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## GW sells popular class program

by Jason Steinhardt  
Managing Editor

GW and Cornell University began competing in the online class software market four years ago. GW's Prometheus program racked up 65 university customers, while Cornell's Blackboard captured 2,200 clients and spun into its own corporation.

The two companies are now one, after GW sold Prometheus for an undisclosed amount Jan. 8.

Blackboard will now operate Prometheus, whose clients include Vanderbilt, Columbia and New York universities, and take away some of the flexibility universities enjoyed. The two programs, developed in 1997, differ in that Prometheus' source code is public, so universities can make changes to the program to suit their needs. Blackboard users are presented a standard program, without the option for changes.

Blackboard is the largest course management software company, boasting more than 2,200 clients in more than 140 countries. The company employs 450 people.

"We were at GW and planning to spin Prometheus out of GW," said Bo Davis, managing director of Prometheus. "We were looking for an organization where it would be very safe; that's really why we chose Blackboard."

But the buyout was not

See BLACKBOARD, p. 7



Chris Zarconi/Hatchet staff photographer

Afghan interim leader Hamid Karzai thanks Afghan-Americans for "courage" in first U.S. visit.

## Afghan head visits U.S. Karzai addresses packed gymnasium at GU

by Patrick W. Higgins  
Hatchet Staff Writer

Newly appointed Afghan leader Hamid Karzai called upon Afghan-Americans to return to their native land and help reconstruct its economy Sunday night. He spoke to a gymnasium full of hundreds of enthusiastic Afghan-Americans at Georgetown University.

Speaking his native language, Karzai expressed his desire for Afghanistan to become a member of the global market in the hour-long speech. Karzai is scheduled to meet with President George W. Bush Monday, as part of his first trip to the United States as the leader of Afghanistan.

"Our effort as a country is to become donors, not merely

takers," Karzai said. "We have to show the world that we can deliver also."

Karzai, who was appointed chairman of the Interim Administration of Afghanistan late last year, praised citizens of his nation for their "loyalty and courage," using personal anecdotes to illustrate his view of the

See KARZAI, p. 8

## GW to admit smaller class

by Trevor Martin  
News Assistant

With applications up 15 percent from last year and 150 more students already admitted from among early decision I applicants, GW officials said they are still working toward an "eclectic" class of 2,250.

University President Stephen Joel Trachtenberg said he expects GW to lower its admission rate from 48.5 percent last year.

"My expectation is that it will be harder to get into GW this year than it was last year," he said. Trachtenberg would not specify how much he expected admission rate to drop.

As of Jan. 24, GW received about 16,000 applications, up from 14,000 at this time last year, Director of Admissions Kathryn Napper said.

The regular decision deadline was Jan. 15, but Napper said she expects about 1,000 more applications in the coming weeks if the current rate continues.

"It is hard to say how many applications will be in," she said. "There is no formula for it."

Napper said the University has admitted 540 students in the first round of early decision selection compared with 400 last year.

Napper said she expects to have about 1,500 spaces left for

See EARLY p. 10



Matt Ricciardi/Hatchet staff photographer

**IT'S NOT OVER 'TIL IT'S OVER**  
Lindsay Davidson gets back in form Saturday. The women sunk Richmond with a final-minute spurt. See story p. 13.

## Turn it off! Cell phones take over

by Elizabeth Crawford  
Hatchet Reporter

As students in professor Ivy Kennelly's Sociology of Sex and Gender discussed the latest episode of "Friends," the familiar musical notes of a cell phone rang out from the bottom of a student's book bag. The room suddenly filled with quick glances and disclaimers of "It's not mine."

As the owner rummaged through her bag looking for the phone, Kennelly took the opportunity to address her low tolerance for cell phones that disrupt her class.

"I'm just going to tell you, and this doesn't count," Kennelly said, "but every time I hear a cell phone and I find out whose it is, it is one point off your final grade."

Outside of class Kennelly admitted that she sometimes forgets to turn off her cell phone, too, "but they are annoying and they disrupt class," she said.

While Kennelly's policy on cell phones is one of the stricter ones on campus, the issue of cell phones is quickly growing from a nuisance that disrupts class to a full-blown problem that many professors and students are being forced

to deal with daily.

"I do not have a policy against cell phones in my syllabus because I consider it basic considerate behavior," statistics professor Efstathia Bura explained. She also admitted that phones are going off more frequently in her classes and that cell phone use among students has increased dramatically in the last year and a half.

Cell phone use has become so pervasive on campus that posters listing classroom courtesies remind students to first turn off cell phones.

Gelman Library officials said students are allowed to use cell phones in the lobby areas.

"We allow cell phones in the library, but just not in the regular reading rooms," said Natasha Capellas, a library assistant. "As long as they don't disturb others, you can use them in the hallways or lobby."

Capellas said the library receives a small number of noise complaints.

"Basically it's just common sense. If people are being loud, then (students) will come down and tell us," she said.

Sophomore Angela Venturiello, who frequently studies in the library, said she generally does not have a problem with

people who use their cell phones in the library as long as they are in the lobby or hallway.

"I do, however, have a problem when you have the phone on any ring mode which easily distracts me and others," she said. She also said that even when cell phone users were in the hallways she could sometimes still hear them. "It's a little distracting, but I learn to block it out."

First-year graduate student Meighan O'Reardon said she also is annoyed with cell phone users that are disrespectful but pointed out that the whole world is dealing with the same issues.

"It happens in business all the time," she said, noting that she works for an accounting firm. "We will be in a meeting and someone's cell phone will go off, and we all get distracted."

The trend has even got to the highest stages of government, causing President George W. Bush to pause a press conference last April when he was interrupted by reporters' cell phones going off multiple times.

Cornell University sophomore Carlos Rossy said cell phones are a mainstay on

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