

Mock Rock exclusivity hurts community

The light-hearted Biola competition should be more open to new members joining groups.

By **KRISTEN SMITH**
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The yearly lip-synching tradition of Mock Rock purposes to bring Biola's community together. But is this really the case?

This year, seven different groups auditioned, but only six groups were accepted. How can an inclusive university turn away groups wanting to build a Christ-fearing and fun atmosphere? Mock Rock is not a collegiate level dance competition but is advertised as an event bringing all Biolans together for a night of laughter.

The audition process is tedious. Not only do many of the groups meet two to three times per week, but they also stay late nights to



AARON FOOKS | The Chimes [file photo]
MOCK COMMUNITY: Alumnus AJ McKay, member of It's Whatever, holds the winning trophy at Mock Rock 2015. Exclusivity in this year's groups is hurting Biola's community.

show how their team is a Mock Rock performance that will entertain.

Requiring an audition puts more competition in Mock Rock which takes away from the enjoyment of performing. Yes, Mock Rock is a competition, but it occurs in an environment meant

to promote friendships, not bring people shame for not being accepted to compete despite hours of practice.

Auditions are helpful for gauging the ability of dancers but should not cut people from a competition where they are on par with previous groups. Biola's mis-

sion statement promotes equality and a chance to do what they believe. It does not make room for exclusivity. Biola tries to become a more inclusive community, so it should start with something small but influential like Mock Rock.

One Mock Rock group, It's Complicated, allowed any Biola

student admission into their group promoting camaraderie but were cut as a credible team, but other Mock Rock groups were more exclusive with who they admitted into the group. This creates a hypocritical stance on the standard for "collegiate level" dancing.

"A good performance doesn't have to be at a professional standard. To me, the judges chose groups they knew well. We were a group of new people really excited to participate in such a big event on campus and now students can't experience performing in it because we didn't meet a requirement that can't really be measured at audition time," said Amanda Beshay, sophomore business major and member of It's Complicated.

Mock Rock affects Biola's reputation regarding community and what is or is not acceptable. A simple performance may not seem like enough to ruin a reputation, but community is what provokes many Biolans to attend. Biola should carry this in regards to its events and decision-making.

"Mock Rock should be all-inclusive for those who prepared a

fun and energetic performance. Biola students want to be involved and want to be a part of community events like this on campus. However, students aren't given this opportunity unless they're in a group with the "popular" kids, but even then, students can't get on a popular Mock Rock team unless they have connections. My team was one of the few that allowed anyone to join, and that's what made it so fun," Beshay said.

Biola is known for its people. But if students who are not deeply involved in the Biola community made time to practice with a Mock Rock group, they should not be cut, especially when connections to people inside the group play a role in who joins. It makes community less accessible to students wanting to be a part of Mock Rock's tradition.

Mock Rock should be passed to generations of students to come. Unfair exclusions create an undesirable reputation for any university, especially a Christian-based private college where students pay for, but do not always reap the benefits of the campus community.

Doctor's note requirements place grades over health

Biola's attendance policy forces students to sacrifice their health to get good grades.

By **MORGAN MITCHELL**
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We have all experienced it. You sit up and your nose immediately begins running and your brain pounds against your skull like it is excavating a mine. It is the common cold.

You know you put other students at risk, but if you miss class, you lose participation points that can make a difference between an A and a B. You go to class and three days later Jimmy, who sits next to you, comes to class with many of your similar symptoms.

One reason students cannot stay home is many of Biola's attendance policies require a doctor's note to miss class without losing participation points or missing attendance quizzes. These are extremely hard to acquire and can cost a lot of money.

"A physician's note is very

much old school," said Georges Benjamin, executive director of the American Public Health Association. "It was designed to say that if you're not sick enough to see a physician then you should have to come to class or go to work, but there are many conditions for which a person does not need to go to a doctor."

These include the common cold, menstrual cramps, depression, anxiety and self-medicated asthma.

Many attendance policies are in place to ready students for the working world post-graduation, but Benjamin feels an honor system would prepare them better.

Benjamin says in order to help students be adults we need to give them adult responsibility. Part of that responsibility involves knowing when to stay home and when to go to school, and another part is being aware of and realizing the value of education and how much of their money goes towards it.

Honor systems give students that responsibility and create trust between students and faculty that they will make the right decisions regarding their attendance.

In the working world, employees are encouraged to stay home when sick.

Dr. Jennifer Shu wrote an article for CNN saying people should stay home from work when sick

because they will not be as productive, they can get others sick and it may take longer to recover.

Classrooms could better mirror the workplace by integrating technology that allows students to work from home.

"I understand the idea of preparing people for the workplace, but the modern workplace allows for teleworking, telephone conferencing, and skype and video conferencing," Benjamin said. "Education needs to evolve with that trend, more innovative classrooms are allowing those options to occur as well."

Responsible students stay home when sick and make up for missed work while irresponsible students will abuse the honor system. Responsible students will become responsible adults in the working world and the irresponsible students will go on to struggle in the workplace.

Attendance is a responsibility students can only learn themselves and it is better to learn it in college before they get to their jobs.

"[Students] should think thoughtfully about when they're not going to class, but if they're not well, they should stay home and take care of themselves," Benjamin said. "Their health is far more important than anything else."

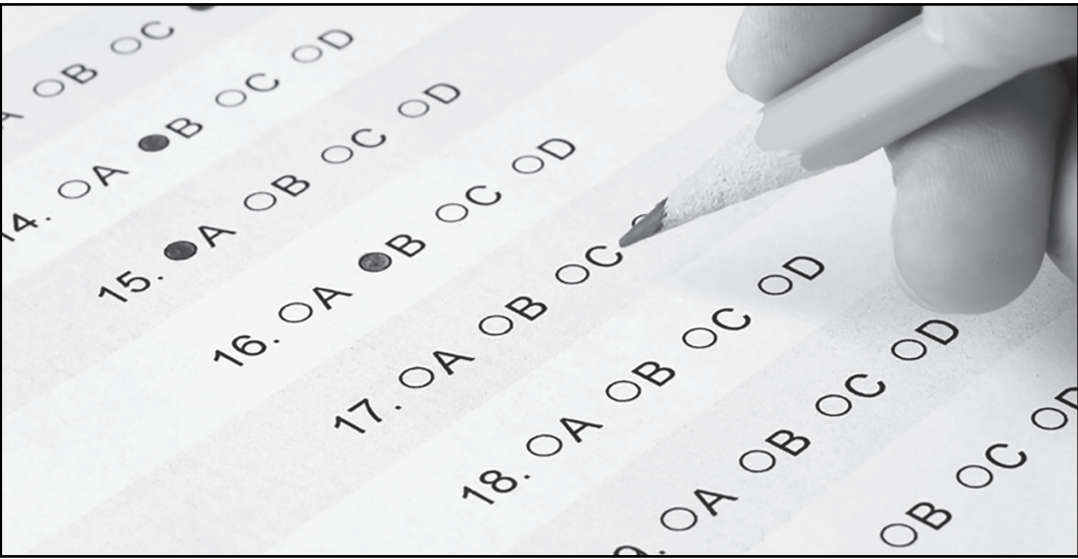
[Students] should think thoughtfully about when they're not going to class, but **if they're not well, they should stay home and take care of themselves.**"

-GEORGES BENJAMIN,
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE AMERICAN PUBLIC HEALTH ASSOCIATION



Courtesy | flickr.com (creative commons)

ILL ADVICE: Because Biola requires a doctor's note to be excused from class without losing points, students are forced to go to school despite it putting their health and their classmates' health at risk.



Courtesy | Flickr.com

TEST TROUBLES: When students took the new version of the SAT, they found it more closely matched their high school curriculum, but it still needs improvement.

New SAT improves, but still not perfect

SAT wins the little victories, but society still fights the bigger issues.

By **JACQUELINE LEWIS**
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On Saturday, March 5, 2016, college hopefuls met with the new face of the SAT. Although the College Board hoped to make the test more fair, educators debate its actual success in achieving these goals.

Most current Biola students likely took the dreaded exam in its old form, since it is the most popular of the two standardized tests most colleges accept with prospective student applications. But in recent years, its popularity declined as schools began to question the effectiveness of the SAT and studies determined it a poor predictor of future college performance.

According to the New York Times, students dread the test because of the anxiety it creates and its unclear content. Teachers disliked it because it did not test on classroom curriculum and because the schools' average scores would receive publication with the blame falling on

teachers for poor performance. It seemed to favor the wealthy as their money allowed them to hire tutors and pay for classes that would better prepare their children for the exam.

This year the College Board, the creator of the test, responded to these complaints and changed the exam in a few major ways. For example, they got rid of the guessing penalty and made the essay optional based on the individual college requirement. The essay itself changed as well to match more closely with college-style writing assignments by analyzing a source's argument instead of writing their opinion on the relationship of failure and success and the like.

According to Kaplan Test Prep's survey, after the administration of the new test, 60 percent of students said the questions were straightforward, 16 percent thought the material related a lot to their high school curriculum and 56 percent thought it related at least somewhat to their high school curriculum. However, the majority of students still believed the length of the sections proved too tiring.

Although not a change in the test's content, the College Board also made the test available during the summer.

However, besides questions regarding how much actual content changed, the new SAT

receives the most criticism in its availability. James Murphy, tutoring manager for the Princeton Review, writes in the Atlantic that the SAT's availability in the summer still favors the affluent. Students in poverty cannot apply early to schools because they have to wait to find out how much financial aid they will receive. Because of this, they usually have to wait until November of their senior year to test.

Additionally, schools sometimes apply a school-day waiver system where the school or government pays for all students to take the SAT during the school year. This would cause lower-income students to take it during this time instead of getting extra time to study during the summer.

This also still does not completely solve the problem of wealthier students having access to tutors where poorer students do not. Free online study services like Khan Academy provide help in this area, but not all students learn as well as they could in an online format.

The College Board took a step in the right direction in making the content more direct, but the College Board, educators and policy-makers still need to work on how to make higher education and the American Dream more accessible to all.

We're happy you picked up the paper, but there's even more online.

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