

Lazy Learning

Mackenzie Brown
Staff Writer

Online classes don't measure up to face-to-face learning

Every semester, more and more students sign up for online courses in order finish classes on their own time, giving them a chance to catch up or get ahead. In addition, schools provide online classes to integrate online learning into the traditional classroom.

However, online classes are often more complicated than they are helpful, so students should refrain from signing up unless they know they can be patient and responsible.

Face-to-face interactions give teachers a chance to understand their students' learning styles and to establish a steady form of communication. Online courses, on the other hand, require students to email their teacher if they have questions or need further explanations. This makes communication limited and impersonal, and students have a hard time understanding what a teacher expects when they are exchanging emails instead of having conversations. Core classes and languages are the worst classes to take online, because these classes require interaction with classmates and conversations between students and teachers. Online

classes are in no way a reliable replacement for traditional face-to-face learning.

Students finish online classes as fast as possible to stay on schedule, but this usually means they skim textbook pages for answers and rush through the material they are meant to read thoroughly. When this shortcut is so readily available, it takes time and patience to slow down and learn the material. Assignments for online classes are also easy to put on the backburner until the due date is rapidly approaching. In order to complete a class before the night it's due, students must have enough discipline to complete lessons daily.

Although online classes are beneficial when a student needs to complete a course quickly, there is no guarantee that they'll remember what they learned in the near future. It is up to each student to decide whether this time-efficient method of learning is actually reasonable for their own schedule and personality.

Any material a student may need to apply later in life should be taught in a classroom, and any course that requires avid communication should be learned from a teacher that a student can speak with daily.



Due to influx in technology based learning, students have had to adapt to online classes to receive credit for certain electives needed to graduate. Because of this new trend in education, grades 6, 7 and 8 students keep a chromebook, given by the school, with them at all times. "I finished an economics course in three hours," senior Austin Iske said. "And I know nothing about economics."

Political Ignorance

Democracy unsuccessful with uneducated populus

Haley Spencer
Staff Writer

There is a hidden aspect that has been a huge part of every election since that of John Adams and Thomas Jefferson. It is something that the common citizen is unaware of, which contributes to the issue, and many politicians prosper from. The answer? Political ignorance.

Political ignorance is the lack of information and knowledge regarding political issues. Many believe that politics don't apply to their daily lives or that since they read the news every once in awhile, they aren't guilty of it. The reason why this is such a widespread issue is because of exactly that. No one wants to admit it, but we are all guilty of some aspect of political ignorance.

Democracy is rule by the people, for the people, of the people. Democracy does no

good though if the voter, or the "ruler," doesn't understand the basic concepts of their nation and government. In our middle school, a survey was taken by all eighth-grade students concerning politics. The results were staggering. Out of 104 students, one student knew that Guam was a territory of the United States. The average person is expected to vote for their president, senators, and representative, but they don't even know something as simple as Guam being a territory. This plays into political ignorance because people are choosing not to know this information. It's not that it isn't available, it is a choice.

Many argue that it is okay to be politically ignorant because there is no way that a single person being educated is going to change the outcome of any election. That is very incorrect. Although a single vote may not

actually change the outcome of an election, that is absolutely no reason to justify being undereducated. No one has ever said that the only reason to be educated politically is just so that we can vote. Politics and the government are some of the only things that actually affects our day to day lives. Political news is so much more than just who is running for what office. It includes disease outbreaks, wars, current events, speeches, and many other things. Next time someone tries to justify their ignorance by saying their vote doesn't count, remind them that politics is not just voting.

Politicians are using the fact that we Americans, as a whole, are politically ignorant. Take Donald Trump's campaign for example. One of the most surprising aspects of the 2016 presidential election has been the rise of Trump and we can thank political ignorance for

that. Since Trump is a long time celebrity, name recognition is definitely in favor of Trump this year with voters who don't know much about politics. Many polls also reveal that much of his support comes from people with low levels of education which lends itself to the group of people most indwelt in political ignorance. That's why Trump seems to be able to say anything and not lose any support. The populous supporting him are so politically ignorant that when he does or says something stupid, they don't even know about it and if they do, they don't care.

As a nation, we find it easier to deny our issues than to just solve them. If people deny they are politically ignorant, though, we will never be able to solve the ever apparent issue. Politicians are using the fact that their constituents are undereducated to put into place whatever they

want. We are very quick to jump on politicians for being corrupt and way too powerful, but maybe if people actually put in the time to study what is making these politicians so "corrupt," we wouldn't have the issues we have today. It is important for people to understand what their choice to be undereducated is causing for the entire world. So, don't believe that your undereducated vote counts for nothing, it counts for a lot.

Political ignorance is such a widespread issue because of the denial that is associated with it. With many issues, people believe that they are doing something wrong and they choose not to fix it. With political ignorance, though, people deny that it is even an issue and, therefore, neglect to solve it. If we don't acknowledge the major issue presented right in front of us, we will never be able to solve it.

No Offense

Senior urges maturity

Austin Iske
Editor-in-chief

American society has reached a crossroads. The very basis of our government is found on free speech, but some people seem to want to rid our nation of this fundamental right. Words are becoming just as dangerous as weapons in our culture, and it's hurting us. Intelligent conversations are stifled due to the fear of hurting someone's feelings, a crime equivalent to capital murder these days. Debates about current issues can't be held without one side being labeled a bigot, racist, or homophobe. This has to stop. We have to realize that finding a way to be offended doesn't win an argument, it simply ends one without either side walking away more informed about the opposition. This isn't what we want. We want ideas to be spread, even if it costs upsetting people.

A recent occurrence that I think needs to be talked about is the removal of street names and monuments dealing with

the Civil War. People who cry that confederate generals should be stricken from the records show ignorance of facts and a complete disregard for history in general. How can you advocate the removal of history just so you can drive on Grant Street instead of Lee street? The practice of slavery was horrendous, but that is no reason to kick it under the rug and act like it never happened. We need to talk and learn about it to ensure nothing like it happens again. After all, those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it. Putting on blinders and only seeing what you want to doesn't make the world a better place, it only ensures that you can't. It's time we grow up and face the world for what it really is. No more safe zones. No more hiding. Let's be a culture that embraces differences instead of hiding from them.

Turf Trouble

Mayor speaks on recent gang violence

Morgan Taylor-Thomas
Staff Writer

Longview Mayor Andy Mack is searching for a way to give gang members a way out while Longview continues to gossip about gangs and gang-related criminal activity.

Mack posted a link to a two-part questionnaire on Facebook for the residents. The first question related to the subject, asking respondents whether they would support finding a way to help gang members out and into a new community if it were an available option. The other question asked who they favored to win the Super Bowl. (GO BRONCOS!)

"This week's survey is kind of interesting, and it's going to spur some discussion. I'm excited to see what happens," Mack said during a speech for the Longview Rotary Club on Tuesday, according to the

Longview News-Journal. "If possible, would you support a program that gave gang members the option to turn their lives around if they wanted it? Would you support that? I would. In a heartbeat."

There are many recreational, educational, and after-school programs that exist to help persuade youth from joining gangs, however, there are none within our area that help escape this lifestyle, Mack said.

"They're lost," he said. "Once they're in, they're done, and it's because of them we are having issues. However, I believe that not every one of them want to stay in, but they have no option out."

Gang members often lack jobs, money, or family support, all factors that attract them to gangs and leave them with

few options if they desired to distance from the gang, Mack said.

Mack has been posting non-scientific surveys every week since June.

"There is not a simple solution that makes (all crimes) go away," Mack said in his speech Tuesday. "It's a multifactorial puzzle that has many pieces, and if we continue to put them together, eventually our pieces will be greater than (offenders) pieces and we will succeed."

Seventeen people commented on the mayor's post and eleven people shared it within an hour after posting.

"I believe that there's a chance for this community to come together and help the youth that are stuck find a way out of a lifestyle they no longer want to live," Mack said.