# New AP Policy Offers Benefits and Possible Disadvantages

## -Staff Editorial

Next year at Loy Norrix, many changes are scheduled to take place. Small learning communities aside, new policies concerning advanced placement (AP) classes are sure to make some waves. In the 2008-2009 school year, more AP classes are slated on the schedule, grades will be weighted to reflect the work required for AP classes, and the $80 AP exams will be paid for by the school. Along with the obvious advantages of these changes in policy, however, come effects that may be detrimental to some students.

On one hand, it is great that our school is expanding to offer more challenging classes. More students will probably take these classes for many reasons. First and foremost, weighted grades will encourage students to enroll in AP classes. Enrollment numbers in AP classes are generally lower; one reason for this is because many students were worried about their grade point averages. Because 'A's are much more difficult to obtain in AP classes, students often take the easy way out and enroll in non-AP classes.

Another push for students to enroll in AP classes is that the school will now pay for the exams. Because some students may be enrolling in numerous AP courses at once, this is especially helpful. By funding the exams, the school is providing further initiative for students to take these AP classes.

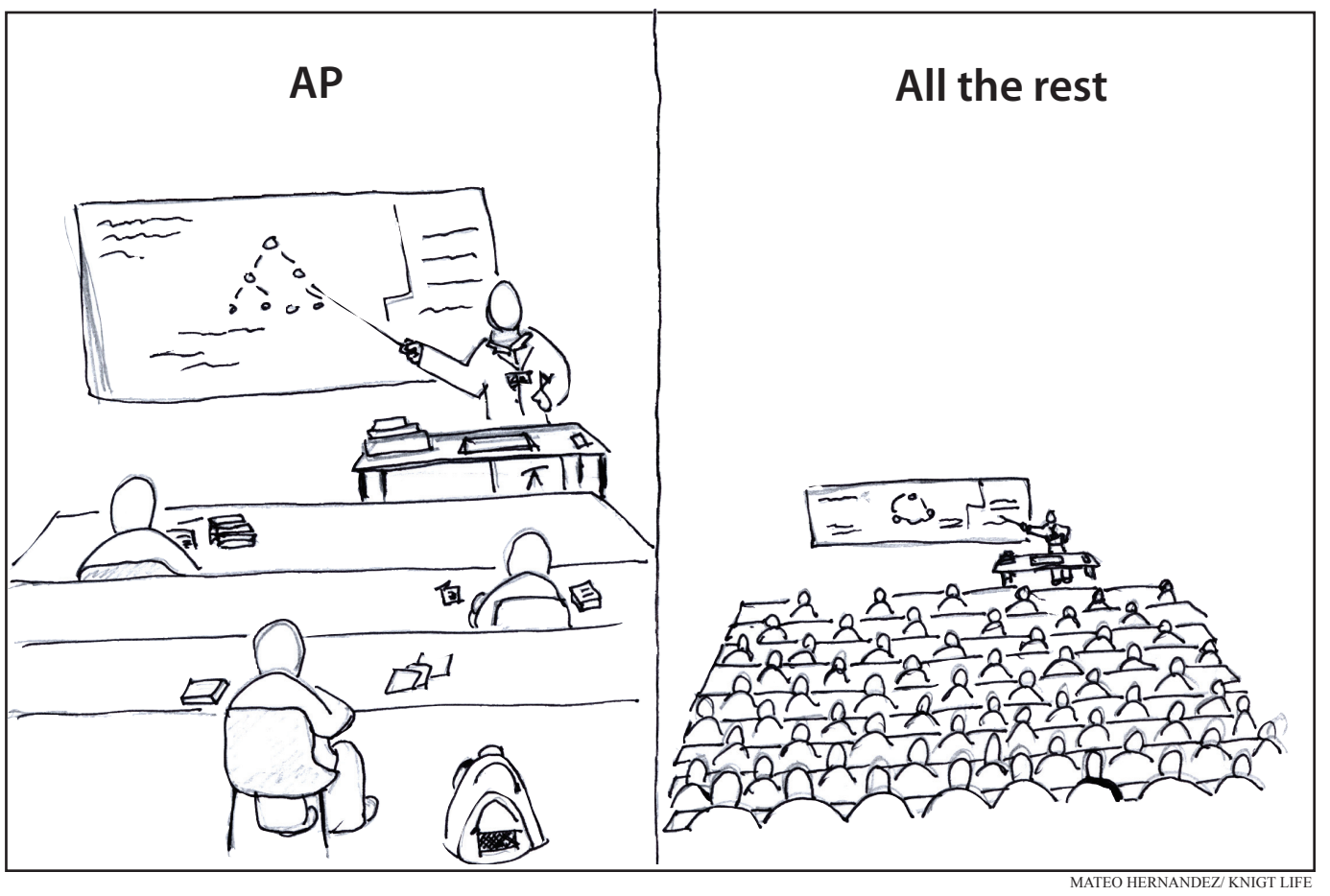
The new AP policy will have a positive effect on LN. More students will want to take these courses, and therefore more students will be better prepared for college. Success in these courses will help to improve the community's view of the school. The addition of new AP courses and the incentives that the AP policy provides show that LN is moving forward.

However, there are also some downfalls to offering so many new AP courses. Some teachers new to the AP program may not be prepared to teach an AP curriculum, and therefore the students will not be properly prepared for the exam. So while some students will be taking an AP course, working hard and getting ready for the exam, other students could potentially be taking a disorganized class, but still receiving AP credit.

Also, with block scheduling many will find it difficult to fit in all of their required classes and take AP courses that last all year. For every yearlong AP class in which students enroll, two electives or core classes are eliminated from their schedule. For students who are already enrolled in Education for Emplyment (EFE), Education for the Arts (EFA) or Kalamazoo Area Math and Science Center (KAMSC) classes, this may prove especially problematic. If the school is going to offer new AP classes then a change back to the six-period school day or a similar alteration may be necessary.

The students who are not enrolled in AP courses must also be considered. Even though more students will probably be taking AP courses, there will most likely still be fewer students in AP classes than in regular classes. This will mean that regular classes would be packed with students, up to 37 per class! This year, there are AP classes with only 5-10 students while the general-education version of said class has a grossly unequal student/teacher ratio. Increased class sizes are already presenting numerous problems for both teachers and students; next year's policies may only aggravate these problems.

The flood of new AP courses for the 2008-2009 school year has the potential to be both a huge success, or a huge failure. Hopefully, these benefits will outweigh the possible detrimental effects.




MATEO HERNANDEZ/ KNIGT LIFE

# Should we be Concerned?

## School Shootings Affect Our Student Body

**Angelo Murray**
Photo Editor

Recently there have been a high number of high school shootings in the United States, which have left many injured and dead. In Febuary in Ocard, California an eighth grade student was shot in the head. The suspect promptly left the room, leaving behind a stunned class and a student who was in critical condition.

That Monday before, the suspect told a friend that the victim will be, "Having his last day."

Some students think when one person hears about a school shooting, others students might want to do the same thing.

"Once people hear about one school shooting, they see it as an available option for themselves," senior Sandi Wieleba said, stunned at the recent number of school shootings.

Why do students bring guns to school and kill their peers? Loy Norrix is a fairly safe school and like Wieleba, I never have to worry about my safety.

"For the most part, I feel pretty safe...I have not felt endangered," Wieleba said.

Many average high school students have become targets in school shootings. Students our age are dying without living their life to the fullest or having the opprotunity to chase their dreams.

We see on T.V. all the time; the good kid seeks vengeance on a bully and the good kid comes out on top. Is this sending the wrong message to students?

Junior Iesha Mullen thinks maybe kids who shoot students at school are looking for revenge on the bullies and said, "[School shootings occur] Because they get tired of people bullying them!"

Mullen thinks kids who are bullied are the ones who bring the guns to school. Mullen thinks these students should be expelled from school and seek help and go to counseling.

"They should know better! [not to bring guns to school]," said Mullen.

Most shootings are unpredictable. If it was to happen at LN, I personally would be scared to come back! Wieleba has that opinion as well saying she would not be surprised at the possibility.

"School shootings are happening in small communities and it could happen locally," Wieleba said. "I would be afraid, I would not come back to school!"

So what could we do to prevent a similar situation? Schools should have more clubs geared toward stopping violence and helping victims. For example, Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) is an organization of mothers aiming to stop young people from driving drunk. LN should have something where teens work to stop school shootings.

Sophomore Tyler Selph thinks metal detectors should be put in schools as a step to stop school shootings.

"Because if they have to go through metal detectors it will be harder to bring guns through schools," Selph said.

This topic has affected many LN students and some surely have concerns. Though there is no absolute solution, we can only talk to administrations and talk to the community about this situation.

# Maybe I'll Get Around to it Later…

## How we let Procrastination Get the Best of Us

**Emily Rooney**
Editor-in-Chief

We all know how it works -- putting things off until the last minute, making excuses, even cleaning your room three times to avoid doing what you know you should be doing. Procrastination gets the best of all of us at one point or another in our busy lives and it is one of the most difficult habits to shake.

Although some people may function better under pressure, the majority of people fold under the stress and anxiety caused by putting things off until the last minute. So why do so many people continue to procrastinate consistently even when they know what the outcome will be?

One of the main reasons why people delay doing something they are dreading is because it is so much easier to make excuses and wait until the last minute than to sit down and get it over with. Almost all high school students can relate to that feeling when you know that you have to get something done, but instead you convince yourself that you can afford to wait until the last minute. Then, once you have put it off, you wish you had just gotten it over with sooner.

While waiting until the last minute sometimes works in your favor, too often it results in frantically throwing something together at the last minute and not really doing your best work. If you let procrastination become a habit then everything suddenly becomes much more complicated than it should be. Before long you could find yourself going a step further than procrastinating and just not doing things at all.

What most people probably don't realize is that procrastination can often affect people other than yourself. While you are sitting there putting things off, it is almost guaranteed that somebody is counting on you to get your work done.

Often the solution to procrastinating is to set specific goals of things that you need to get done, and then to reward yourself if you get them done in the amount of time you allotted to do them. If you do not have a specific plan, you will almost certainly waste time finding things you "have" to do other than the task you actually do have to do. When you don't have goals, suddenly organizing your sock drawer, checking your facebook every five minutes, or picking the lint off of your sweater becomes your top priority and studying for that big physics test is bumped to the end of your list.

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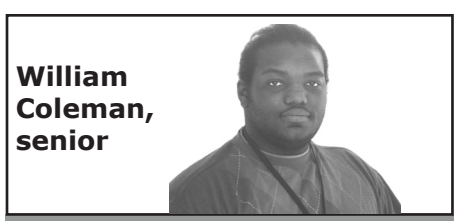
So next time you feel like putting something off until the last second, take a moment and think about the last time you procrastinated. If you remember being stressed out and frustrated as a result of procrastinating then try and find some way to avoid doing it again. Or if procrastination helps you focus when you're under pressure, bring on that messy sock drawer!

# KNIGHTS SPEAK OUT How Do You Feel About Quiet Halls?




William Coleman, senior

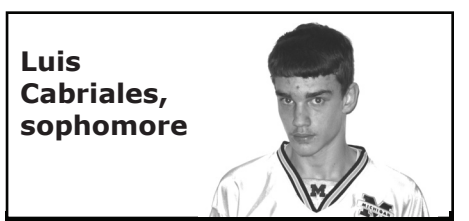
"Quiet hallways is a sign of [the administration] getting control."

Darice Smith, Front Office Secretary

"We believe in quiet halls because it gives our students a chance to achieve academically in a quiet environment."

Katie Shorter, sophomore

"I hate quiet hallways. I really don't understand the point of it."




Luis Cabriales, sophomore

"Quiet hallways make people feel like they are still in elementary, not high school."

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