**SPRING 2011 CRIMSON COLUMNIST APPLICATION**

**INTRODUCTION**

The columnist application consists of three parts: (1) basic information (2) an outline of the columns you propose to write during the semester and (3) TWO sample columns.

One of the sample columns must be a time-sensitive piece that will be published as your first piece if chosen; the other is an “evergreen,” a piece that could be published at any time during the semester. The outline is a fleshed-out proposal of your column’s theme in no more than one double-spaced page. See the **SAMPLE APPLICATION** below.

Please copy all three parts of your application into ONE Microsoft Word document. Please then e-mail your application to **ebmartin@college.harvard.edu** with the subject “Columnist Application – LAST NAME” no later than **Saturday**, **February 5 at 11:59 p.m**.

Late submissions will NOT be accepted. All Harvard College undergraduates are encouraged to apply. Please do not hesitate to contact Eli Martin, Jake McAuley (mcauley12@college.harvard.edu), or Anita Joseph (ajoseph@fas.harvard.edu) with any questions you may have.

**BASIC INFORMATION**

**Name**:

**Class Year**:

**Concentration**:

**House**:

**Hometown**:

**Email**:

**Phone Number**:

**Are you a Crimson editor or comper? If so, which board?**

**PART I. COLUMN OUTLINE**

If selected, you will write either five or six columns during the semester. It’s important that those columns remain related to a clear theme, and this outline is a chance for you to elaborate on your column’s theme with five clear ideas for columns you might write. Of course, we understand that topics may change, but please be as specific as you can.

Please answer the following questions in no more than one double-spaced page.

1. What is your column’s theme?
2. Why are you qualified to write on this theme?
3. Outline five topics

**PART II. Sample Columns**

**I. Time-Sensitive Piece**

If selected, this will run as your first published piece.

**II. Evergreen**

An “evergreen” is a piece that could be published at any time—i.e., one without a time peg.

**SAMPLE APPLICATION**

**Name**: Crimson Q. Editor

**Class Year**: 2013

**Concentration**: Social Studies

**House**: Adams

**Hometown**: Cambridge, MA

**Email**: crimson.q.editor@college.harvard.edu

**Phone Number**: 617-576-6565

**Are you a Crimson editor or comper? If so, which board?** Yes, blog

**COLUMN OUTLINE**

1. What is your column’s theme?

My column’s theme is intellectual life Harvard. Before WWII, Harvard was a bastion of white male privilege. In the 1950s, under the leadership of President James T. Conant, the University began to usher in a new age of meritocracy. By the late 1960s, students violently stormed University Hall, leading to the resignation of President Nathan M. Pusey. After several sea changes in intellectual culture, where are we today? What are the issues and thoughts that characterize today’s Harvard experience, and how have these issues been shaped? As a demographic, Harvard students are a pretty interesting bunch. Wearing t-shirts with slogans like “Save Darfur,” how many of us will ever do anything besides wear one of those t-shirts? We clamber into “the pit” to protest that “Israel is a racist state!” and yet we fail to raise an eyebrow at the racism that has crept into the public eye right here in Cambridge, MA. Why? My column will attempt to explore the bizarre mind of the average Harvard student, if there can be said to be such a thing.

1. Why are you qualified to write on this theme?

I’m qualified to write on this theme because I’m involved with a number of activities on campus, including the IOP, PBHA, HRDC, house council, The Crimson, and the Texas Club. I’ve seen up front what these bizarre Harvard students are like.

1. Outline five topics
2. **Amy Chua (defender of the Chinese mother) is coming to Harvard Co-op**; Harvard students are mystified, enraged, but intrigued. I will use this event to explore how our community reacts to a weird brand of positive stereotyping
3. **The Darfur Sweatshirt.** Why do people wear these? Do they actually intend to do anything besides wear a sweatshirt? If so, what happens to genuinely serious causes trivialized into slogans?
4. **The Harvard Protest.** Israel as a racist state? Save Tibet? What gets student protesters motivated, and why? I’ll look at the Harvard protest in a historic context to try and understand where we are today.
5. **Harvard and TFA.** During a down economy, TFA was an incredibly popular option for Harvard graduates to pursue after commencement. Now that things are picking up, numbers show that things are changing. The question, however, remains: Do people mostly care about joining TFA because they care about educating kids, or because they wish to earn another prestigious honor Harvard offers?
6. **Primal Scream.** What’s the underlying significance of this bizarre phenomenon? How long has it been around, why do people do it, and what does it tell us about our community?

**\*\*Below are two model sample columns on an unrelated theme.**

**Sample Column- Time-sensitive piece**

WHY HARVARD HATES AMERICA

By ADAM GOLENBERG

May 1, 2008

Any Harvard student with the balls to participate in the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps (ROTC) deserves our respect. Quite frankly, ROTC doesn’t sound like a whole lot of fun.   
  
For four years, cadets and midshipmen wake up obscenely early in order to trek to MIT and get yelled at by their instructors. That’s an indignity that Harvard usually reserves for accounting students. If you want to know what visceral discomfort looks like, watch a Harvard ROTC student shuffle across campus in his military uniform. Banished by the Faculty in 1969 amid a rising tide of anti-war sentiment on Harvard’s campus, ROTC has more recently been relegated to its pariah status because of the military’s mindless discrimination against homosexuals. Forget the active duty that follows graduation—for our peers in uniform, the years of glory-free self-sacrifice start in Harvard Yard.   
  
Their one moment in the sun comes during the week of Commencement, when Harvard’s cadets and midshipmen receive their commissions and their first salutes in a touching, deeply significant ceremony in Harvard Yard. It’s a chance to celebrate new officers’ past achievements and their future service to the nation. Their recognition is richly deserved.   
  
This year, University President Drew G. Faust will attend the ROTC commissioning, but with an asterisk. Proof to the aged adage—beware geeks bearing gifts—Faust will harness the symbolism of her appearance by criticizing “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” (DADT) the federal law that bars openly gay Americans from serving in the military. While she will recognize the value of military service, Faust will also express her wish that, “every Harvard student had the opportunity to serve in the military.”   
  
Few at Harvard disagree with the sentiment. Even Harry R. Lewis ’68, former dean of the College and one of Harvard ROTC’s staunchest advocates, argued on this page last year that, “the ban on homosexuals in the military is unwise.” The dispute here is not over Faust’s message, but rather her timing. “If it’s going to be political, I think everyone would be happier having someone else speak,” one Marine midshipman told The Crimson earlier this week.   
  
But ROTC graduates’ happiness is, unfortunately, not the issue. On June 4, they will be commissioned in a military ceremony in Harvard Yard, despite the fact that the military explicitly violates Harvard’s non-discrimination code by forbidding gays and lesbians to serve.   
  
President Faust should absolutely use the occasion to express this community’s moral outrage at DADT. It would be offensive to our values for Harvard’s ROTC graduates not to begin their service in the shadow of the Pentagon’s repugnant discrimination. (These values are, incidentally, not just President Faust’s—there is no shortage of Harvard ROTC students who oppose DADT, but who are forced to keep their silence because of the military’s restrictions on their free speech.)   
  
Other Americans seem perfectly capable of respecting the military—if, perhaps, from a distance—while remaining deeply ashamed of its intolerance of homosexuals. It is incumbent on the military’s youngest officers to feel the same way, even—indeed, especially—at an event with as much military and personal significance as the commissioning ceremony.   
  
It is hardly extreme to claim that all Americans who value liberty and equality—not just those in uniform—should be deeply embarrassed by the profound systemic discrimination that DADT embodies. What kind of liberal democracy, after all, can passively abide what Faust rightly described last week as “a badge of degradation or second-class citizenship” for gay Americans?   
  
The point, however, is not to hold cadets and midshipmen responsible for their political overlords’ intolerance. The decision to ban gays from the military was not theirs to make. But if this country is to overcome the well-worn prejudices that make DADT possible politically, then moral objections to the status quo must be involved wherever the military and civil society meet—in Harvard Yard, for example. And the generation of military officers now being educated at Harvard and elsewhere should rightly have their service tinted by the discrimination of DADT, at their commissioning and elsewhere.   
  
Some will object, of course, that mine is a deeply political, even partisan view. Paul E. Mawn ’63, who chairs the pressure group Advocates for Harvard ROTC, declared this week that, “it’s not appropriate to talk politics at a military service.” Joseph M. Kristol ’09, a Marine ROTC midshipman, despaired that Faust’s comments would “radicalize” the ceremony.   
  
Opposing discrimination is, however, neither political nor radical. Dismissing Faust’s—and Harvard’s—objections to anti-gay discrimination as “political” cloaks the issue in the mundane. ROTC graduates certainly earn their right to celebrate their commissioning with their peers and their families, but they do not deserve to ignore blithely the military’s formal discrimination in the course of their revelry. On June 4, President Faust owes it to this institution and its values to at least offer a gentle reminder of the discrimination that the military has come to represent.   
  
As they sally forth to serve their country with pride, Harvard’s ROTC graduates should do so with firm misgivings about the discrimination built into the organization of which they will have become part. Only by doing so can they aspire to overcome the generational divide that stands between the status quo and real equality of citizenship for gay Americans.

**Sample Column - Evergreen**

ROTC? ROFL!

By BRIAN J. BOLDUC

February 19, 2010

Harvard University treats the Reserve Officers’ Training Corps like a final club: It refuses to recognize the program. Yet the [military](http://www.nytimes.com/2010/02/03/us/politics/03military.html) is preparing to lift its ban on homosexuals, the ostensible reason for ROTC’s exile. Is President Drew Faust practicing her salute? “There are not currently any plans to modify the arrangement,” John Longbrake, senior director of communications for the University, wrote in an e-mail. “We will of course follow any federal policy changes with interest.”

So will I. Even if Congress repeals “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,” ROTC will struggle to gain recognition.

Why the skepticism? Because excuses for the University’s policy have multiplied over time. Before 1993, students used ROTC’s [exclusion](http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1984/2/13/anti-rotc-pbabt-the-tail-end-of/) of disabled people, President Ronald Reagan’s budgetary [cuts](http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1983/4/11/rotc-at-harvard-three-views-pbibn/) to civilian aid, and the military’s [discouragement](http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1989/4/25/students-plan-rotc-protests-pprotesting-the/) of “openness and critical inquiry” as grounds to repel ROTC. The Harvard Crimson argued that the program would sully the University’s academic integrity. In 1989, the [editorial](http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1989/4/29/never-again-pbtbwenty-years-ago-in/) board insisted, “ROTC should not return ever, under any circumstances.” Should Congress abolish DADT, more excuses will crop up.

Not necessarily among students. Last spring, the Harvard Republican Club held an online [poll](http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2009/5/8/poll-results-favor-rotc-recognition-according/) in which 62 percent of the 1,700 undergraduates who responded supported recognition of ROTC.

Even the activists are laissez-faire. For example, the Student Labor Action Movement, which [protested](http://www.thecrimson.com/article/2006/10/1/military-presence-sparks-protest-student-protestors/) military recruitment on campus four years ago, has no plans to oppose ROTC. “The tentative consensus at the moment among our membership is that we will not protest the return of ROTC to Harvard’s campus, if President Obama ends ‘Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell,’” Remeike J.B. Forbes ’11, a member of SLAM, wrote in an e-mail.

No, excuses are more likely to pop up among professors. Some of them “don’t view military training as academic,” Paul E. Mawn ’63, chairman of Advocates for ROTC, told me. “Some of the training I got when I was a midshipman was as tough and as challenging as any Harvard course I took. Marine engineering? You don’t get stuff like that anywhere else,” said Mawn, a retired Navy captain.

The faculty raised this objection in the 1970s: Warfare is a trade and thus irrelevant to liberal education. Stephen J. Chapman ’76, who as a student tried to reboot ROTC, told me, “Someone at the time asked me, ‘Would you allow someone to teach a course on welding?’ I said, ‘No but I don’t really think that’s the same thing.’ It struck me that you wanted military officers to get a liberal education but that wasn’t the common sentiment.”

Nor is it today. The best argument for ROTC is not that it complements liberal education but that it promotes public service. “Harvard is supposedly about public service,” Mawn said. “Never do they mention anything about the military in terms of public service.” Yes, President Faust attends the commissioning ceremony. But the University disrespects cadets by formally ignoring their service—particularly when it praises all other forms of service. Instead, the University awkwardly acknowledges ROTC’s existence but holds its applause, acting as if the program were “the crazy uncle in the attic,” said Mawn.

And for no good reason. To recognize ROTC would not be to violate the University’s policy against discrimination. Unlike final clubs, whose students restrict membership, ROTC excludes homosexuals because Congress says so. To recognize ROTC would merely be to honor it—no assembly required. “If a lightning bolt hit Drew Faust and the Corporation tomorrow and they decided to recognize ROTC, there’s not enough critical mass to form separate battalions…The Pentagon is not champing at the bit to have the administration get ROTC back on campus like it used to be,” Mawn said.

Despite my skepticism, the University seems headed toward recognition. The professors whom Mawn believes oppose ROTC are “remnants of what I would call the Woodstock generation. These people supported the Vietcong. They view themselves as veterans of the anti-war movement.” Although Mawn respects their right to express their opinion, he adds, “The light at the end of the tunnel is that those people will filter out.”

Until then, proponents of ROTC should stress Harvard’s dedication to public service to bolster their argument. They also should prepare for a long haul. Remember that the Crimson [reported](http://www.thecrimson.com/article/1981/4/8/rotc-making-a-comeback-piapril-10/) “some ROTC officials are confidently predicting that Harvard will have its own detachment again within six years.”

In 1981.