



100 years of learning

As the years have changed, so too have students and faculty. Yet even over the course of 100 years many aspects remain the same. From the very beginning New Trier News has created a space for dialogue as well as debate over education. Articles range from satirical summaries of standardized tests, to questions over the morality of cheating. Although education may change, New Trier News will remain a safe stage for the conversations we need to have.

From the archives: the article below was originally published Oct. 4, 1996

Adm. explains academic integrity

by Amy Choi

The urgent need to develop an academic integrity policy in 1992 left many students questioning the moral character of New Trier. Why does the administration feel the need to create a formal policy concerning cheating? What is their purpose? Is the policy only for disciplinary measures? What exactly is academic integrity?

According to Ms. Judy Brinton, dean, "the academic integrity policy was meant to raise the issue of what academic integrity really is."

"WHEN WE passed the policy, we thought about it as an educational tool. Its role is to educate people as to what it means to be academically honest."

The policy details violations of academic honesty and its consequences, emphasizing its secondary importance as a disciplinary policy. It does appear to be successful in that sense, as there have only been five students who have violated the code twice in the past three years that the policy has been in effect.

Mr. Wesley Baumann, principal, indicated that the strength of the policy lies in its disciplinary side.

"SINCE RECORDS are being kept, a student doesn't get to cheat once in every class and get away with it. There aren't many repeat offenders," he explained.

On the issue of the purpose of the policy, there is a rewording agreement among administration and faculty that the greatest significance of the academic integrity policy is to inform students of honest academic habits before entering the college level.

"There is no higher institution of schooling which does not react negatively to cheating," Brinton explained. "Knowledge of the policy is extremely valuable for students going to college, because the policy is universal in academic circles."

MS. JULIE Johnson, English teacher, agreed that communication of the policy to students is necessary.

"Students need to understand from the beginning what's acceptable and what's not. It is important to develop healthy habits in high school, and the academic integrity policy is valuable in that it makes the school's standards for academic integrity clear," she stated.

Still, despite these explanations, a question lies in why so much time would be concentrated in specifying 28 academic offenses and 16 different disciplinary procedures in the policy. Are cheating and plagiarism so predominant at New Trier as to require such effort?

NOT SO, says the administration.

"I do not think cheating is prevalent, but cheating exists. It is not common, but it is more than rare," Baumann commented.

Brinton also maintained that, though students do cheat, it is not a general characteristic of the student body.

Baumann admitted, though, that violations of academic integrity have risen in the past years, and he cited distinct reasons for the rise.

"I think unfortunately that [the rise] is a sign of our society. Students see so many examples of adults in public leadership positions who give up their integrity to further themselves."

"Of course when they do it, they influence the kids. It is indicative of society in general that we don't think of cheating as bad at certain levels, like asking what is going to be on a test; we expect to actually copying somebody else's answers," he continued.

"CHEATING NOWADAYS is like speeding in a car. Nobody ever feels guilty about speeding five or 10 miles over the limit as long as they don't get caught," Baumann stated.

He does, however, understand that students are under academic pressures which have intensified greatly over his 20 years at New Trier.

"SINCE FAMILIES are smaller, I think parents invest more in their children. Not only the parental pressure but the peer and self-imposed pressures also have magnified with the greater difficulties [these days] of getting accepted into college," Baumann explained.

He denied the claim that the school itself places the pressure on its students and also maintained that using stress as an excuse to violating the academic code is unacceptable.

Brinton concurred with his statement.

"I THINK that [using pressure as an excuse] is a cop-out. Your actions are still your own. You have to choose how to deal with pressure."

"It's a dangerous way of thinking to use it as an excuse [for cheating]. I think how a student deals with pressure speaks to his character," she remarked.

With 62 breaches of the academic integrity policy and 57 student offenders in the past three years, one has to wonder about the character of the student body. But put those 57 students in the pool of possibly 2000 or 2300 offenders, and the policy appears to be a success.

"I THINK that the policy has worked really well," Brinton said while voicing one concern. "If the students don't feel knowledgeable about it, that is an issue that needs to be addressed immediately."

Baumann is less convinced. "It is somewhat successful, because it serves as that extra deterrent. Kids are scared because they don't want to take a class and have it on their records, or they don't want to risk letting their parents down if they get caught."

"But it's not the answer."

From the archives: originally published Nov. 10, 1961

News services school, presents practice SAT's



Seniors (l. to r.) Pim Paulk, Bob Udesky, Dave Rachlin, and Dave Winer consult News exam specimen while studying for aptitude tests.

(photo by Actipes)

With the coming of another season of college entrance tests, the News makes available some of the questions which may appear on them.

RAT (Real Awful Test)
Name _____ (40 points)
(Plus 30 points in illegible)
Date _____ (10 points)
Sex _____ (200 points)
Honor Pledge _____ (-50 points)

The entire test will be objective, since everyone objects to taking it.

A. Poetry exam

Read the passage carefully, referring back to it as necessary in answering the questions which follow.

"Mary had a little lamb,
Whose fleece was white as snow.
And everywhere that Mary went,
The lamb was sure to go."

1. What is symbolized by the tone of this poem?
a. Socialism is an unrealistic attitude for surrealists.
b. Lambs have fleas.
c. Mary has fleas.

2. Compare or contrast the sources of irony in the first and last lines.

a. Yes.
b. What irony?
c. Orange juice in the winter.

3. From what is said in this poem, do you still wonder where the yellow went?

a. What yellow?
b. What poem?
c. What nonsense!
4. What mood is inspired by this famous work?
a. Gentle sweetness of spring flowers.
b. Nostalgia of a lost youth.
c. Nausea.

B. Math Exam

In the below multiple choice questions, one, and only one, of the answers is correct. Black out the space of the letter of the number of the answer of the question on the math section on the right side on the back of your answer sheet. (50 extra points for finding it.)

1. Too plus to =
a. for
b. fore
c. twenty-to
2. In this equation,
 $P = \Delta mv + m^2 v = \sqrt{x^2 gh} (W = w) - 8$, find X.
a. It's got to be in there somewhere.
b. Capital or small "x"?
c. x = 0

3. $A + B + C + C = ?$
a. a question mark
b. 13 cows
c. a .275 average

4. How many places will pi work out to? (Show work).
a. 1.414
b. Does not work on Saturday.
c. Capital or small π ?

C. Science Exam

1. When was Issac Newton born?

a. On his birthday
b. In the fall.
c. Which Issac Newton?

2. Explain in full the details of the theory of relativity. (use this space).
2a. Why is this concept wrong?
2b. What is a better theory?
2c. Prove it.

3. What function does the atom have?

a. He and Eve started civilization.
b. Helps make the atom bomb possible.
c. Is part of the digestive tract in the body, as in atomic ache.

4. What is an atomiser?

a. One who hords atoms.
b. Don't you know either.
c. (Doodle space)

D. History Exam

1. What is the capital of England?
a. England
b. Capital or small England?
c. False

From the archives: "Trevs plead for pre-break finals" was originally published Feb. 9, 1996

Trevs plead for pre-break finals

by Matthew Yeh

For students, few things are more feared than the three days in January when 20 percent of their grade is on the line. For teachers, few things are more dreaded than the weekend after finals when exams must be graded.

Stress will always accompany final exams. However, New Trier chooses to add to the pressure by holding finals exams after winter vacation.

UNDER THE current scheduling plan, winter vaca-

tion becomes an irregular split in the semester. Students must abandon school for a full two weeks and then are expected to bounce back for exams held only two weeks later.

Some may argue that students can use the time over winter vacation to prepare for finals. Although it is likely that a number of students do study over break, it is possible that few even open a textbook to study those two weeks.

Furthermore, it is often ineffective to study for an exam two

or three weeks in advance. Two weeks ago I studied the Westward Expansion in U.S. history. Right now I have no idea what the Golden Spike is, and the name Crazy Horse sounds like a brand of beer. Similarly, students who study over winter vacation will often forget what they learned by the time finals arrive.

PERHAPS THE worst thing about the current finals schedule is that it creates two periods of pressure for students. One period is the week before winter break when

teachers have that nasty tendency of cramming in the work they didn't get around to earlier. The other period is the week before finals.

A simple solution to these problems is to move final exams to the week before winter vacation. Such a change would eliminate the unnatural split in the semester. Students would also have to contend with only one period of high work-load.

Teachers would also benefit from the change. Rather than

grading exams over a single weekend, they could work at their leisure over winter vacation. Perhaps we could then

eliminate "grading day" or better yet, we could move that day before exams and convert it into a much needed "reading day."

Teachers and students alike must pressure the administration to change next year's calendar. Let's not make finals any worse than they already are.