

August 27, 2003

Letters to the Editor
The New York Times
229 West 43rd Street
New York, NY 10036

Dear Editor:

Your August 24, 2003, front page article entitled “As State Colleges Cut Classes, Students Struggle to Finish” brings needed attention to a real and growing problem for many students (and their parents) expecting to graduate in 2004 or 2005. There will be fewer college courses, sections and seats available to students. This problem may be even greater in the South, where almost half of the population growth for the U.S. has occurred in the past 10 years and college enrollments continue to outpace national increases.

Technology offers the nation a means to address these cuts. The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB), an interstate compact of 16 states, is utilizing technology to do just this in the South. The SREB Electronic Campus (www.electroniccampus.org) is a “marketplace” of more than 8,000 online courses from colleges and universities that can make “virtual seats” available to help replace those lost. Not all courses are available online, but a growing number are, with the quality of these courses backed by both the institution and SREB’s Principles of Good Practice.

For students in this academic emergency, SREB’s Electronic Campus may offer an immediate solution to finding the courses they need to graduate. The Electronic Campus is another tool that we are utilizing to ensure that our students in the South are prepared to compete in today’s global economy.

Very truly yours,

RONNIE MUSGROVE
Chairman, SREB

RM:klr
cc: Mark Musick, SREB