

Editorial:**Who's to blame for payment problems?**

Everyone who is being paid on time for their jobs please take one step forward. Not so fast Rider University students. This semester it seems that a surprising number of individuals working at Rider have found out the hard way that their paychecks are not guaranteed to be available on payday.

Recently there has been a series of cases in which students and, sometimes, entire organizations have not been paid for their services weeks and months after the fact. This, of course, is an unacceptable practice. So, who is to blame? Is it the Office of Disbursements, which is in charge of pay? Is it Student Financial Services, which handles students' contracts and legal forms? Is it the supervisors, who must sign their workers' pay sheets and hand them in on time? Is it the students' fault for not turning in their pay sheets in a timely manner? We may never know because each side refuses to take any of the blame.

Student Financial Services has said that there are several reasons why a student would not be paid on time. Many students fail to fill out their contracts correctly and cannot be paid until the problems are fixed. In addition, there is often a gap between the time when workers fill out their pay sheets and when supervisors sign them. Again, these workers cannot be paid until the signature is in place.

These are legitimate reasons for a pay hold up and students should take extra precautions in order to prevent them from occurring. However, many students who said that they filled out their contracts correctly have still not been paid on time. Rachel Messler, who works for admissions, said that she received a call from Student Financial Services informing her that they could not find her I-9 form, which she had submitted over the summer. The office assured Messler that the problem would be taken care of but later called again saying that her paycheck would be held until her I-9 form was submitted.

It turned out that there was a problem with the organization of Messler's papers, but that doesn't change the fact that Student Financial Services did not inform her of the problem until several months after the fact. College students are already notoriously poor and the last thing they need is to be denied their rightfully earned paychecks because of a problem that could have been discovered and corrected very quickly. There is no excuse for this type of error. If Student Financial Services is too busy to identify small problems in a timely manner then they should hire more staffers.

There are also problems with the Office of Disbursements. Many students have not been submitting their pay sheets on time, which leads to a hold up. There would ordinarily be nothing that the Office could do to curb this problem. However, the reason there is such a problem with lateness this semester is because students sometimes do not receive their pay sheets until they are already late. So, unless students and supervisors find a way to fill out their pay sheets, go back in time and submit them on the correct day, there is sometimes no way for them to carry out their part in the process. The Office of Disbursements should take responsibility for this failure.

While several problems have since been fixed, it is still unacceptable to have student workers going unpaid for as long as they did. The whole blame for this cannot be placed entirely in one area. Students and supervisors often do hand their paperwork in late, but problems also exist within Student Financial Services and the Office of Disbursements. All parties need to admit their faults and work to fix them completely. Otherwise, Rider students may end up giving new meaning to the word penniless.

This weekly editorial expresses the majority opinion of The Rider News editorial board and is written by the Opinion Editor.

QUOTE OF THE WEEK

"We have the Bill of Rights. What we need is a Bill of Responsibilities."

— Bill Maher

**Lacey Logic:****Keep on playing, little drummer boy**

You are a few days away from Thanksgiving break. The last leaf has fallen. The air is crisp and smells of winter, though snow is still a few weeks away at best. To you, the mood seems right. You reach for your CD collection and pull out Jewel's Christmas album. Just as the music begins to play, the stereo is silenced by your roommate's disapproving finger, nixing your plan for holiday joy so soon in the season.

He or she is likely a prisoner of the common misconception that Christmas music should not be played prior to Thanksgiving. Many share this unspoken agreement that the holiday season officially begins on Thanksgiving—more specifically the moment Santa's sleigh graces the last stop of the Macy's Day Parade. While I can respect that belief, I do not practice it. Once Halloween is over, I begin craving my favorite Christmas songs and it was only this season that I decided to ignore others' rules and march to the beat of my own drummer boy.

Christmas time is what makes the rest of the year worth bearing. It is a time of year when mankind is at its best. But it does not begin at any specific moment. It is a state of mind that can last more than just one month per year. Listening to Christmas music before the "appropriate" time is nothing to be ashamed of. It is only a small attempt at making the holiday last

just a little bit longer, which, of course, can only result in more good things such as joy, happiness, smiles and giving. These are all values that we should try to promote rather than suppress.

Embracing music that revolves around these themes should never be a source of shame, regardless of whether or not there is snow outside.

Personally, I think that the whole issue can be compared to cheesecake. When you have a cheesecake, you don't eat the entire thing in one sitting. Instead, you take your time and savor every slice. With Christmas, however, people seem to attempt the opposite, making the magic last only during December.

There is no divine purpose in letting yourself be tortured until it is acceptable to get into the holiday spirit. Decorate your tree as early as you want and leave it up through February if you so desire. And next year, when others try to tell you that it isn't time for Christmas music yet, what they are really trying to say is they wish you would turn it up louder.



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