

The Davidsonian

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Beyond grades

When we came to Davidson as prospectives, we were led around by smiling tour guides who cheerily told us not to expect the same grades we received in high school. College is different, they said. Especially Davidson College. For many of us, that is exactly why we came here — because Davidson is not high school, where we regularly were at the top of our classes, where we were the exception to the rule.

The grade inflation article (see page # 9) argues that everyone at outstanding schools like Davidson is far above the average job-market applicant, and therefore our grades should reflect this difference and show our exceptional worthiness in the "real" world. The article claims that not catering to such a system will impair our chances of receiving jobs. The writer admits that graduates of his or her Ivy League have as much trouble finding work as graduates of Davidson.

But we came to Davidson precisely because it is not full of the "average" job-market applicants. We entered this school to join an academic world of a different scale — one which regards us differently than it does the average job market applicant.

We are among students of our own standing, and our work is regarded accordingly. We are part of a school where A's truly denote excellence, and C's denote average effort and performance.

To accept grade inflation essentially would be accepting the abandonment of Davidson's much-touted "standard of excellence" — a standard which our mere presence attests to — and replacing it with a "standard of market value."

Davidson is not about market value. If it were, it would not require and promote the Honor Code. If it were, Reach Out would not exist, much less thrive. What distinguishes Davidson graduates from grade inflated Ivy League alum is not the grades, but the value assigned to the grades.

Our school recognizes grades as a small part of the person, and encourages its students to do the same. This awareness is what a "Liberal Arts education" is for — not always for a career track, but for the actual value of the class, and for the thought it provokes. We will grow more if we are challenged to do better.

In the "real" world, grades are of little importance. We realize this and embrace it, passionately believing that our worth in the "real" world does not lose value after graduation, does not diminish the moment we show ourselves next to an Ivy Leaguer, and cannot be fully represented by a transcript.



End of Semester Experiment #42:
Intravenous Coffee

LETTERS

Comic apology

To the Editors:

We want to apologize for any offense or insult experienced by those who attended the performance of comedian Gerald Kelly, Saturday night in the 900 room. He was abusive to members of the audience and his language was excessively crude.

Students and staff saw him perform at a conference before inviting him to campus. What they saw then and what we got Saturday

night were two widely divergent performances.

The College Union is a place for all to feel welcome, supported, and valued.

In the future we will be even more diligent to see that performers and guests we bring to Davidson make positive contributions in this regard.

We are truly sorry for this experience which may have marred an otherwise delightful Spring Frolics Weekend.

Sincerely,

William Brown,
College Union Director
Sherry Malushizky,
Assistant Director for Programs
Molly Johnson,
Program Advisor
Sara Beth Hamlin,
College Union President
Mecie Beecham,
Social Vice President of the College Union
Jenny Everett,
Co-Curricular Vice President
Shannon Howland,
900 Room Committee Chair

Nobody has a right not to be offended

To the Editors:

I'm sorry to hear that Sara Gephardt was offended by the Easter crosses and that she feels disregarded by the school. But I'm disturbed that she wrote in her

article of last week that "Freedom of speech is necessary and important, but sometimes compromises must be made to acknowledge that we care about one another." Students here have a right to

civily express their views, no matter how offensive. Nobody has a right not to be offended.

Sincerely,
John Rogers '96

AIDS Quilt trip next fall

To the Editors:

In November 1994, part of the Names Project AIDS Memorial Quilt came to Davidson, displaying approximately 504 panels in Johnston Gym. This event brought together many aspects of the Davidson community, giving students and community a new perspective on the AIDS epidemic. The Quilt sent a powerful message of love, compassion and understanding to all those who visited it. The students, especially, showed a great deal of support and desire to learn and experience more of the Quilt.

The NAMES Project AIDS Memorial Quilt will be on display in Washington, DC, in its entirety dur-

ing October 11-13, 1996. This display is a wonderful opportunity for education, awareness, and support.

Fortunately, this event coincides with Davidson's Fall Break. It is our hope that we will be able to bring about 30 Davidson students to Washington, DC, to assist with the Quilt display.

Students will have the opportunity to not only view the Quilt, but to be an integral part of the display through volunteering as quilt monitors, reading names, distributing educational information, and accepting new panels.

There will also be a Candlelight March Against AIDS, in which Davidson would like to have a contin-

gent. This event is a wonderful opportunity for you, as a student, to experience one of the most powerful displays of the Quilt ever, and to bring that knowledge back to the Davidson community.

There will be an informational meeting about this trip to Washington, DC, on April 30, at 9 p.m. in the Morrison Room of the College Union, or contact Georgia Ringle at -2902. Please attend if you have any interest in this unforgettable event.

Sincerely,
Susan Plummer
NAMES Project '96 Committee

The Davidsonian is published weekly on Monday during the spring term by the students of Davidson College. Please address all correspondences to: The Davidsonian, P.O. Box 219, Davidson, North Carolina 28036. Phone (704) 892-2148 or -2149. Our offices are located on the third floor of the Grey Student Union building. Opinions expressed in letters to the editors or commentaries do not necessarily reflect the views of the Editorial Board of The Davidsonian. Subscriptions cost \$35.00 per year. Advertising rates are available upon request. Copyright is held by the Trustees of Davidson College.

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