

## Editorial

# Accountability imperative for Dead Week

You might remember a few weeks back when we heard the Government of the Student Body was kicking around the idea of making Dead Week a little more dead.

On the provost's corner of the ISU website exists a link to the faculty handbook's Dead Week policy. Among the suggestions for instructors:

"Mandatory final examinations in any course may not be given during Dead Week except for laboratory courses and for those classes meeting once a week only and for which there is no contact during the normal final exam week. Take-home final exams and small quizzes are generally acceptable."

"Major course assignments should be assigned prior to Dead Week. Any modifications to assignments should be made in a timely fashion to give students adequate time to complete the assignments."

"Major course assignments should be due no later than the Friday prior to Dead Week. Exceptions include class presentations by students, semester-long projects... and extensions of the deadline requested by individual students."

News to you?

The hits keep coming:

"Instructors are reminded that most students are enrolled in several courses each semester, and widespread violation of these guidelines can cause student workloads to be excessive as students begin their preparation for final examinations.

Students are reminded that their academic curriculum is their principal reason for being in college, and they have a responsibility to study in a timely fashion throughout the entire semester."

This year's Editorial Board is exclusively students.

This isn't on purpose, mind you, but we've all agreed these "guidelines" aren't exactly commonplace.

We're not complaining about our homework — that's to be expected with our fancy college educations.

However, Dead Week and Finals Week are the worst part of our year.

We miss the accountability that came along with the indentured servitude to our government-subsidized public schooling.

There are classes with group projects due one week, comprehensive finals the next. Some of us have classes where the only points are four tests, one being a comprehensive final. No quizzes, no projects, no homework.

We have brilliant minds at this university, and it's a privilege to learn from them.

We also have a laundry list of professors we'd like to send to remedial teaching workshops.

Accountability has to exist on both sides of the spectrum, but the expectations placed on undergraduates must be kept in perspective.

People drop out because of the stress from course loads, and we're not talking about the hooligans that drink their way into academic probation.

Maybe some discourse at a GSB senate meeting is in order? Proposing some sort of system to see whether or not the dog-and-pony show at the end of the semester is feasible for John and Jane Q. Student, perhaps?

Hang in there, State.

Our fearless leaders won't let us down. They'll nip this in the bud.

In the meantime, with fall festivities and shenanigans behind us, let's put down the beer and pick up the books.

That's what you're paying for, isn't it?

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## Education

# Gain real-world skills



By Rick.Hanton@iowastatedaily.com

## Creative learning goes beyond the classroom

I spent a portion of the weekend of Oct. 30 driving 255 miles with two other students to an amateur rocket launch in Princeton, Ill., where I helped a student project team from Iowa State launch its custom carbon fiber rocket 6,600 feet into the air.

The rocket's motor ignited on command, spewing a bright blue flame as it pushed for the heavens. As it crested in its parabolic arc, it released its drogue parachute and soon landed nearby in a plowed cornfield. It was all part of a preliminary test of a large cache of electronics hidden within the rocket's jet-black frame.

That test was one of many practical tests the group has been doing as it builds toward its final goal of launching the rocket from a sounding balloon floating 80,000 feet above our heads.

Such a rocket-balloon combination is known as a "rockoon" in rocketry circles and was first used by Dr. James Van Allen of the University of Iowa in 1952 to study the radiation belts that surround the Earth — which are now known as the Van Allen radiation belts.

While enrolled at Iowa State as a student, you can learn tons of definitions, equations and best-practices in the classroom. But it is always an extra benefit to get actual experience in the field — the corn field in this case.

Of course, real-world experience differs from major to major. For engineers, projects like the rockoon abound, with students developing race cars, robots, chemically powered vehicles and other electronic and mechanical marvels in their free time.

If you're not an engineer, there are groups and projects within your college that you can get involved with, too. Students in agriculture might be interested in the groups that evaluate and judge land and soil management. Students specializing in writing might write pieces for sponsored local and national writing contests.

Business majors might spend their time working on or using their entrepreneurial skills or comparing notes on the hottest investments. Whatever your major happens to be, you should follow your passions and spend some of your free time making your learning experience unique.

Employers will reward your time spent to go above and beyond the call of classes and they do realize that practical skills complement theoretical knowledge. As an engineer I can sit and develop computer simulations of our rockoon rocket all day, but without real data and testing with a real rocket, the information I develop is unproven and basically useless.

A major reason that smart engineering groups like Lockheed Martin's famous advanced Skunk Works division locate their engineers a short walk from the manufacturing floor is to encourage this same kind of hands-on development and testing work. In any future job, if your goal is to move up in the company's leadership, make sure that you stay well-connected to the people below you. They can help keep your plans and ambitions well-grounded in the requirements of reality.

So if you have free time in your schedule as you plan out your next semester on AccessPlus, go talk to your adviser, your favorite professor or one of the many labs on campus — Rockoon is supported by the Space Systems and Controls Lab in Howe Hall — to find a neat project to help with.

A lot of projects can also provide you with some extra cash or credits in your pocket to help compensate you for your time. Trust me, doing some creative work outside of your class homework takes effort, but it can be very rewarding and in the end will be well worth your time.



The ISU rockoon group, from the Space Systems and Controls Lab, launches a test rocket filled with electronics Oct. 30 at the Midwest Power rocket launch in Princeton, Ill. Photo: Rick Hanton/Iowa State Daily

## Food

# Campustown dining options provide cheaper alternative



By RJ.Green@iowastatedaily.com

## Don't waste money on pricey plans from ISU Dining

The food situation on campus is sad. Unless the university duped your folks into wasting money on a meal plan at the beginning of the year, you're paying a hefty price for your cafeteria food.

ISU Dining and its "convenience" stores are strewn everywhere, peddling \$4 coffee and \$8 entrees like the food is good and the prices are reasonable. It's not. When Walmart turns a profit selling the same stuff at half the prices, and most student debt is in the five-figure range, I'll call campus food prices "gouging" and lose no sleep over it.

It's a bummer, too — there are a lot of great places a stone's throw from campus that seem to be struggling. I have zero confidence in the crap Lane 4 has been feeding us — Towers was why Campustown worked, and building a hotel or Buffalo Wild Wings is a far cry from the foot traffic a few thousand people give an area.

Still, if you're holed up in your dorm room living off the oatmeal packets you stole from the UDCC, do yourself the favor and check out some of the great food across the street.

### Angie's Cantina

Under new ownership, it's changed more than the name: Besides having a full bar, Angie's also has new Spanish-Asian fusion dishes. You're almost guaranteed to run into the new owners, and these folks genu-

inely appreciate your patronage.

You can still get breakfast for less than \$5 at any time of day, but now you can also help yourself to tapas, tacos, quesadillas and homemade sangria. The serving sizes are big enough for an offensive lineman, and the food is always spot-on. The next time you find your drunken self and your heathen friends hungry at some ungodly hour of a weekend morning, make a field trip to Angie's.

### Es Tas

I almost didn't put it on here, but sentimental reasons prevailed. When Es Tas was on Welch, I practically lived there. Some of the bars charge \$4 for a bottle of Miller Lite and call it a special; Es Tas' idea of "special" is a gallon of Fat Tire for \$5.

Until two years ago, I gave Es Tas the edge over Tasty Tacos. Blasphemy? Hardly.

You could taste how fresh the produce was, and you had your pick of swapping out one of five different meats for most Mexican dishes. The Guac Burger is everything a hamburger should be.

Over the past two years, though, there's been a noticeable decline in quality. I've had under-cooked and outright cold food delivered to me, but that was before it stopped delivery service.

I still get nostalgic and order takeout every few months or so, but it seems like it's really skimping on the ingredients.

### Jeff's Pizza

I have four words: Barbecue Bacon Chicken Ranch. Easily the second-best pizza in Ames, if not existence.

Jeff's gets all sorts of awesome points — two footlong, grilled sandwiches set you back a measly \$10; the nightly specials are an awesome deal; it's open until 3:30 a.m. on the weekends; and bison is on the ingredients menu. Freakin' Buffalo on your pizza.

There is also a \$5 lunch special, and I'm inclined to think the restaurant would have a lot more traffic from campus if Lake Latrine wasn't in the way. If you find yourself ordering delivery from the chain pizza restaurants, hang up the phone, punch yourself in the face and call Jeff's.

### Planet Sub

Ames doesn't really need another sandwich shop, and it's a bit pricey for deli fixin's, but Planet Sub's food is awesome. It's one of those places that'd do really well inside of the Memorial Union, but instead got stuck in no-man's-land.

Planet Sub reminds me of a hipster Quiznos, complete with delivery. It also has \$2 Turkey Tuesdays, although I'm not sure if that's a chain thing or if it's a promo for the Ames store. Regardless, if you haven't been there, you should check it out. I have a feeling it won't be around much longer.

### Pizza Pit/Welch Avenue

I could write an entire column on why Welch Ave is the best bar in Ames. Exhibit A: Pizza Pit delivers to Welch Ave. There's the \$2 top-shelf nights, \$1 PBR nights, but this is a column about food.

Pizza Pit makes, for my money, the best pizza in existence — The Super Meat Sampler.

Friends and I affectionately refer to it as the Barnyard Holocaust. It's the epitome of manliness, clogged arteries be damned.

I can vouch for the chicken wings — which are absolutely spectacular — and the jalapeno poppers. I've eaten slices of their other pizza. It's not that they're bad, it's just that the Super Meat Sampler is that good. I'll use girl-food words for it: amazing, incredible, delectable, savory, they're all fitting. I'm getting hungry writing this.

### Thai Kitchen

I love Thai food. I'm only writing this for the folks who have never heard of the place, because if you know where it is, you already eat there.

Skip all of the other swill that passes off as Asian food in Campustown. When it comes to cultural foods, I have no qualms judging merit based on clientele — Cracker Barrel probably tastes great when you have one tooth, but anyone looking for a down-home American meal knows how terrible that place is.

Same goes for Golden Wok — the only Asian place I've seen there have been employees, and that's because the food is terrible. I think that horrible place stays open because it delivers.

I love Thai Kitchen so much I've offered to deliver — on more than one occasion — solely for tips and two meals per shift. Mrs. Chittamvanich appreciated the offer, but said there would be no way the could keep up during their lunch shifts, and she's absolutely right.

If you haven't been there, go. Go now.