to grow, and unless there's a drastic change in funding, class sizes are an issue that both students and professors are going to have to deal with. It's our sacrifices together as a university that will create a solution.

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Fees



Illustration: Kelsey Kremer/Iowa State Daily

The university should not force students to pay course fees for exams and software. Isn't that what tuition money is for?

University course fees a no-go

On Monday, I received my syllabi and, like most of the 28,000 ISU students, I quickly glanced over it as the teacher talked about it, then gazed off into space for the remainder of the class period. As I enter into my fourth year at Iowa State, I'm pretty familiar with general grading policies, academic dishonesty, special accommodations, and everything else on the syllabus. We are all capable of reading even if most students won't do it. However, in my merchandising class, I noticed something new: course fees.

I'm used to paying lab fees for my design classes. These fees cover things like fabric, thread, machine maintenance, notions and sometimes the occasional field trip. The course fees the syllabus in my merchandising class went on to explain covered things such as "exams, instructional copies, VR software costs, and copies/presentation materials."

I was slightly confused. Aren't things like my exams what I'm paying Iowa State thousands of dollars a year for? The instructor went on to say that if we needed to make copies or prints for our projects, we could keep the receipt and be reimbursed for them if they were done at an on-campus printing site.



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I also happen to know from working at Campus Organizations Accounting that receiving reimbursements is extremely inconvenient and I'm willing to bet that most students won't want to go through the hassle. Well, the college can just pocket that extra money from the fees then. I'm fairly certain my three exams for the course won't cost the \$25 they're asking for, and I don't even know what the hell VR software is. I know, I'm not the most technologically savvy person, but that is beside the point.

So, this is how the College of Human Sciences is making ends meet. Starting a few years ago they started requiring students to print their own syllabi, and now we have to pay for our tests, which I have concluded from dis-

cussions about blue books is possibly slightly illegal given the fact that students, in essence, must pay for their grade. Students pay their tuition, which is an agreement between them and the university that they will receive a set amount of education, services, etc. for the price they pay. However, the university breaches that agreement when it forces the students to pay an additional "tax" in order to receive a final grade.

But the university will continue to cut the budgets to poor little programs like apparel, educational studies and hospitality management and force them to scrimp and scrape to make ends meet at the expense of their students. All while Iowa State makes calls to donors asking them to pay for a new scoreboard and football facility instead of supporting the actual educational institution that allows collegiate sports to exist. So to those of you that actually read the newspaper, say something. And to the rest of the student population ... continue to live in quiet oblivion.

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Apple

Take lesson from Steve Jobs' past

While some people think his story has been overplayed by news outlets in the last week, Steve Jobs is a man who deserves the attention he has received as the curtain falls on his amazing career. I'll start off saying that, while I'm not a Steve Jobs fan or an Apple fanboy, I do have to admire his products, his achievements and his career path. How did one man who seemed more preoccupied searching for his spiritual self during his college years, and only toyed with computers in his spare time, manage to revolutionize the technological world?

Well, that is a very good question to ask.

For those who don't know his history, Steve Jobs was an adopted child who grew up in San Francisco in the '60s, the days in which man first walked on the moon, integrated circuits were being established, and students were revolting against popular culture. Jobs was influenced by all these things, but one of his biggest early achievements was being noticed by Hewlett-Packard employee Steve Wozniak as he became interested in computers during his high school years.

Jobs would later attend college, dropout, become a Buddhist in India and return to California before working with his friend Wozniak again. It was in 1976 that Jobs convinced Wozniak they should commercialize a simple computer design Wozniak had created and convinced a local shop to buy the computers for



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\$500 apiece. It was that simple. With Wozniak's brilliant engineering skills and some of Jobs' shrewd business decisions that kept company ownership in their hands, Apple Computer had made their roots.

Their second design, the Apple II, is generally credited with creating the home computer market with its simple interface, ease-of-use and easy setup. Jobs was always pressing the envelope and pushing his employees to create a more user-friendly experience. This is what got the 24-year-old founder famously interested in the interesting things Xerox was doing at its Palo Alto research center nearby. After seeing the graphical interface Xerox invented there years before its time, Jobs set out to copy it — creating the graphical Apple Lisa and Apple Macintosh in 1984.

Even when he was then fired from Apple in 1985, Jobs went off and created the NeXT computer, which used object-oriented programming — now a standard of most software — and then-revolutionary devices like the Ethernet port (which can now connect your computer to the Internet). On that machine he could send multime-

dia emails and could eventually use the newly created CD-ROM drive to load programs. As Jobs explained to news outlets at the time, the NeXT computers were far ahead of their time and eventually their NeXTSTEP operating system was bought by Apple and became the stepping stone to the current Mac OS X.

From his early days learning about computing with Wozniak, Jobs always wanted the computers they developed to have the very best technology possible coupled with the best design in existence. Jobs has delved in software, engineering and design but has never tied himself solely to one discipline. He thinks about developing the best, and only the best, holistic product and pushes his employees to develop it as quickly as possible.

One of Jobs' greatest gifts is his intuition about what the user needs. When Jobs designs a new product, he can visualize how it should work and function for the user. It was said that during the last decade one of the toughest achievements for Apple product managers was to get a finished product past Jobs. The brilliance of Apple is they have never been hindered by what "the market" wanted. The company took risks to design devices to fill gaps in current technology with unique combinations of both new and old technologies.

For years, if a new product didn't live up to all of Jobs' expectations, it was sent back to the drawing board. One requirement of Jobs' position is to have

a completely open mind. Apple thrives on the mentality that if you throw enough smart people at a hard problem, anything can be possible.

This is something to think about as you go through your college career. The young people of the last few decades have accomplished some amazing world-changing feats because they pushed boundaries and were never told what could not be done. The moon landings in the '60s, the creation of consumer electronics in the 1970s, Jobs' and Gates' work to create personal computing in the '80s, the Internet in the '90s and social media revolution in the new millennium were all achieved by people in their 20s who were willing to dream. What will our generation create and develop? How can you and I change the world for the better?

Learn from Steve Jobs' example: Do your dreaming first, unbounded by real-world constraints. Then work with diverse people, diverse techniques and diverse technologies to bring your dreams to life. When you're done, you will have something your customer wants, something beautiful that seems as if it is from the future. As Jobs once noted about Apple computers: Technology alone is not enough. It's technology married with the liberal arts, married with the humanities, that yields the results that makes our hearts sing.

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