

Eliminating AP Humanities will positively affect students

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In past years, H-F students opting to take Advanced Placement (AP) English classes have had to choose between AP Humanities and AP Language and Composition. However, beginning next school year, AP Humanities will no longer be offered at H-F because it is being eliminated in favor of more AP Language and Composition classes. The H-F administration is correct in removing AP Humanities from the course roster because it is not a College Board registered AP class and does not properly prepare students for the AP Language and Composition exam, which AP Humanities students are to take in May.

According to the web page of AP Humanities teacher Josh Brown, AP Humanities is a course that combines the work traditionally done in the Humanities—art, music, philosophy, and literature with the study of non-fiction prose from a rhetorical point of view. Although Humanities is offered at H-F under the AP name, the College Board, which runs the AP Program, does not recognize Humanities as an AP class and, consequently, does not offer a Humanities AP exam. As demonstrated by the latter part of Brown's course description, which is a summation of the work done in an AP Language and Composition class, Humanities students must do double duty: complete the Humanities curriculum in addition to preparing for the Language and

Composition AP exam.

The College Board was a major factor in the decision to eliminate AP Humanities. The College Board will begin auditing high schools in the near future and H-F is making a smart move to ensure that they pass with flying colors. "We want to be on track with what the College Board dictates," said English Department Chair Jenny Pepper. Unsurprisingly, the College Board was displeased when it discovered that H-F was using the AP name for an unofficial AP class. "What we are teaching is Language and Composition through the Humanities," said Humanities teacher Sue Anderson.

Students taking AP Humanities are at a disadvantage on the AP exam because their coursework does not take a straightforward approach to preparing for the exam. "We do not teach a 'straight' English class here. When you go out in life, you do not just read fiction," said Anderson. AP Humanities students learn about things such as ancient history, which while worthwhile, is not instrumental in preparing for the Language and Composition AP exam which focuses more on Rhetoric and arguments.

When exam day arrives in the spring, many AP Humanities students have felt unprepared for the exam. Senior Nate Hojnacki took AP Humanities I in his junior year, but is now enrolled in AP Literature and Composition, the second level of AP Language and Composition, instead of AP Humanities II. "Humanities is two classes in one, and it was really difficult to juggle the two aspects of the class. I did not think

Alcohol forced on minors through advertising, should market to adults

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Underage consumption of alcohol happens everyday. The excitement of doing something illegal or viewing their favorite television show character drinking may entice minors to drink. Another major influence is the advertisements on television that teenagers see. By eliminating these advertisements, there is one less source of pressure placed on teenagers to illegally consume alcohol.

The alcohol advertisements are not only shown on television but also in magazines.

A study on alcohol advertisements showed that the number of beer and alcoholic drinks increased with the number of youth readers according to the center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth. This is just one example of pressure put on minors to drink. "They are young and potential adult consumers. The companies figure, hey, start out early and we will have consumers for life," said H-F Psychology teacher Lauren Chasey. It is unnecessary and dangerous to advertise to the consumer's health. There is an age requirement for a reason and advertisements should not try and get around the age restriction just because they want to make more money.

An example of how these ads can backfire is 19-year-old Ryan Pisco from Nevada. He was at a party and drank beer. He then drove home and got into an accident and died. His mother is suing Coors Company for causing Ryan's death, according to *cnn.com*. His death may not have been directly caused by the Coors



False Advertising Advertisements give the impression that drinking is exciting, but not the side effects.

Company, but other accidents like this could be. The alcohol companies must stop showing flashy advertisements that are appealing to teenagers unless they want more lawsuits because of deaths. "It is impossible to pinpoint or blame just one. Yes, I do think they (the advertisements) contribute to kids thinking that alcohol is appealing or an adult or cool thing to do," said Chasey.

Advertisements such as the Bacardi and cola commercials are very appealing to kids. They show flashy colors and catchy sayings that appeal to the teenage group, such as "Bacardi and Cola, they get the job done."

Advertisements are supposed to appeal to those who can buy their product, but in the alcohol world, this precedent does not seem to follow suit. These companies can change their marketing campaign and appeal to adults, which would allow for less consumption of alcohol by minors. By not being tempted by these campaigns, minors will be less interested in their product. This may decrease their revenue, but it would be beneficial to the well being of teenagers. The

alcohol campaigns could help the problem of underage drinking at H-F or other schools by showing the side effects of underage drinking like the Phillip Morris Company has done for smoking.

Advertisements on television and in magazines are very persuasive. They show the glorious side to drinking but not the ugly side. This needs to stop before more teenagers get into a car and drive. Alcohol advertisers need to be more conscientious when putting together their advertising campaigns and think first of the people they will put at harm and second of their profit.

Students Say...

Do you think that it is the right choice for H-F to get rid of AP Humanities classes?



"No, I think that AP Humanities prepares students for the AP Exam because we still learn how to analyze writing, but the focus is different."

-Eunice Chyung '06



"Yes, because I want to take a class that prepares me for the AP Exam I will actually take."

-Tim Sweeney '06

I was prepared for the AP exam," he said. Hojnacki also commented on the benefits of preparing directly for the AP exam. "AP Literature and Composition is a much more compatible class for me because you are working with the material you need for the exam," he said.

Although an overall emphasis on the humanities is detrimental to preparation for the AP exam, some humanities lessons are valuable and should be incorporated into the AP Language and Composition curriculum. Approaching English through the humanities can increase students' cultural awareness and broaden their horizons by exposing them to many different facets of music, history, and art. "By replacing AP

Humanities with AP Language and Composition, students will be able to focus on what they need for the AP exam. However, I think teachers would not want to get rid of all the literature [from the Humanities classes] but would pick what is best for their class," said Pepper.

Therefore, it is much more sensible to take AP Language and Composition rather than attempting to prepare for the Language and Composition AP exam through AP Humanities. The decision to replace AP Humanities classes with AP Language and Composition classes was the correct choice and will improve the performance of H-F English students on their AP English exams in addition to appeasing the College Board.

Guess Who?



GUEST COLUMNIST

Get to Know the Columnist: Lauren is a staff writer on *the Voyager* and participates in Snowball and Snowflake every year.

By Lauren Yanow

Not too long ago one of my friends mentioned that they become very annoyed when someone says, "that's retarded," or "that's gay." I have to be perfectly honest and say that it never occurred to me how offensive saying something along those lines could be.

When people describe things as "retarded," or "gay," I have noticed that they are often trying to be insulting, possibly even degrading. So why is it that comments like this have become part of teenager's everyday vocabulary?

The more I think about it, I have many friends who have people with mental illnesses in their families. One of my closest friends has a cousin who was recently diagnosed with a mental illness. At first, I did not think twice before making a comment saying something like, "that's retarded," but since it has started affecting someone I care about, I have been able to avoid saying it completely.

Something that makes these hurtful phrases so degrading is that they are not generic terms. By singling out these two groups, people are indirectly insulting others who have a mental illness or make certain lifestyle choices. And why should having a mental illness or choosing a different lifestyle make someone a bad person, let alone be something for which they are insulted?

Once realizing how bad it is to say something like this, it became even clearer to me how much it affects me personally. A few years ago my mom's childhood best friend got divorced. Not long after the divorce, she revealed that she was a lesbian. My first reaction went straight to thinking about her kids. I had grown up knowing them as almost a part of my family, and I began to worry about what their peers would say. Now when naïve teenagers make rude or degrading comments, it hits home with two people who mean a lot to me.

Once I realize that people I cared about were affected by mental illness and lifestyle choices is when I really wanted to cut the rude comments out of my vocabulary. Maybe some people use these remarks in everyday conversation until something happens to make it affect them personally. I would hope that once people are personally affected by either mental illness or lifestyle choices they would be conscious when making, in some way, degrading comments.

Since my friend mentioned this concept to me, I have caught myself on the verge of making one of these comments and was able to stop myself. When saying "that's retarded," or "that's gay," people should realize what they are actually saying. When teenagers choose to insult others with one of these comments, the result sometimes does not affect the person who it was directly made to. However, often times the people who are impacted and hurt the most are the group of people who are directly associated by someone who has a mental illness or a different lifestyle choice.