

# Drop slip becomes hot ticket on campus

By Brian Nelson  
Copy editor

She knows she has to tell her mother. She doesn't want to. Yet she knows that it will become obvious, eventually. She's not the only young woman who has been faced with this issue. It happens. It's part of nature.

She has changed her major, from nursing to English.

"I have decided," said Rosalina Valdovinos, English sophomore, "I just haven't made it official yet. I like writing. I like writing stories and I couldn't keep up with all the science classes."

With the consideration of changing majors, Valdovinos picked up a drop slip. She said it would be unwise to continue classes that were not in her new field of study.

Students drop classes for many reasons. Changing majors is one. Others are taking too many credit hours, or finding that they can't keep up with the assigned work. Every student has their own reason.

"I've dropped a class because it didn't fit with my

schedule," said Jessica Hadley, digital arts junior. "I would have had to take the class by appointment, and that would be too stressful." Hadley said students may drop a class because of stress, or because they do not care for the instructor.

"Or they're too lazy," said Greg Turner, digital arts junior, who was sitting next to Hadley.

Dr. Stephen Woodburn, assistant professor of history, said that as an instructor, he is not told why students drop his class, but students who drop tend to be apologetic.

"Sometimes a friend convinces them to take as class," said Woodburn. "If the friend gives up, they're going to give up. The reason they came in is no longer there."

Woodburn said he wants students in his class who want to learn, and when a student drops his class, he doesn't take it personally. "It's a fact of life that some are going to drop," said Woodburn. "I sure don't hold it against students. They just have to make a rational choice if a class is not panning out for

them. I'm not going to bully them. It's not in their best interest and not in my best interest either."

Woodburn said he advises students to talk to their advisor and instructor before the final signature on the drop slip. Tami Pullins, associate academic vice president for advising and student success, agrees.

"If for some reason they want more information beyond that (of their advisor) they can come to me," said Pullins. "What I would want them to do is look at their four year plan for graduating." Pullins said she discusses what happens if the student drops the class. She wants to see if the student is really in a hole or if they are taking the far extreme for what may have been one missed assignment. She then asks the student to sleep over their decision, for they have likely put a lot of time and energy into the course.

Pullins said that courses dropped as of Jan. 23 will not appear on a student's transcript. March 13 is the

last day to withdraw from classes. Courses dropped Jan. 24 and on will remain on the transcript, along with a WD (withdrew). When students do drop, Pullins, like Woodburn, does not judge the students.

"We all have our different paths and different journeys. Here, we call it graduation," said Pullins. "If there's a student I'm partially connected

with, I suppose I would be frustrated that student has hurt them self. Obviously, we want students to graduate. We want to know what keeps you tripping over that same rock...This is too big of an investment to not finish."

Though students may drop a class, this does not mean they will drop everything that life throws at them.

"Sometimes it's the red badge of courage," said Woodburn. "They've lived to fight another day. You know you are a little older and a little wiser. You didn't know what to expect. Now you do. Hopefully, that makes a difference for you."

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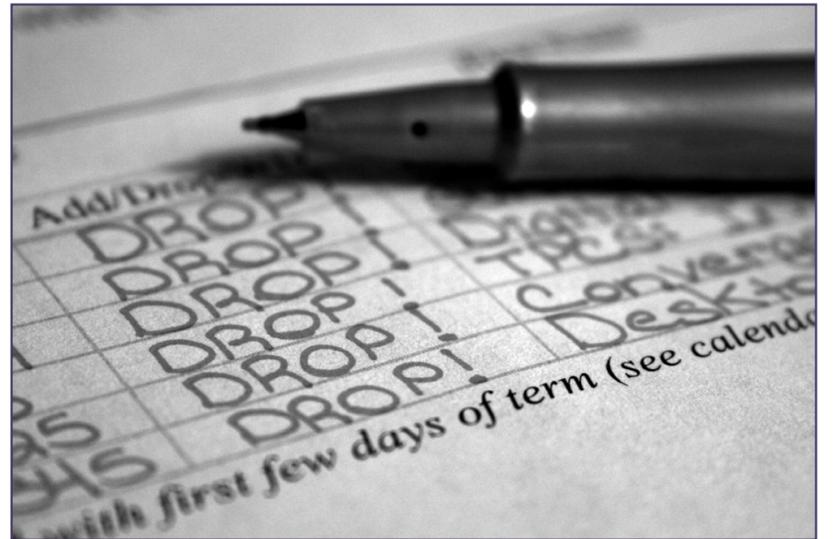


Photo illustration by Brian Nelson

# Solitude is vital for sanity in busy atmospheres

By Samantha Gillis  
Features editor

It's a peaceful walk through Island Park, with a book and your favorite blanket or the corner of the library and a journal. Where do you go to escape? Where do you spend your alone time?

In the frantic days, there needs to be a place where we can exclude ourselves from the outside world and delve into our inner world. Claudia Geer, professor of psychology, said a time for peace, quiet and alone time is vital

for everyone. "No matter if you're introvert or extravert, we all need some time for solitude.

"The problem is that we don't always allow ourselves that time. We're simply too busy," she said. Geer said that alone time is as vital to our lives as eating, breathing or sleeping, because it allows our bodies to recharge and revitalize.

"It doesn't matter if you think you need it or not, you do." She said there's no magic number on how much time we each need. It just depends.

Mahrjon Hafez, technical theatre senior, is a resident assistant in Broadhurst, whose days are jammed packed with classes and theater activities. She said, "I definitely need my alone time. I just don't get enough. In a perfect world I would want an hour or two on top of what I already have for alone time."

Hafez said she is definitely an extravert and needs people to talk to, but she also needs time to recharge. "I usually catch up on everything and recharge on Sundays. Which

means I don't watch TV, but I read scripts, clean and send e-mails."

Although she lives by herself now, the second semester of her freshman year she had a roommate. "I loved my roommate Michelle Dreiling because I could vent to her about theater problems, and it wouldn't get around because she had nothing to do with theater. It's just a way to let out some steam, it's not being catty."

She said, "At the same time when I am booked back-to-back with theater, I re-

ally appreciate living alone."

Mattie Allison, psychology senior, also lives alone but isn't fussy about how much time she needs to herself. "I don't actually set aside time to be alone... But I am not very busy either."

Allison had a roommate in past years, which she said might have contributed to a higher amount of stress. "She would stay up late and do her homework while I needed sleep...it's nice now because if I get sick of my suitemate I can just shut the door," said Allison.

Typically Allison doesn't go anywhere in particular to find quiet, but rather she just reads a book in her room.

Geer said that there is so much noise in our lives we have a tendency to focus on what the world outside wants from us. We rarely look within. Geer said, "We all need to just stop, breathe and set aside all the technology, but mostly just stop."

Samantha Gillis is a sophomore majoring in convergent journalism. You may e-mail her at [samantha.gillis@sckans.edu](mailto:samantha.gillis@sckans.edu).

# Local trial surfaces death penalty controversy

By Korie Hawkins  
Staff reporter

Kansas hasn't executed anyone since 1965. But there has been a death penalty law three times.

The death penalty was reinstated in Kansas July 1, 1994. The legislature enacted a new death penalty law, which Gov. Joan Finney allowed to become law without her signature.

On Feb. 26 and 27 the Senate Judiciary Committee planned a hearing on Senate Bill 208 to abolish the death penalty. The committee will vote on the bill this week.

The new bill will not affect the 10 inmates already

sentenced to death.

This includes Justin Thurber, who was recently convicted in the Cowley County killing of Jodi Sanderholm, a 19-year-old college student in 2007.

Thirty-six states have the death penalty according to the Death Penalty Information Center.

Sen. Carolyn McGinn (R-Sedgwick) introduced the bill. She said, "Death sentences are too expensive and unnecessary because a person can be sentenced to life in prison without parole. Lawmakers need to save money to keep the budget balanced for the fiscal year that begins July 1."

Dr. Donald Anderson,

retired professor of psychology, taught at Southwestern College for 29 years. He is a member of the Kansas Coalition Against the Death Penalty. He has been attending trials for 13 years and he has been to 18 capital offense trials. He supports the Senate bill that is in the Judiciary Committee.

Anderson attended the Justin Thurber trial that took place earlier this month. He said, "I can feel the pain of the victim's families. I introduce myself to the family of victims, and tell them who I represent. I'm normally seen as the enemy. I usually end up supporting the accused. We want to see these people

brought to trial. We don't want them put to death."

Anderson's viewpoints are the same among students like Lea McCraw, biology freshman.

"I don't agree with the death penalty, because it cost too much and it doesn't solve anything," said McCraw.

The groups involved in the Kansas Coalition oppose the death penalty. They explain their reasons in a printed brochure:

- It's morally wrong according to biblical aspects.
- It doesn't keep others from committing murders.
- We are prone to make mistakes as far as prosecution and DNA evidence is concerned.

It's unnecessary considering we have life without parole.

- It's not applied fairly.
- We, being the Kansas Coalition, don't want it.
- Others do want the death penalty in Kansas.

Phil Alton, physical education and health freshman, said, "I believe in the death penalty, and I think those convicted should be put to death immediately following sentencing instead of wasting tax payer's money allowing them to sit on death row."

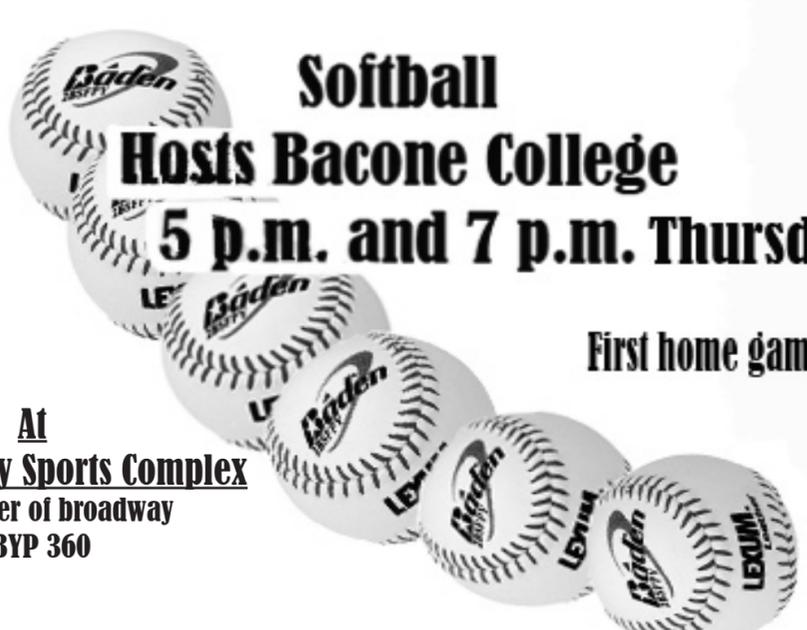
John Richmond, physical education senior, supports the death penalty. He said, "Tax payers spend too much money sending these offend-

ers to jail for the rest of their lives."

In 2003, the Kansas Legislative Post Audit Division estimated the cost of a death penalty trial to be \$1.2 million and the cost of an incarceration trial was \$740,000.

As of January 2009, 130 people across the U.S. have been released from death row and incarceration because of innocence often based off DNA evidence. This fact is included in Dr. Anderson's quiz he provides for various groups he speaks with about opposing the death penalty.

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