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LETTERS

Prairie View penalty too light

Regarding Thursday's article "Prairie View students punished in exam flap / Caught texting answers during nursing test, they weren't allowed to graduate with class":

As a licensed registered nurse, I cannot fathom the reasons why these students tried to cheat their way through their comprehensive nursing school exam. I am somewhat concerned at what appears to be a rather lax punishment for those caught cheating.

Considering the scope and planning exhibited by the students who were caught cheating, I'm not sure one ethics class is sufficient, as it would appear that they exhibited a much larger moral and ethical lapse. The A&M program is, after all, a four-year program, so these students were not wide-eyed naifs led astray. They were at the end of their nursing education, and ethics should have been an integral part throughout the entire nursing school curriculum.

Maybe the Texas Board of Nurse Examiners should consider taking some action as well, since one can only imagine what else a person who cheats on an exam is also willing to lie or cheat about? We are, after all, talking about potential future nurses who may be caring for us some day.

GENEVIÈVE M. CLAVREUL
Pasadena, Calif.

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11 Prairie View nursing students caught cheating on test

University says they won't be allowed to graduate

By MIKE TOLSON

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Eleven Prairie View A&M University nursing students were caught cheating on a comprehensive examination last month and were not allowed to graduate with their class, the university said.

The students, who were using cell phones to text-message other students who had finished the exam, will be allowed to re-enroll this fall and will be required to take a course in ethics. They also must take the examination again. If they pass, they will be allowed to graduate in December.

"We never want to have any type of break in our university policies," said Betty Adams, dean of the nursing school. "We always take it as a matter of criticality when there is one. We have a protocol in the university and believe in due process. We handled this as we would any other matter on any other day."

Other students noticed the cheating and reported it to faculty members who were present. An ensuing university investigation brought students before a student court.

"They did go through student hearings," said

school spokesman Bryce Kennard. "These 11 'fessed up, if you will, but it was never clearly defined who precisely did what and how many were involved."

Ten of the students agreed to return in the fall. The 11th student has not responded, he said.

The examination takes four to five hours to complete. Students are allowed to take breaks and leave the room, Kennard said, however, the text-messaging was done while students were seated and taking the test.

Approximately 45 Prairie View nursing students graduated this spring.

mike.tolson@chron.com

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