



ADRIAN McCANDLESS | The Wichitan

TERRORISM IN THE CLASSROOM

Professor gives students a glimpse into the mindset of extremists

CHRISTIAN MCPHATE
OPINIONS EDITOR

Before Sept. 11, 2001 only a few people were studying terrorism.

Dr. Nathan Moran was one of them. He was immersing himself in

the topic at Sam Houston University, gaining insight into the mind of a terrorist.

Today, Moran occupies a front row seat in the war on terror, first as an MSU professor who teaches a course on terrorism and also as a consultant on terrorism for the U.S. State Department.

The boyish-looking terrorism expert, who also chairs the Criminal Justice Department, said his fascination with terrorism began about two years before the attack on the World Trade Center.

Back then, "it was a Middle Eastern issue not a U.S. issue," Moran explained.

Since that time, Moran has done training for the government in the areas of counter-terrorism, intelligence, and counter-intelligence. He worked with the Department of Homeland Security, advising them on counter-terrorism procedures, issues related to terrorism inves-

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Distance ed makes you feel at home

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The distance education program at MSU continues to grow in popularity.

Pam Morgan, director of distance education, gave a brief overview of the status of the program to The Wichitan.

Approximately 25 percent of the student population is involved in distance education. This number includes students enrolled in Internet courses, telecourses, off-campus instruction (non-concurrent) and interactive television.

For Fall 2006, 1,318 students are taking at least one Internet course.

The number of students using WebCT in some form, either full-Internet courses or supplement to a traditional on-campus course, is 3,578.

This number has increased by 448 students since Fall 2005, representing nearly 60 percent of the student body.

Morgan said that all of the colleges are involved, and distance education courses follow the university calendar.

She said most full-time Internet students take a bigger course load than full-time students on campus.

"The success rate of students in distance education courses roughly mirrors that of students at the university," Morgan said.

To address the questions of the quality of these courses, she said that 90 percent of the courses are taught by full-time faculty.

Those courses that aren't taught by full-time faculty do undergo a rigorous check.

Morgan said it is because of the rigor of the distance education courses that they are not offered for concurrent enrollment students.

She encourages more professors to participate in distance education and has offered to train any professor interested in using distance learning, such as WebCT.

'Watch' helps troubled students cope

RANDALL MOBLEY
FOR THE WICHITAN

The pressures of college life can sometimes push a student to his or her breaking point. Stress about school, work and life in general can overwhelm many minds. Some students, though, entertain thoughts of suicide as an escape. Many universities, including MSU, have a policy in place to deal with troubled students.

A "Suicide Watch" is a guiding procedure in which colleges take on the task of helping the students work through their problems.

"Attempted suicide watch is a more flexible policy than others here at MSU," said Keith Lamb, associate vice president for student affairs.

According to Lamb, he and Dail Neely, dean of students, find out about suicidal students many different ways.

"Sometimes the student will confide in the faculty. On other occasions, friends of the student will show concern and report the behavior to the faculty," Lamb said.

Five incidents of attempted sui-

cide have already been reported this year, according to Lamb. If the suicidal student is involved in any type of counseling, information on the student is limited because of confidentiality laws.

Regardless of how the college finds out the information, the same steps are taken every time a suicide attempt is reported.

Lamb said that the first step is calling 9-1-1. As soon as paramedics are notified, the local hospital psychiatric staff is contacted. The housing staff at MSU is advised about the incident as well as the counseling center. University police are contacted for protection of the student. The family of the student is also notified. The office of public information is put in the loop as well and a committee meeting is held within 24 hours to determine follow-up care at MSU.

According to Lamb, counseling is determined case by case. There are no set number of visits or appointments that have to be made, but counseling is recommended in every case.

Professors at MSU are usually not contacted, Lamb said. In the case they are, they are asked to watch for

changes in the student's behavior or continual patterns of behavior in the student.

Dr. Pam Midgett, director of the MSU counseling center, said that many things can contribute to a person wanting to take his or her own life.

"When a person attempts to kill themselves, they are usually very desperate," Midgett said.

Bad news about a death, a breakup with a boyfriend or girlfriend, or even an upcoming test could all be factors that push people over the edge, according to Midgett.

"People who are depressed don't usually think about solving the problem. The problem overwhelms them," Midgett said.

Other signs that a person might be suicidal are that they may give away special possessions, isolate themselves from family and friends or say things like, "I just need to sleep for a long time," according to Midgett.

Midgett said the counseling center isn't a discipline office, but rather a place where one can go for help with whatever one is struggling with. It's also a place to find support and encouragement.

"The number one issue that we care about is the student's health. The secondary issue is the surrounding community at MSU," Lamb said.

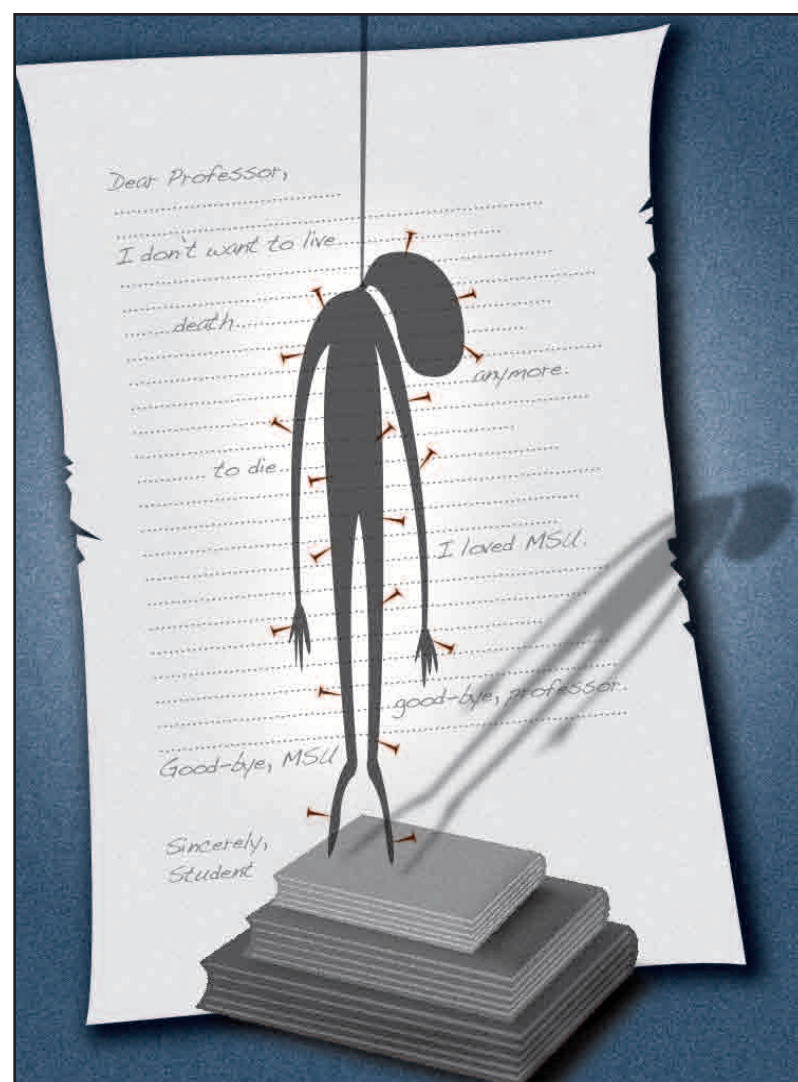
Lamb acknowledged that MSU reserves the right to remove a student from housing if they pose a threat to other students or staff or have a repeated pattern of suicidal behavior.

However, Lamb also stated that MSU does not remove the student from school.

"Never, as long as I've been here, have we removed a student from school because they were suicidal."

According to Lamb, if a student leaves the university because of a suicidal incident, MSU does not follow up on the student.

Colleges face legal liability in dealing with suicidal students, Lamb said. Colleges can potentially get sued no matter what they do, according to Lamb. Many colleges have been charged with neglect of a student if the family feels that the college didn't take proper steps to help. Some colleges have also been sued because of expelling the suicidal student from school.



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Four rock bands are still kicking after being out of the main spotlight for a few years.

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The new Will Ferrell film has some unlikeable characters with a good story.

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Mustangs not floating in the stars

The Oklahoma City University Stars defeat the Mustangs 75-68.

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