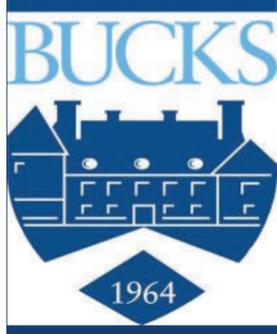


The Centurion



The Award-Winning, Student-Run Newspaper of Bucks County Community College

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Bucks Increases Tuition by Another \$5 Per Credit for Fall

HAL CONTE
Centurion Staff

Tuition at Bucks will be raised by \$5 per credit for county residents in the fall semester, bringing total tuition prices to \$145 per credit and raising frustration among some students.

“College is expensive enough already guys, stop it,” said Luke Delavan, a psychology major. “It is definitely going to be a struggle for students who are already having trouble paying for classes.”

However, he added, “I wouldn’t know their financial situation.” According to college president Stephanie Shanblatt, the decision is being made to balance the budget.

“The college made some very difficult decisions in crafting this budget. Bucks continues to be a great value with strong academic programs and dedicated faculty and staff,” Shanblatt stated.

“Support from the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and from the County of Bucks, the college’s local sponsor, helped keep the tuition increase to only 3.6 percent.”

Administrators say that the overall increase for an in-county resident will be \$120, assuming they are taking 24 credits, which is the amount the college recommends.

Tuition will also rise for out-of-county and out-of-state students, from \$280 to \$290 and from \$420

to \$435, respectively.

While some students expressed annoyance at the tuition hike, others were more ambivalent. “I know they did it for a reason,” said Anthony Consoli, a candidate for secretary of the Student Government. “I would just say that I hope they put that money to good use.”

Professors also had things to say about the tuition increase. Mark Cobb, a philosophy professor, expressed the hope that Bucks and other community colleges would eventually be free to attend. However, he recognized the difficulty of the college’s dilemma.

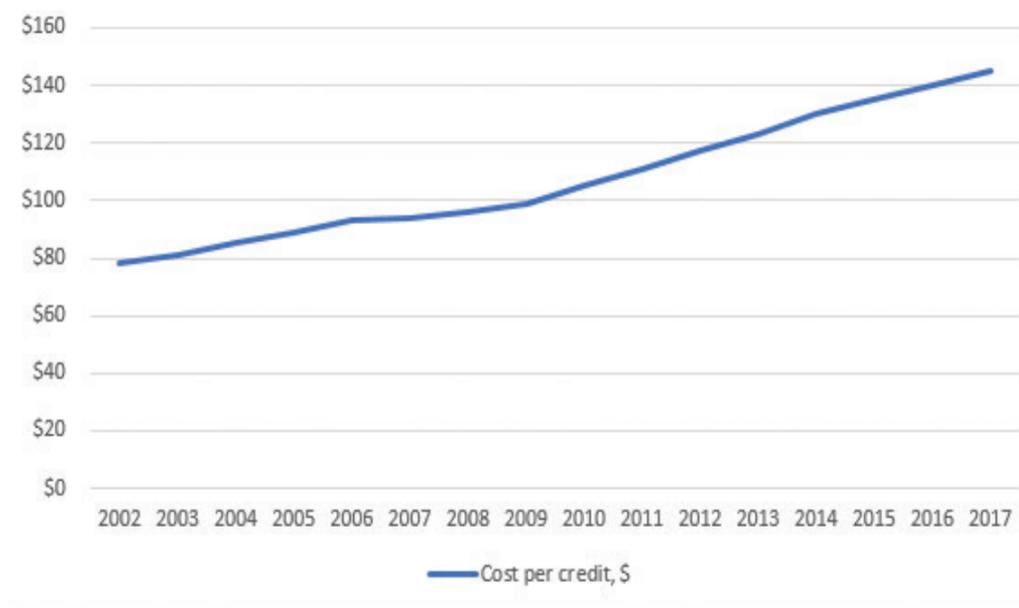
“It is hard for a particular school dealing with budgetary constraints to do anything really bold or progressive,” he said. “For me, I don’t feel like I have enough background information in order to say something definitive.”

Tuition rates at Bucks have been increased annually since at least 2003, according to information and stories from the Centurion’s archives. A chart on this page shows how tuition has gone from under \$80 per credit in 2002 to the \$145 rate to be implemented in the fall.

According to the government CPI (Consumer Price Index), these increases have exceeded the rate of inflation significantly. If prices had risen equally with inflation, the cost per credit would be less than \$110.

State budget cuts have placed increasing pressure on community

Cost Per Credit, Bucks: 2003-2017 (does not include fees)



Tuition Rates at Bucks Since 2003. Data from The Centurion

colleges. Both the previous governor, Tom Corbett, and the current governor, Tom Wolf, have overseen austerity programs targeting community college funding.

The State of Pennsylvania declined to raise funding for community colleges in its latest budget, keeping funding at the same levels that it was last year. The decision to increase tuition was made unanimously by the Board of Trustees on Thursday, April 13, 2017.

Student leaders say that they will try to make the best out of a

challenging situation. “I personally understand that as a student it will never be pleasant for tuition to increase,” said Theodora Dagkli, a presidential candidate in the student government elections. “We are trying to get as much sponsorships as possible to reduce tuition or if we can’t do that, to help the students.”

Thomas Skiffington, chairman of the Board of Trustees, said that all the options were looked at before they finally settled on raising tuition.

“As always, our primary goal is

to minimize tuition increases, and to do so only as a last option,” he said. “We are extremely reluctant to raise tuition, but take this measure only after every action possible to reduce operating costs has been made while continuing to provide the high quality education that has earned Bucks a national reputation.”

See inside for more stories on the costs of attending community college: pages 6, 7, & 8

PHOTO CREDIT: HAL CONTE

NOVA Comes to Bucks to Talk About Sexual Assault Prevention

SCOTT KEOUGH AND ROWAN HALDEMAN
Centurion Staff

A speaker from the Network of Victim Assistance (NOVA), came to Bucks on April 19 to speak to students about ways to be aware of and prevent sexual assault that happens on campuses.

Danielle Hudak, the spokeswoman for NOVA Bucks, started her presentation, titled “Aware and Prepared,” by giving out the 24/7 hotline that NOVA provides to anyone struggling with a previous or ongoing sexual assault issue. She then began to identify the patterns of behavior for people likely to perform these assaults, which ranged from screaming at women as they walk down the street, to exposing themselves to women.

Hudak made it clear to the group of around 70 Bucks students that sexual violence doesn’t just occur when physical force is used, but also when attackers impose emotional or physiological force on the victim. “60 percent of all sexual assaults go unreported,” she said, a statistic that shocked almost everyone in the crowd.

“One of the most common reasons for this lack of reporting is victim blaming, which is when the victim of the crime is held entirely or even partially respon-

sible for what happened to them,” Hudak said. Abuse is never the victim’s fault. “It is up to all of us to make a conscious choice to never blame the victim, and to never make excuses for the perpetrator of a crime.”

Danielle also informed the students that sexual assault is not motivated just by desire. “The important thing to understand and remember about all sexual violence, is that rape and sexual assault and other behaviors is not motivated by sexual desires but by the need for power and control.”

NOVA wanted to make a clear distinction between what was proper consent for sex and what was not acceptable as consent for sex. “If a person isn’t awake or is too under the influence of drugs or alcohol then they cannot give proper consent and the answer is always no,” Hudak told the audience

Affirmative and legal consent was a major topic at the event. “Just because a girl leaves the bar with you doesn’t mean you automatically get to have sex with her.” Hudak asserted.

Affirmative consent is defined as explicit, informed, and voluntary agreement to participate in a sexual act. One of the most shocking and stunning points made by the NOVA spokeswoman was

that 80-90% of all sexual assault victims know their attacker. Hudak followed up by saying “Rape doesn’t happen in a dark alley by a stranger in a mask anymore, it is someone you know.”

Use of drugs and alcohol was another major speaking point in the presentation, which went into detail about all of the drugs a person might give a target to make them less likely to fight back or remember a sexual assault. “Prescription drugs such as sleep aids or muscle relaxers can be used as well as street drugs like GHP, roofies, and ecstasy. And these can all be added to drinks without changing the color, odor, or flavor of the beverage.”

Hudak made sure the group understood that the substance used in most sexual assaults is alcohol.

“Why do you think college students male and female are five times more likely to get sexually assaulted on a college campus then if not?” Hudak asked. A student raised his hand and said, “Because there is more use of drugs and alcohol on college campuses.” Hudak acknowledged that the student was correct but also said a big part of it was people experiencing more freedom for the first time in their lives and are experimenting with drinking for the first time.

They then presented one of the



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<p>Education</p> <p>We offer personal safety educational programs to children and youth, adults, seniors and individuals with disabilities in schools,</p>	<p>Advocacy</p> <p>NOVA is an advocate for victims and victims’ rights. We provide support and accompaniment to all criminal justice proceedings. We speak</p>	<p>Counseling</p> <p>NOVA provides absolute free one-on-one short-term counseling to help victims their families and significant others to identify and w</p>
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NOVA’s website

most shocking statistics of the entire presentation, which was “50% of college sexual assaults occur in Augusts, September, October, and November,” which are the first months of a student’s college career.

Lastly, Danielle informed the students about a federal law called Title IX, which has been used to fight against campus sexual assault. “[Title IX] prohibits gender-based discrimination in educational institutions. They can

help and support you through the process of recovery.”

Although the NOVA presentation was a lot to take in, and at times a little intense, it was an important step in helping students to not only prevent their own sexual assault, but also help prevent others from getting assaulted as well. The group’s assault hotline is 1-800-675-6900.

PHOTO CREDIT: NOVA

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Revival of Tyler Literary Club

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Letters should be limited to 500 words. They will be edited for spelling, space and malicious or libelous statements. Letters must be the original work of the writer and must be signed. For identification purposes, letters must include the writer's full name and telephone number.

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Tyler Literary Club members

JOCELYN PAPPAS

Centurion Staff

The Tyler Literary Society Club is rising anew after closing down due to lack of participants in the 2016 fall semester.

After the previous president of the club moved away from Bucks, it was left without anyone in charge.

However, halfway through the spring semester, Lesa Shirley became the new president. She had an interest in starting up the club once more.

Although Shirley is enrolled in the music department, she expressed her love of the arts and literature overall.

Currently, the team consists of Vice President Danielle Shead, Secretary Mary Kate McGarvey, and Treasurer Delaney Hensor.

Eric Specian, a part-time faculty member, acts as the advisor and is working with Shirley and the rest

of the members to revive the club.

The club currently meets in the Rollins Center in room 112, with meetings typically lasting from 12:30 to 4:30.

Notably, the club is in charge of putting together each issue of the Tyler Literary Magazine, formerly known as The Literary Review.

The club is currently accepting more submissions for the upcoming issue, which is set to be released on May 1.

Shirley explained that some changes will be made to the format of the magazine in comparison with the previous issues.

An accredited publication, the Tyler Literary Magazine is a collection of poetry, essays, short stories, photography and much more – by the students, for the students.

Although publishing by deadline is the club's biggest goal,

Shirley explained how the club aims at more than simply getting the magazine done on time.

“Writing has benefited me.... In writing you can make up anything and there is no limit. I can apply that when writing for the magazine, when I write true to myself, and about something I stand strong for,” Snead said.

“Writing and literature is a way for me to express my creativity and get out my emotions. It's a stress relief and creativity all mixed into one,” McGarvey responded.

“Writing and literature has benefited me because of the therapy in it. It has saved my life, changed it, and is the reason I'm here today. The power of pen and paper on a page can be life-altering. Applying that to the magazine is important because you never know who might need uplifting,” Shirley concluded.

She also hopes that the club will help grow appreciation for culture and the arts, with the desire of more voices being heard from students.

PHOTO CREDIT: JOCELYN PAPPAS

“Normally the things I write are for my eyes only, but the magazine gives me a chance to share it with others, and it challenged me to write shorter things,” McGarvey said.

Shirley mentioned that there are upcoming plans for book readings from the club, and that are many more plans to execute after summer breaks.

Additionally, the club hopes to plan what Shirley calls a “Finals Countdown” sale, in order to raise money and recruit new members.

On one table, they will be selling small packages containing a variety of things that a student might want for final exam preparation, such as pencils and lots of coffee.

Another table will be set up with details about the club in hopes of encouraging more students to join it.

Those interested in joining can inquire about the club at tylerlit-society@gmail.com.

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Bucks News

Seasoned Reporters Talk About The Ins and Outs of the Career at Bucks' Annual Journalism Forums

HAL CONTE
Centurion Staff

Tom Sofield, a recent Bucks graduate, is already a successful entrepreneur. Although he has worked at major national corporations, his company is located right in the heart of Bucks County. His start-up, Levittownnow.com, was founded in 2013, and has recently been joined by a sister website, Newtown Now. His occupation? "It's the only profession where one minute you are talking to a drug dealer, and the next you are talking to the police, and you don't get in trouble."

Sofield is a journalist, and along with seven other members of this profession, was present for a series of intriguing Journalism Forums held at Bucks' Newtown campus in the Centurion's newsroom on April 17 and 18. And although some have the perception that journalism is a dying art form, those present would disagree.

"What we do in this field of journalism is critically important, now more than ever," said Freda Savana, a veteran reporter who has worked in the business for 30 years. Case in point: the journalists presenting have been on the scene for national events ranging from the Orlando terrorist attack to Donald Trump's campaign rallies.

"I got into journalism because I liked to write," said Jarrett Renshaw, a reporter for Reuters who covered the Orlando shooting. "What better way to travel, write,

and get paid at the same time?"

The forum was host to journalists of all types, from hard news reporters to sports commentators on WBCB radio. Some start work at 5:00 in the morning, while others are only warming up at 7:00 in the evening. However, all of them brought passionate and engaging stories to a collective audience of over fifty students, as well as tips for those wishing to get their own feet wet in the profession.

One common piece of advice was to write stories for the student newspaper, either at Bucks or after transferring. "It's like credit," Renshaw explained. "You want to get a credit card, and you have no credit history. How do you prove you're creditworthy? You have to have clips, you need to generate something that demonstrates what you're doing."

Tommy Rowan, a staff writer at Philly.com, said that those wishing to go into any career should use their time in community college to "find out what you want to do." "The best way to go is to find a professor, and make yourself known to that professor." Rowan, who went to Temple University after graduating from Bucks, explained that many of the adjunct professors at Temple are working journalists.

Another former Bucks student who is now working as a journalist, Anthony DiMattia, was able to get an internship out of college at the Courier Times. A 2012 graduate, he got a job as a copy editor just one year later.

During the three forums, speak-

ers demonstrated the drama of reporting, describing various events that they have covered. Renshaw was in the middle of moving when his editor told him to fly down to Orlando to report on the terrorist attack there last year.

"Our first mission is to find out who the victims are. You go knocking on doors." Many families were too distraught to talk about the event, he said.

Rowan explained the political dynamic of covering a major city. "[Politicians] get power-hungry. Bigger city, bigger playground, bigger paydays." "The only thing you can do is find people and talk to them." "If you write a story that helps other people, that gets laws changed, there can't be anything better than that," DiMattia said.

When asked, Savana said that tales of hoarders were among strangest stories she has written. "They are interesting, but they are really weird."

Other reporters stressed the occasional difficulty of the job.



From left to right: DiMattia, Sofield, Savana, and Haddon

"There are times when I have a camera in one hand, a phone in the other, while trying to tweet about it on social media!" exclaimed Michele Haddon, who works at the Doylestown Intelligencer. "Sometimes I knock on the door and think, 'Please don't be home!'" But we have a job to do."

Haddon also mentioned the importance of being prepared as a journalist. "Pens don't work very well in the cold, so bring a pencil. I always have a pair of rain boots. In the winter, I kept snow pants."

"You just have to stick your phone in somebody's face and do it," said Charlotte Reese, a journalist at WBCB 1490 AM. "If you want to be a journalist, just tell

PHOTO CREDIT: TONY ROGERS

yourself, 'I'm a journalist.'" For Sofield, technology is the biggest challenge – and opportunity – facing young journalists today. "Analytics have totally changed the game. A lot of stories we journalists think are important, many people don't care about."

The company that he used to work for, Gannet Media, is currently trying to get journalists to build their own personal brands based on their lives as journalists, not necessarily as writers for Gannet. "They want people with an active social media presence, not someone who is tweeting out nudes," he laughed. After all, there are some things even a journalist can't get away with.



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Special Report: The Cost of Community College

The Struggles of Trump Budget to Cut Pell Grants Community College

CENTURION STAFF

Across the United States, there are 1,462 community colleges. No two are exactly alike, however, here we take a look at the real cost of community college as a whole. Not only costs of tuition, but the tolls it takes on students in all areas of their lives.

The first story reports on President Trump's budget plans to cut Pell Grants, a major form of compensation toward economically distressed students. Pell Grants are government subsidies provided to students who come from families who live below the poverty line and would otherwise have tremendous difficulty paying for their education. Unlike loans, grants are not required to be paid back, so Pell Grants are an indispensable source of tuition money to families in need.

We then take a look at the trials and tribulations of employed community college students and their daily lives. Having to juggle school and work full time is no easy task, yet these superhuman students pull it off. The article follows four Bucks students who work as well as attend class while attempting to maintain healthy personal lives, too.

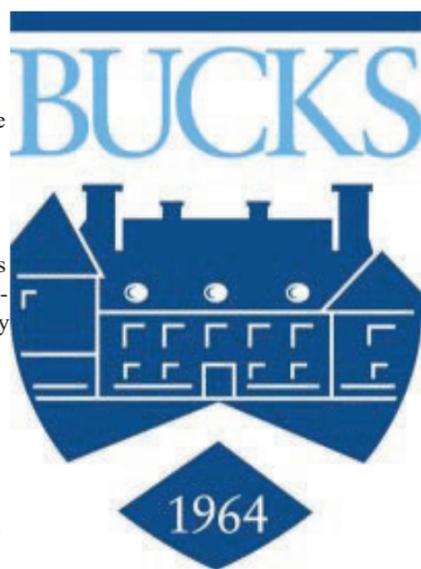
Hal Conte investigates the rising costs of tuition at community colleges country-wide, in the article "Rising Costs of Community College Spark Concern for Students." In this article

Conte examines the differences of tuition prices based on credit hours and majors.

The following story covers San Francisco and New York's new initiatives to experiment with free community college. Already seen as a better financial choice than four year universities, community college that is tuition free would be even better. The new initiative has many benefits planned for students, like money for books and other services, for example.

Finally, one of the hardest struggles students at community college face; graduation and transferring. Gianfranco Illiano reports on the hardships many students here at Bucks have encountered in graduating on time and getting credits transferred to universities.

Read on to find out more about the community college struggle.



The Daily Lives of Working Bucks Students

SHANNON HARRAR

Centurion Staff

Tatiana Orr, an 18-year-old, second-semester music major, is a full-time student at Bucks, as well as a full-time employee at Ann's Choice retirement community. The 5'3, blonde hair, blue-eyed Tat, as friends call her, juggles classes Monday through Friday, work weeks ranging anywhere from 24 to 32 hours, family, friends, a boyfriend, and a band. How does she do it? The world may never know.

A typical Monday for Tat is a 6:30 am wake up, and about an hour to shower, get dressed and gathered for the day. Living in Upper Moreland, it takes her around 30 to 40 minutes to commute to Bucks, where she takes two classes from 9 am to 1:15pm, then jets off to be at work by 3:00. She works a five-hour shift, then uses the rest of her night for various activities.

Tat likes to stay in shape, so she may squeeze in a workout at the gym. Or she may take the evening to do homework for classes, or practice with her band. They try to write and play music as often as possible, which is tough, as they all share similar hectic schedules.

Her band mates, twin brothers Dane and Michael Hafler, are also full-time students at Bucks and are employed full-time at Ann's Choice with Tat. Both sophomores planning on transferring to Temple next fall, the boys know full well the struggle of balancing everything life has to offer.

For 20-year-old psychology major, Dane, being a full time student and working 20+ hours a week doesn't go without taking its tolls. He takes four classes and works five days straight. Each day in his schedule is as packed and complicated as the next, not only struggling to fit in time for work,

school and sleep, but his other many interests as well.

As mentioned earlier, he is in a band, and he also engages in many different hobbies such as art, basketball, and playing his favorite video games, League of Legends. He also enjoys going to the gym, long walks in Tyler park, and oh, having a social life. With a girlfriend, family, friends, and three cats to attend to, it's a wonder he finds time to breathe.

"It's a lot to handle but I feel like it's necessary to have a lot of outlets for stress relief," Dane says of how he manages it all.

For his twin brother, Michael, a physical therapy major, life isn't any easier. He juggles a girlfriend, the band, the friends, family, and cats, as well as three classes and a 30-hour work week. And for his next trick, he will be jumping through a hoop of fire! Come get your tickets now to see the

VINCENT BARRERAS

Centurion Staff

Pell Grants and other college programs may lose money as President Donald J. Trump outlined his 2018 budget proposal.

According to the budget, while Pell Grants will not be completely eliminated, they will lose \$3.9 billion in funding. This money adds to a budget that would see a \$9 billion cut for the U.S. Department of Education.

"Pell Grants are very important because college is so expensive. If they take money away I think there will be much less students in college, which could also impact jobs," said John Takach, a 25-year-old medical coding major at Bucks.

Pell Grants have been around since 1972. The Trump administration says slashing funds "safeguards its survival for the next decade."

According to Market Watch, "the maximum Pell grant for the 2016-2017 award year was \$5,920." These get sent to students from families that earn less than \$40,000 a year. The difference between a Pell Grant and a loan is that students don't have to pay back the grants as they do with loans.

Pell Grants are the largest expense in the U.S. Department of Education. The government spent \$28.2 billion in the 2015-2016 academic year. The peak expenditure was \$39.1 billion for the 2010-11 year.

Dilan Pedraza, a 19-year-old business administration major said, "this is extremely important for people who need the money. This isn't something that should

be taken away. Pell Grants help people who are academically capable of going to college and can't afford the tuition. Taking this away would misdirect the country. If this is cut people won't be able to afford college no matter how their parents balance their budget."

The Trump budget also proposes a total elimination to the Federal Supplemental Educational Opportunity Grant Program (FSEOG), and also reduction to the Federal Work Study program by an unstated amount.

The FSEOG provides additional grant money for students, which is prioritized by income of the recipient. Federal Work Study provides employment for students on and off campus during their college career.

FSEOG supply \$100-\$4000 a year for students with the greatest need for financial aid. The Trump administration says this will save \$732 million. They also argue FSEOG are "a less well targeted way to deliver need-based aid than the Pell Grant program."

Around 1.6 million low-income students receive this grant.

According to U.S. Department of Education, "81 percent of FSEOG dollars went either to students whose families earn less than \$30,000 or to independent students who are highly likely to be low-income. Another 16 percent goes to families making between \$30,000 and \$60,000 a year."

The Trump administration also wants to reduce the Federal Work Study program. This program has been criticized for disproportionately aiding private institutions. It is credited to giving students

work place experience while they are still going to college and also helps students find post-college employment.

According to U.S. Department of Education, "44 percent of work-study dollars go to independent students or families making \$30,000 or less, with another 20 percent going to families making between \$30,000 and \$60,000."

This cut, however, is only a proposal for now.

The future is uncertain for these programs and whether this proposal will come to fruition. Only time will tell.



PHOTO CREDIT: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

amazing wonders of the atomic community college student!

Community college is often seen as the safe choice for kids who don't know what they want their major to be yet, or aren't as financially equipped as their peers who have the means to go away to four year schools. And don't get me wrong, community college is a great choice, I'm happy to be here, but honey, it ain't a walk in the park.

Community college students don't have it easy. In fact, the community college experience is arguably harder than that at a university. Factor in jobs, classes, commutes, extracurriculars, and so on, and the load for the typical community college student adds up quickly.

For most university students, academia is the main priority, as it should be. Ask any four-year college student, and they are

probably unemployed. Meals and housing are available right on campus, and usually there is no commute at all; everything is within walking distance.

For community college students though, it isn't that simple. We have jobs, cars, classes, clubs, and, you know, lives that we have to attend to, all at once. And we do it, too. No, we aren't superhumans. Yes, we are sleep deprived.

Our last student specimen we'll be looking at is 21-year-old Jackie Kohl. You may know her as the sarcastic, stormy gray-eyed cashier at the Bucks' café. Always ready to check you out in her line with a smile and a quick one-liner, Jackie's living that community college student life, too.

For Jackie, her busy days are Tuesdays and Thursdays. She wakes up at 6 am, leaves home at 7:10 to arrive at Bucks for work and clock in by 7:30. She takes

a break around 10:30, and from there she works till 3:30. Depending on the day, she'll either head home for a few hours, or stick around the cafeteria helping out with the many catering jobs our lovely staff at Culinart provides. She has class from 6pm till 8, and then is usually home by 8:20. She'll shower and maybe pop on a Netflix show, if that, "I'm so exhausted I don't have energy to do anything else," she says.

Please; for 20 cents a day, you can help these overworked college students find time to tie their shoes.

Kidding. All jokes aside though, this is a lot for a human to handle. Yes, this is the real world, and yes life gets jam packed and stressful at times, but there should be some kind of life break for students, right? We're just trying to learn after all.



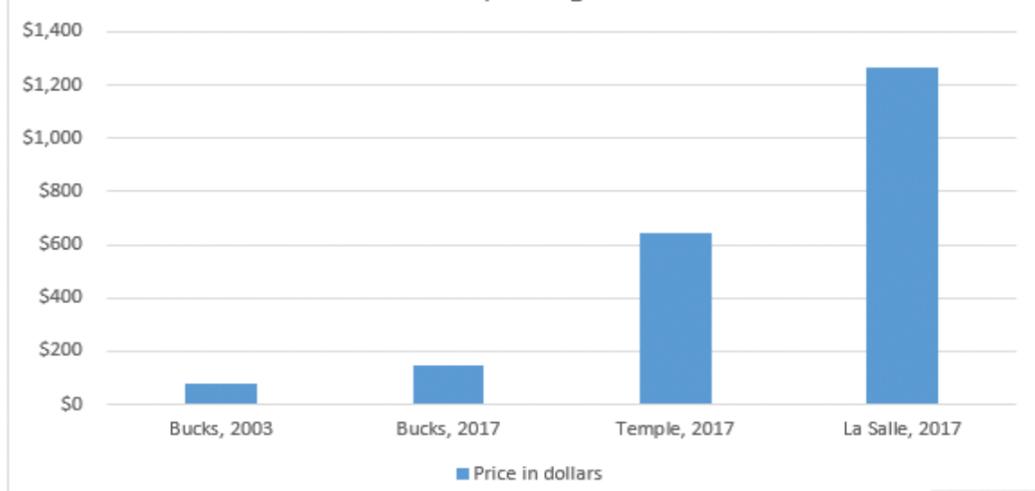
Jackie Kohl fits some studying into her work shift.

PHOTO CREDIT: SHANNON HARRAR

Special Report: The Cost of Community College

Rising Costs of Community College Spark Concern For Students

Cost Per Credit Hour, Colleges and Universities



These figures are based on information found on Temple's and La Salle's websites

PHOTO CREDIT: HAL CONTE

HAL CONTE

Centurion Staff

From the outside, it appears that Gianna Rato, a freshman business major at Bucks and a first-generation college student, has the world at her fingertips. Between a scholarship that covers almost an entire year at the college, her enrollment in Bucks' honors program, and multiple high school AP classes from William Tenant, Rato is seemingly in a very good position to transfer next year to a four-year school. There's only one problem: "If I hadn't gotten that scholarship, I'm not sure if I would have gone to Bucks."

Unfortunately, Rato isn't alone: Despite working an exhausting 32-hour workweek, Rato is just one of many students who are having a hard time paying for an education at Bucks.

Although Bucks and other community colleges are still overwhelmingly cheaper than state or private institutions – the cost of attending La Salle University, for example, can amount to over \$50,000 per year -- they are still difficult to afford for a wide range

of students. "I can't afford school, and I couldn't afford to have lunch, due to the fact that my Discover card isn't accepted in the cafeteria," sighed Gina Lutz, a psychology major.

This has led both students and professors to pose the question: If even community college is getting too expensive for some students, is something wrong? The current tuition rate is \$140 per credit for a student living in the county, which would add up to \$2,100 for five courses. This does not include various required surcharges, including activity fees (\$2 per semester credit hour), a services fee, technology support fees (\$35 per semester credit hour), and a returned check fee. Out-of-state and out-of-county students must also pay a capital fee (\$20 per semester credit hour). "They went up from last year," Lutz noted. Additionally, certain art, nursing, and science classes have other secondary costs, such as the \$100 studio art fee necessary for taking Music Technology. Effectively, it costs over \$2,700 per semester to attend Bucks full time, not including books, and that cost continues to rise. A tuition increase of \$5 per credit was also announced for

the fall semester, increasing the cost of attending to \$4,418 for 24 credits, according to a Bucks press release.

Looking at data from previous issues of The Centurion, the price of attending Bucks has been rising for over 15 years, from \$81 per credit in 2003 to today's rates. This rise in tuition can be linked in part to multiple budget cuts imposed by the state of Pennsylvania under former Governor Tom Corbett. In 2011, acting to fulfill a campaign promise not to raise taxes and reduce the deficit, Corbett slashed the budget for community colleges as well as for other state institutions. He followed this up with additional cutbacks in 2012 and 2014. These austerity policies have continued under the current administration of Governor Tom Wolf, who in February flat-funded the state's community colleges as part of his 2017-2018 austerity budget, according to the Pittsburgh-Post Gazette.

The increasing price of tuition at Bucks, while not even close to equaling the cost of four-year schools, has arguably placed the college out of reach of many potential students. According to

Census Bureau data, 6.3 percent of Bucks County residents live below the poverty line (currently \$12,486 for an individual living alone) which is determined by the amount of a family's income spent on food. Between food, rent and household debt, it would be tremendously difficult for a student to pay for four years of tuition, even at Bucks, as well as basic necessities, under these circumstances. The National Student Campaign Against Hunger and Homelessness, a Massachusetts nonprofit group, recently surveyed 3,765 students in both community colleges and four-year institutions. Among their respondents, 22 percent of students reported very low levels of food security, enough to classify them as hungry. And 13 percent of community college students surveyed experienced homelessness.

Even you don't live in poverty it can still be tough to afford community college if you are working part-time at a minimum wage level. Both Lutz and Rato expressed fear that they may not be able to keep up with the money required to continue attending. "It seems like the [multiple] payments were higher than they were last year. I don't know if this is because they are clumping them together. It does mean that I can't afford to pay this year," Lutz explained.

Rato said that she had been planning to attend Temple, but she would have had to borrow \$15,000 per year just to pay for room and board. She applied to Bucks and received both the dean's scholarship and the honors scholarship. "I chose the honors one. If I didn't get either, I probably would have just started working full-time."

College administrators and teachers offer several tips for students who are finding it hard to come up with the money to pay

for community college. "I think that students should be very vigilant in the way they calculate their education, and assess the cost of college before they go there," said Christina Fogle, an administrative assistant for Student Services. "You need to know the difference between your money expenses and what you make at work, and do all the calculations."

Fogle also said students should be extremely careful about calculating how much they need to borrow. "A lot of the time, students borrow more money than they need, which increases their debt." Bucks also offers services to students who find it difficult to pay the auxiliary costs of attending college. There are applications that can reduce the cost of books, and Bucks gives students the opportunity to be part of the Federal Work-Study Program. Students can also take advantage of several tax credits.

Other resources exist for students who are trying to pay for community college. Fogle recommended second-year scholarships, such as the Fellowship Foundation Scholarship, which requires six classes and financial need. Taking Advanced Placement (AP) classes during high school can also lower the cost of attending college, as a good score on these tests can count for college credits.

Sadly, even this isn't always enough. "I had a semester's worth of AP credits, and I would have taken more, but I couldn't afford the AP test fees," Rato explained. "This week, I'm working 34 and a half hours at ShopRite." Despite all of these setbacks, however, Rato is still relatively optimistic about her future. "I only have one more semester, so I can shell out the \$2500 if need be or split it into payments. I am still figuring out what business school I will transfer too. All I know is that Temple is no longer guaranteed."

Experiments in Free College Begin in San Francisco, NY

VINCENT BARRERAS

Centurion Staff

San Francisco will become the first city in the United States to offer free community college to its residents, while New York will soon offer tuition-free public universities.

The plan was passed in early February, and San Francisco Mayor Ed Lee announced that this will go into effect next fall semester. The details of the bill state that San Francisco will set aside \$5.4 million per year to cover enrollment fees and other expenses for City College of San Francisco students.

San Francisco plans to fund this by putting a transfer tax on properties that sell for \$5 million or higher.

Students will also receive money towards books and other services; \$500 for fulltime and \$200 for part-time students.

Any person who has lived in San Francisco for a least one year will be eligible for this, regardless of their income.

New York is another progressive bastion willing to discuss free tuition. New York Governor Andrew Cuomo has approved free college tuition for state universities, city colleges, and community colleges.

Cuomo's plan will only apply to families who earn less than \$100,000 per year, whilst Lee's applies to all residents who have lived in the city for at least one year.

Senator Bernie Sanders (I-VT) was present to speak in New York when the mayor held a press conference regarding free college tuition, expressing his upmost support of this legislation. If you

recall, during his presidential run, Sanders was quite vocal on the idea of tuition free college.

Sanders is quoted saying, "It's an idea that's going to reverberate not only throughout the State of New York, but throughout this country."

City College of San Francisco is hoping this will help their enrollment, which has dropped from 90,000 to 65,000 since 2012.

Private schools have also voiced their concerns on the legislation. They fear this will take away

from their own enrollment, which could prove to be interesting to see how they intend on responding to this.

There are multiple viewpoints about whether this country should move in the direction of "free college," some positive and others negative.

"Free community college is important because everyone should have equal opportunity to be educated. This will help with the burden of college debt since people can get the first two years

free," said Joe Mela, a 19-year-old Engineering Major at Bucks County Community College.

Jason Yakimiv, a 19-year-old Pre- Allied Health major at Bucks County Community College said, "It's awesome idea, I don't know if everyone will be on board, but only time will tell."

Erik Onchanu, an 18-year-old Business Major at Bucks County Community College said, "I don't think we should have free community college, people won't value it as much if they get it for

free. If you fail a class, it doesn't matter because you can just take it again, whereas you pay and are more accountable for the outcome. If you're like this and get a job these same qualities can carry over. If people go for free they won't take it serious."

This issue has many perspectives as you can see. San Francisco will pay close attention to how this works and if it succeeds, could inspire other cities to follow.



Mayor Ed Lee (left), and Governor Andrew Cuomo (right)

PHOTO CREDIT: WIKIMEDIA COMMONS

Special Report: The Cost of Community College

Lagging Behind In The Race To Graduate

GIANFRANCO ILLIANO

Centurion Staff

As children grow up, their parents and teachers tell them to go to school for 13 years, earn a high school degree, then go to college for four years and graduate. After all, the faster students graduate, the less they spend, typically, on a college education.

The problem, graduating in college in four years is hard to do, especially for students coming out of community colleges who transfer to four-year colleges or universities.

The reasons for this vary. Kevin Koerner, student at Bucks and Yardley resident, entered Bucks as an exercise science major as a freshman in 2015, but a year and a half into it, he decided to change his major to sports management.

While he was able to use some of his exercise science credits as sports management credits, he was unable to replace exercise science classes with sports management classes. Due to his new, required courses, Koerner can't transfer to a four-year university until 2018.

"I had to spend more money to pursue my new major, but I don't mind it that much. I'll definitely not graduate in four years or be able to transfer later this summer, but at least I'm able to transfer after three years at Bucks instead of four or five years like some kids I know."

To not get too far behind, Koerner said he's taking classes in the summer to obtain more credits. "I'm taking two summer classes at Bucks so I don't have to take any extra classes next fall or spring, I'm trying to get out of here as soon as possible."

For students who changed their majors, it might be best to take some classes in the summer so that more credits are counted for when it comes time to transferring

to a four-year university.

Then there are students like Michael DeMarco, of Fairless Hills, who went to Bucks for three years and then transferred to Temple University. "I was told before I admitted to Bucks that I would finish my time there within two years but it took longer because my advisor didn't do her job." He claims that his advisors said he would be at Temple University by his junior year of college but it turns out, DeMarco had to stay at Bucks for three years to earn his associates degree. DeMarco says his advisor assigned him classes that weren't designated for his major and as a result, he didn't have enough credits that were transferrable to Temple.

"I was really pissed off when I found out that I had to stay at Bucks for another year, I missed out on a lot of things, a lot of opportunities, and the worst of all, I spent a lot more money!" said DeMarco.

The new reality is that a vast majority of students don't end up graduating in the traditional four-year window. Most college students at public universities end up completing their bachelor's degree in six years, according to a study by Complete College America.

Complete College America is a non-profit organization that works with states to help close the college degree attainment gap, making it easier and more cost effective for students to pursue higher education.

In their November 2014 report, the group tackled the four-year graduation myth, stating most students at public universities don't graduate on time, according to USA TODAY.

According to the study, for a non-flagship public university, only 19 percent of students graduate on time and even at flagship research public universities, the

on-time graduation rate is only 36 percent. Only 50 of the more than 580 public four-year institutions have graduation rates above 50 percent.

Another downside for not graduating in four years is that students are paying more money the longer they stay in school—a lot more money! According to 2013 data from the University of Texas at Austin, students who graduate on time will spend 40 percent less than those who graduate in six years.

There are a lot of reasons why students don't graduate in four years, however, there are four main reasons why students tend to take longer to complete their degree.

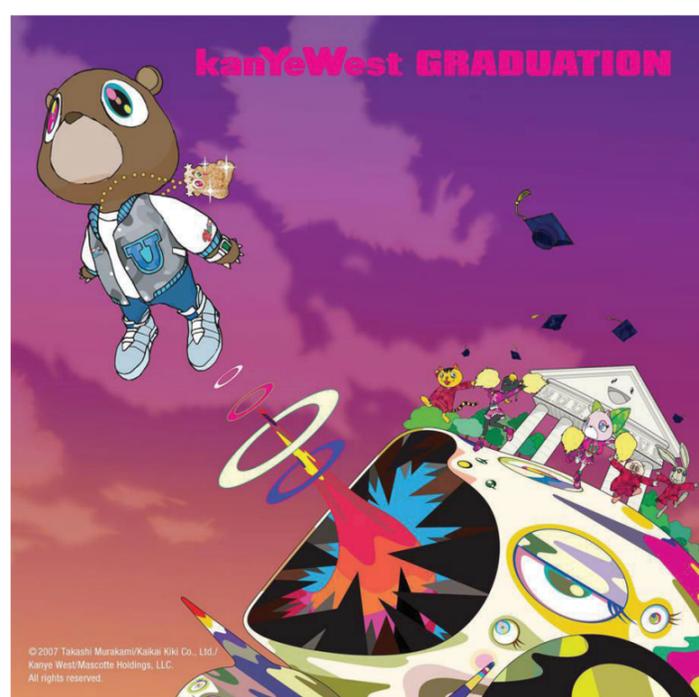
One of the reasons why students take longer to graduate is the lack of a clear plan or advising. According to Dr. Bob Neuman, a former associate dean of academic advising at Marquette University, when students enter into college freshman year, they often take a relaxed approach to college.

Dr. Neuman told USA TODAY, "Students aren't sure what's sure what's going to happen to them once they start college. They aren't thinking about how college should connect them with a career when they get out of college."

Students should take full advantage of advising. It doesn't matter if the student's grades are high or low. It's always helpful to talk to somebody who's apart of the university.

According to the National Center for Education Statistics, approximately 80 percent of students change their majors before they graduate. And depending on when you change your major, it can delay your expected graduation date.

For students who changed their majors, it might be best to take some classes in the summer so that more credits are counted for



when it comes time to transferring to a four-year university.

Another reason why students seem to graduate longer than expected is because of transferring. The National Clearinghouse Research Center reports 37 percent of college students end up transferring during their college career. Unfortunately, credits for completed courses don't always transfer to the new school.

Wayne Watro, a student at Bucks, from Yardley, will be transferring to La Salle next fall but he says that a lot of his credits aren't being transferred to his new school. "I'm going to La Salle next year but a lot of the credits that I took at Bucks aren't going to work at my new school," Watro says. "I'm basically taking some of the same courses next year at La Salle and that's really annoying," he added.

Many students at Bucks believe that a lot of universities tend to not take as many credits as some advertise. A lot of students get "screwed over" when transferring credits and a lot of it has to do with the money some believe.

Patrick Lawrence, a student at Bucks, of Newtown, says that universities don't take a lot of the courses that Bucks students obtain from the community college is because of money. "I'm transferring to West Chester and they're not taking a lot of the credits that I got at Bucks for some stupid reason. I think it all has to do with the money. Some schools just try to make the most money they can from their students and that's really messed up."

Another reason why students take a while to graduate is because some of the courses that students sign up for aren't necessary to take.

Many students take additional credits that they don't need to graduate. On average, a bachelor degree program requires 120 credits, while most students up taking an average of 134 credits to obtain their bachelor's degree, according to Complete College America's report. It's common that students don't realize that taking additional credits might now be helpful to them in the long run.

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Who Will the Eagles Pick in the NFL Draft?

GIANFRANCO ILLIANO

Centurion Staff

The draft is finally here! And I mean, literally, it's here in Philadelphia. For the first time since 1961, the City of Brotherly Love is hosting the NFL Draft.

The draft is important for all teams, obviously. But we're going to focus on our team's needs—the Philadelphia Eagles!

The Eagles have many needs including CB, RB, and WR. However, a lot fans seem to ignore the fact that the team needs a pass rusher.

Now, don't get me wrong, I think the number one need on this team is a CB. Actually, the Eagles should draft two CB's in my opinion. However, with the Eagles first round pick being 14th overall, a stud defensive lineman with tremendous pass rushing ability may slip to the Eagles.

Derek Barnett, formerly of the Tennessee Volunteers, is projected to be a blue-chip player for years to come. Some draft experts around the NFL believe Barnett will get drafted in the top 10. However, I believe that a lot of NFL teams may underrate Barnett and eventually slip out of the top 10 and slide to the Eagles at pick 14.

I say this because every year there are a few teams that are desperate for a QB and as all fans know, teams will overrate QB's because that position is the most important in all of sports. Luckily, this year's draft class is deep with talent, especially at the CB and RB position. In my mind, there are six teams that pick in the top 10 that could draft a QB. Therefore, if two teams draft a QB in the top 10, two talented prospects who were supposed to go in the top 10 might fall to the Eagles.

Barnett is one of the most underrated prospects. In my opinion, he's the best pass rusher in the draft. He's drawn comparisons to a former Philadelphia Eagle, Reggie White—The Minister of Defense! As we all know, Reggie White is regarded as the best defensive player in NFL History. Barnett is a strong edge presence with NFL-caliber hand usage

and play strength. Barnett is one of the most productive defensive linemen to come out of the SEC in quite some time despite lacking the length and twitch that teams usually look for off the edge.

Coincidentally, Barnett and White went to the same college, the University of Tennessee. For years, White held the record for the most sack in school history, until Derek Barnett arrived. Barnett broke White's record of career sacks at the University of Tennessee and yet, the pro scouts aren't sold on the Volunteers defensive end.

And that's completely fine to me! If teams that are picking in the top 10 aren't buying stock into Barnett, the Eagles will be fortunate to land him at 14th overall.

You may be thinking, "the Eagles don't need a defensive lineman, we need a running back and a corner!" You're absolutely right! The Eagles do need to address those positions but the Eagles shouldn't draft players based on need. They must draft the best players available, and Barnett could be that player when the Eagles are on the clock. Teams that draft based on need turn to the Cleveland Browns.

In this year's draft the Eagles have eight draft picks. In my mock draft I have the Eagles selecting Derek Barnett in the first round at 14th overall. In the second round, the Eagles hold the 43rd overall pick and with that, I think the Eagles will select a CB from the University of Florida, Jalen "Teez" Tabor. Yes, Tabor ran a slow 40-yard-dash at the combine and his pro day, but just watching him play at Florida, he never let the opposing WR's get the best of him. The guy is simply a playmaker.

Obviously, we'll have to wait and see what the Eagles do in the draft, but in the first round, the Eagles have many viable options. They're in a good spot at 14th overall, but their philosophy should be to pick the best player available, not draft a player based on need.

Phillies Open Their Doors On Media Night

JOE ROATCHE

Centurion Staff

On April 11, the Philadelphia Phillies opened the doors of Citizens Bank Park to a group of 200 inspired students to take part in the media night themed baseball game, which featured a panel of experts in the fields of marketing and media.

Experts that fielded questions at the forum included Dave Buck, senior vice president of advertising sales for the Philadelphia Phillies, as well as Brian Monihan, Comcast Sports Net Philadelphia senior vice president and general manager.

Other speakers at the forum included David Yadgaroff, senior vice president and market manager at CBS Radio, and Dave Patterson, vice president of production at MLB Network.

When asked what employers are looking for from future graduates, David Yadgaroff tied it directly to the occasion by saying, "in a lot of ways it's like baseball, you want a five-tool player, you don't want a fielder who can't hit or a hitter who can't field." He continued on by saying, "make sure that you create a broad enough portfolio that can demonstrate what you can do."

Further questions regarding how to receive a job after an internship were answered by Dave Buck who responded by saying, "be the guy that they can count on, be the guy who is there early and stays late." He went on by saying, "do everything you're asked and begin looking for new things."

Another question to the panelists was the idea of professionalism and how it must exist in obtaining a job in today's society.

Scott Palmer, Phillies director of public affairs, had the best answer when he simply said, "if you want to work in baseball more

than anything else, then you are going to work seven days a week, you're going to work holidays, you're going to go in early and stay late." He went on to say, "if you want to be a broadcaster, same thing goes, if it's Easter Sunday, you have to tell the kids you will dye the eggs later."

Students from all over the Philadelphia area began the night by immediately becoming speechless as the elevator doors opened to the conference room in the basement of Citizens Bank Park where all the athletes take questions from reporters.

When the night first began, students participated in a networking hour in which they were able to talk to many of the marketing and advertising sales staff of the Philadelphia Phillies.

Also during this hour, tours took place into the Phillies broadcast booth as well as the press box where Phillies beat writers were already preparing for their night's work.

After the panelists fielded questions, the surprise entrance of Phillies first baseman, Brock Stassi, shocked the crowd of students.

Up and coming media students were able to ask the 33 round pick of the Phillies some questions after getting his call to the big leagues this past year, which concluded the media section of the evening.

Students were then released to their seats to enjoy the second game in a series between the Philadelphia Phillies and New York Mets

Suffering a blowout loss, the Phillies were never in the game as they fell to the Mets 14-4.

Although the panelists provided strikes of inspiration and sprinkled confidence about the future for the students who attended the event, the Phillies play on the field however did not.