Morbidity Matters:

When my parents asked me what I wanted for Christmas this year, I hardly hesitated before telling them I wanted an iPod. Pencil-thin and weighing only 1.5 ounces, the new iPod nano holds up to 1,000 songs and 25,000 photos. Its array of services also allows you to keep an address book, catch up on reading with audio books and listen to radio shows with a service called Podcast.

However, with new technology comes new methods of misuse. The Nano’s ability to store notes recently found a sinister fan at Rider. Some students ask their professors if they can listen to their iPods during exams to help them concentrate, but then use them to view class notes they have typed up prior to the exam. It also grants permission to “listen to music,” knowing full well that they are going to use their iPod to cheat. It can be used by the professors to tell their students that they time and efforts were wasted in the attempt to impart knowledge.

According to Rider’s student handbook, “The University is disgraced when its students knowingly condone cheating. Clearly, the academic dishonesty that is enabled by the use of iPods is a false representation of oneself and one’s abilities. Cheating is also disrespectful to professors. I don’t see how students can walk up to an instructor and get permission to “listen to music,” knowing full well that they are going to use their iPod to cheat. It usurps the authority of the teachers by telling them that their time and efforts were wasted in the attempt to impart knowledge.”

Students who cheat disgrace themselves. College is supposed to be about bettering oneself — about getting an education that will expand one’s mind. The people who go here are supposed to want to work hard, proving their integrity as individuals. Cheating is a surefire way to destroy those lies and turn a false face of honesty on the world.

The six months are up, those loan bills start coming and Jimmy is no longer a student. Now he’s just another citizen with a Social Security number and bills to pay, but no job.

So, here are the choices poor Jimmy faces. He could go back to school, save off those loan payments and become a full-time student again — but there’s a catch. If he needed a loan to pay for undergraduate education, it would be logical to think that Jimmy must take out another loan to afford graduate school or continuing studies courses. It’s just more to dish out later on. By the way, Jimmy lost his health insurance, so he was only covered under his parents’ plan as long as he remained a student.

On the other hand, Jimmy could get a part-time job either stock- ing shelves or cutting down trees just to keep his head above water, but how long does he stay in that place? What if no one in his field is hiring? What if he ends up taking that job full-time, just so he can have health insurance again? Jimmy may never get to where he was headed on graduation day. Oh yeah, then he has to try to find a place to live with no credit and barely any financial history to speak of. Have fun, Jimmy!

Life is a depressingly hypothetical situation, I know, and I’m sure it isn’t news to many people that a degree is not a guarantee to try to find a place to live with no credit and barely any financial history to speak of. Have fun, Jimmy!

That is full of possibilities. Improvisation is necessary. Think about things ahead of time and have contingency plans. Because, believe me, very few people have everything turn out just the way they planned. Improvisation is necessary.

Letter to the Editor:

Debt after graduation

Oh yes, a college education is difficult to finance and can leave a graduate with a heaping mound of debt after the goofy hats and tassels are put away for safekeeping. However, post-grad circumstances, for some, can be even more daunting.

Picture this: a student, let’s call him Jimmy, spends four years in college, does very well, comes out of it with a degree and a few loans to pay off. That’s fine. Then Jimmy starts looking for a job... and looking... and looking. There’s no job to be found. Jimmy lost his health insurance, since he was only covered under his parents’ plan as long as he remained a student.

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