Guest editorial

The cost of college

Are tuition premiums placed on some areas of study at Kansas University and other U.S. colleges pushing low-income students into majors with less career potential?

According to comments by KU Provost Richard Lariviere in a recent New York Times article, the answer to that question appears to be "yes." ...

KU began charging "differential tuition" (now referred to on the KU Web site as "course fees") in the early 1990s.

The fees were justified as a way to insure students in certain majors have the up-to-date equipment and top-notch faculty necessary to succeed in their careers.

However, the tie between higher course fees and majors that lead to higher paying jobs is undeniable. ...

It's worth noting that even this year's entering freshmen, who will pay the much-touted four-year "guaranteed" tuition, must pay course fees. ...

The evidence that low-income students are avoiding majors with additional course fees may be anecdotal, but it is nonetheless disturbing. ...

Acquiring a well-paying job may be one goal of a university education, but universities shouldn't be in the business of placing a relative dollar value on various fields of study.

It's also unsettling for university officials to point to scholarship programs that are funded by the additional fees. That amounts to having students who pay full tuition and fees actually subsidizing the education of some of their classmates. ...

Too many students already are being left behind because of the rising costs of higher education.

There's nothing wrong with being a history major, but it doesn't serve the state of Kansas and its economic future to push people into liberal arts majors rather than encouraging those who are interested to pursue professional degrees.

If even anecdotal evidence that course fees are having that effect doesn't worry KU officials, it should. — Lawrence Journal-World
Jennings builds power base by keeping civic currents open

BY ROB ROBERTS | STAFF WRITER

As an attorney and CEO for Kansas City Power & Light Co., Drue Jennings helped keep the city wired for growth – a daunting, high-stakes task.

Had the utility let oil embargoes, nuclear protesters or steamed ratepayers stem 1970s and '80s power plant construction, it couldn't have carried the load for subsequent development.

But Jennings, who retired from KCP&L in 2001, has been more than a diehard advocate of keeping the home grid fired. Old-school qualities such as honesty and fairness make him a go-to guy when civic progress gets short-circuited.

"Drue has been a bridge across the state line and across racial divides," said Pete Levi, president of the Greater Kansas City Chamber of Commerce.

After a 1989 study ranked Kansas City among the most racially divided U.S. cities, Jennings and Emanuel Cleaver co-founded Kansas City Harmony. Two years later, Jennings backed Cleaver's bid to become the city's first black mayor.

"A lot of the business leaders supported someone other than Emanuel," Levi said.

Nevertheless, the chamber elected Jennings chairman in 1992, and he made strong relations with the mayor's office a top priority, Levi said.

After his term, Jennings remained involved in civic affairs, including the 1996 campaign for a bistate sales tax to save Union Station.

"At the peak, I think I was on 28 boards," Jennings said.

But after the 2002 death of his wife, Sue, who battled cancer for five years, "I wasn't sure I was ever going to do anything," he said.

Then, in March 2003, the University of Kansas called.

Jennings, who earned a law degree and a football scholarship from KU, was a veteran of KU's alumni and endowment association boards.

Chancellor Robert Hemenway wanted to fire Athletic Director Al Bohl, who had ruffled the feathers of Jayhawk basketball coach Roy Williams. And Hemenway wanted Jennings to step in as interim AD.

Jennings agreed, but Bohl's April 2003 ouster didn't prevent Williams from bailing. So Jennings ended up recruiting Lew Perkins to succeed himself and Bill Self to succeed Williams.

"He did KU very proud with those hires," said Jack Kilroy Jr., a KU alum and managing partner of Shughart Thomson & Kilroy PC.

And Shughart Thomson did itself proud by recruiting Jennings as senior counsel in 2004, Kilroy said.

Remarried and re-engaged in the community, Jennings now is focused on KU Medical Center's efforts to win National Cancer Institute designation.

When Sue Jennings' condition merited experimental alternatives, they spent two years flying back and forth to NCI-designated M.D. Anderson Cancer Center in Houston.

"When we were in Houston, you'd see these cowboys who didn't have two dimes to rub together bringing their wives in for world-class treatment," Jennings said. "We had to fly 900 miles to get it, and I used to think, 'My God, what happens to those without the means to do that?'"

Now Jennings is pushing for KU Med to affiliate with Missouri-side hospitals – a controversial but necessary step toward local NCI designation, he said.

Irvine Hockaday Jr., a leading advocate of the affiliations, is grateful.

"He is as fair and balanced in his judgment as anyone I know," he said. "Those qualifications create a tremendous amount of confidence and trust in Drue, and he becomes particularly useful in contentious situations, where everyone looks to a thoughtful broker."

Jennings joined KCP&L's three-man legal team in 1974, and his stock quickly rose.

"I started right after the first OPEC embargo," he said. "It was the beginning of a series of energy crises, and inflation began to eat the economy alive."

Despite that, KCP&L forged ahead with two new coal-fired plants and partnership in a nuclear plant. Rapid-fire rate cases, construction negotiations, SEC filings and new labor contracts ensued. And Jennings was right in the cross hairs of it all.

It was a steep learning curve, but it took him to the offices of general counsel in 1980 and CEO in 1988.

"During the years I was CEO, we didn't construct a single new power plant – didn't have to," Jennings said. "And we not only didn't raise rates, we reduced them a few times."

KCP&L faced new challenges, however, in the 1990s. Deregulation was prodiging once-staid utilities to diversify. Wall Street was pushing them toward high-risk ventures such as energy trading.

In that environment, KCP&L became involved in a series of merger attempts.

In 1996, for instance, KCP&L agreed to sell to Utilicorp United Inc., now Aquila Inc., for $1.35 billion. In the natural gas industry, Utilicorp had developed the kind of trading expertise Jennings thought KCP&L might
need on the electrical side. But Topeka-based Western Resources Inc. killed the deal with a hostile $1.7 billion bid.

In 1997, KCP&L agreed to sell to Western in a friendly $2 billion deal. That deal died, too, the result of Western’s falling stock price.

KCP&L subsequently formed a holding company, Great Plains Energy Inc., which recently agreed to buy Aquila’s outstanding stock and Missouri electric utilities for $4.54 a share.

In the wake of the Enron debacle, Aquila’s value had plummeted. But Jennings wonders what might have been.

“I won’t tell you all their problems would have been avoided,” he said. “But I think they would have benefited from our discipline and conservatism.”

Given Jennings’ lack of ego and knack for collaboration, Levi doesn’t doubt it.

“Drue has one dog in the hunt: doing the right thing,” he said.

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As the Kansas City Business Journal commemorates its silver anniversary in 2007, we also celebrate some of the area’s seminal business figures of the past 25 years. Their profiles will appear every week until the newspaper’s special anniversary section is published Sept. 28.

Drue Jennings (left), former CEO of Kansas City Power & Light Co., stepped in as interim athletic director in 2003 at the request of University of Kansas Chancellor Robert Hemenway (right). Jennings now is working on efforts to help KU Medical Center win National Cancer Institute designation.
The CUSD 101 School District welcomes new teachers and personnel to area schools for the 2007-2008 school year. Pictured are (left to right) Melissa Peak, Kelci Adams, Sherre Yoder, Craig Smith, Dr. Kathleen Davis, Bobbi Simmons, Bill Rounds, and Tarasa Waun.

CUSD 101 welcomes new personnel

The CUSD 101 school district welcomes seven new teachers and a new administrator to the school system for the 2007-2008 year.

Kelci Adams, of Moran, will be teaching math at the Erie High School. She will also be the assistant girls volleyball coach and the head coach of the softball team. Originally from Yates Center, she graduated in 2002. She furthered her education at Allen County Community College, graduating in 2004, and finishing at Oklahoma Panhandle State University in 2007.

Melissa Peak, of Parsons, will be teaching at the Erie Pre-School. She graduated from Pittsburg State University in 1997.

Sherre Yoder will be teaching at the Erie Junior High courses in math and reading. In her sixth year of teaching, she graduated from Pittsburg State University in 1999. She lives south of St. Paul.

Tarasa Waun will be joining the Galesburg Charter School, teaching the sixth grade. She was born and raised in Parsons where she still lives. She graduated from Labette County High School in 2001 and graduated from Pittsburg State in 2006 with a major in Elementary Education.

Craig Smith is also a graduate of Pittsburg State and has been teaching for eight years. At the Erie High School he will be teaching math and Physical Education at the Erie Elementary School/Junior High. He will also coach at the High School level, in the fall he will be the Head Volleyball Coach, and will be the assistant coach for the Girl’s Basketball and Softball teams during the winter and spring sports seasons.

Bobbi Simmons will teach the fourth grade at the Erie Elementary School. She has seven years of experience as a teacher, graduating from Pittsburg State in 2001. She lives in Erie with her husband Jack.

Kathleen Davis will teach science at the Erie High School. She holds a PhD. in Biochemistry from the University of Kansas. She lives in Parsons.

Bill Rounds joins the administration after 15 years of corporate management in Information Technologies. He is currently a resident of Topeka and has a BS in Computer Information Systems from Washburn University, graduating in 2007. He will serve as the district’s technology director.
KU announces graduates of law enforcement training center

HUTCHINSON — Monte C. Strait, special agent in charge of the Federal Bureau of Investigation’s Kansas City, Mo., office, congratulated 52 graduates of the Kansas Law Enforcement Training Center at an Aug. 10 ceremony at the 4-H Encampment Building on the Kansas State Fairgrounds. Among these graduates was Jason M. Wammack, Patrolman, for the Galena Police Department.

The graduates, who began their training course April 30, represented 37 municipal, county and state law enforcement agencies from across Kansas. They were the 191st basic training class of graduates.

The training center is a unit of University of Kansas Continuing Education. Established in 1968 as the central law enforcement training facility for the state, the center is near Yoder.

Graduates receive certificates of course completion and Kansas law enforcement certification from the Kansas Commission on Peace Officers’ Standards and Training, the state’s law enforcement licensing authority. The training course fulfills the state requirement for law enforcement training. Classroom lectures and hands-on applications help train officers to solve the increasingly complex problems they face in the line of duty.

The center trains the majority of municipal, county and state law enforcement officers in Kansas and oversees the training of the remaining officers at seven authorized and certified academy programs operated by local law enforcement agencies and the Kansas Highway Patrol.

About 350 officers enroll annually in the 14-week basic training program. The center offered continuing education and specialized training to more than 2,500 Kansas officers last year. Funding for the training center is generated from court docket fees from municipal and state courts. No funds from the state’s general revenue are used to operate the center.
Anderson receives KU scholarship

LAWRENCE — A Jackson Heights graduate attending The University of Kansas has been listed among 46 students receiving more than $53,000 in scholarships for the 2007 fall semester at KU.

Rae Ann Anderson, daughter of David and Sara Anderson of Circleville, has been chosen to receive an English Faculty Memorial Scholarship for the fall semester. Anderson is a 2005 graduate of Jackson Heights High School and will be a junior at KU, where she is majoring in psychology and religious studies.

Scholarships were awarded to outstanding freshmen, sophomores and juniors in KU’s College of Liberal Arts and Sciences during the 2006-07 academic year. The scholarships, made possible by gifts to KU Endowment from alumni and friends, were awarded based on merit, need or both.

A reception to honor Anderson and other scholarship recipients is planned for Sept. 27.
I spent the summer only 85 miles away from Manhattan, but it felt more like 1,000. I was immersed in a culture completely opposite of Manhattan’s. Every street I ventured down in Lawrence and every party I attended shed light on something I had never experienced in Manhattan.

The ideologies, experiences and student population in Lawrence are so distant from Manhattan, I sometimes forgot I was still in Kansas. This feeling was because of one major difference: the conservative, somewhat-sheltered nature of Manhattan and the liberal, free-thinking nature of Lawrence.

Since conservative communities are more set on their values, they lack one key factor to objectivity: free thought. Lawrence residents seem to have it, and Manhattan needs it. Kansas students seem to see both sides and let logic run its course.

Everyone from Kansas knows Lawrence is liberal and Manhattan is more conservative, but that simple discrepancy makes a world of difference. Thoughts of religion, political issues, drugs, music and even career choices are vastly different between towns.

I noticed those differences in three main areas of the community: the downtown area, student perceptions and drug use. The downtown areas of the two communities are not comparable. Lawrence has a bustling downtown with a solid music scene, a variety of storefronts and numerous restaurants.

During lunch breaks over the summer, I walked up and down Massachusetts Street to watch people interact. People ranged from suit-attired businessmen to perpetually high, homeless hippies. Though there was a variety of people, all seemed to have similar demeanors and weren’t too worried about trivial issues. Most of what I saw was people thinking, whether it was in the middle of a philosophical conversation or just sitting there.

The people walking down Massachusetts Street and Kansas students have much the same aura. Any conversation I had with a student opened my eyes to deeper thoughts about issues like religion, politics and other controversial ideas. They definitely had a different opinion on issues than most K-State students, but the KU students weren’t exclusive to those sides — they knew both sides.

This might be my liberal ideology seeping through, but it seems the conservative, Christian majority of K-State has shaded its eyes and thoughts from nature and sometimes logic.

I also had that mentality in Manhattan unknowingly. Yeah, I’m a liberal, but I didn’t really think about issues too much — I just followed what I thought liberals did in Lawrence or anywhere else. It was more than that in Lawrence though. Many, but not all, Kansas students seemed to think more about the issues and specific-
ty of how they affect people’s lives. I’m not saying those in the K-State community don’t care about other people, but they just don’t think as much and are far less active on issues.

A reason for this proliferation of thought in Lawrence could be the higher drug use. Sure, there are drugs in Manhattan, but I learned of several drugs in Lawrence I hadn’t even heard of before. This might not be great for the users, but it shows one key difference between the communities. More Kansas students aren’t afraid to explore new experiences and thoughts. Sure there are several severely messed-up people wandering Massachusetts Street due to drug abuse, but there is also a feeling Kansas students and many Lawrence residents have from examining issues more evenly and clearly.

It might be hard to learn from Kansas, though. K-State and Kansas students have such an animosity and built-up stereotype against each other that they don’t want to act the same or even think the same.

It’s time to throw those stereotypes and inhibitions away. There’s so much people don’t want to know, they don’t care to know or can’t know, but we can think about them and hopefully make our own determinations, not follow those of our parents, peers or pastors.

Scott Girard is a junior in print journalism. Please send comments to opinion@spub.ksu.edu.
TO THE EDITOR

Readers prefer drug-free ideologies

Editor,

I would like to comment on some things from Scott Girard’s column, “K-State students can learn from KU ideologies.”

First, he says people in Lawrence “think more about the issues.” Just what issues does he mean?

Girard is operating under the assumption that whatever topics they are thinking about are actually valid societal concerns and those of us who aren’t actively debating them are somehow backward.

Secondly, he doesn’t define the idea of “free thought.” The truth is his “free thought” is not of clear-headed people but rather the mindset of drug-induced stupidity.

The form of free thought he refers to is the one that ignores right and wrong and views all beliefs (except traditional Judeo-Christian ones) as equally valid.

I would contend allowing oneself to believe anything (or nothing) regardless of right and wrong, truth or falsehood, and then “thinking” about it all day, is not a sign of enlightenment — it’s a sign of foolishness.

Lastly, he seems to promote an homogenization of thought within our society. Just because our neighbors might be on it doesn’t mean we should all jump on the free-love and LSD bandwagon.

Isn’t one of the “liberal values” diversity? Yet he disparages the relatively traditional views held by many of his peers. His friends in Lawrence can trip all over Mass Street if they want, but I for one am hoping K-Staters will maintain some of the traditional American spirit that has made our country and school great.

Ian Matthews
Senior in Life Sciences
Editor,

I support the First Amendment 100 percent, but Scott Girard and his column, "K-State students can learn from KU ideologies," is an embarrassment to the university. If he wants to explore new mind-freeing drugs he can't seem to get his hands on in Manhattan, then he should move to Lawrence where the law enforcement is apparently much less stringent.

I'm not sure what makes him feel qualified to generalize the values and beliefs of over 23,000 students. For being such an "objective free-thinker," I failed to locate a single unbiased argument in his liberal rhetoric.

Looks like he is well on his way to a bright future in the left-winged media. For his sake, I hope they don't perform drug tests.

Clint Koebling
K-State Alumnus
Overland Park, Kan.
Basehor resident Elizabeth Bartkoski is one of 23 University of Kansas students who was recently named a peer educator for fall 2007.

Peer educators serve as academic resources and mentors to help first-year KU students adjust to campus life.

Bartkoski is a graduate of Bishop Ward High School and is the daughter of John and DeAnn Bartkoski.
Jones Mt. Oread Scholar at KU

The 11th annual walk up the hill for Mount Oread Scholars was held on Monday, August 13, 2007. Kathryn Nemeth Tuttle, associate vice provost for Student Success, led the walk and provided commentary about campus history and Mount Oread, pointing out landmarks along the way.

The walk signifies the beginning of a higher education journey for the 189 Mount Oread Scholars whose ultimate goal is to walk down the hill upon graduation. Two scholars will carry the 2007 KU graduation banner to further mark this important beginning, and scholars are encouraged to wear their Mount Oread Scholars t-shirt that states “What Goes Up, Must Come Down.”

The walk up the hill was followed by a continental breakfast reception at Spencer Research Library.

Bryce James Jones, son of Susan and Brian Jones, Arma, is a 2007-08 Mount Oread Scholar.