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Student attitude . . .

"The idea used to be you're not an Aggie if you've got good grades"

By KATHY HENDERSON
Dr. R.C. Potts sat comfortably in his chair while contemplating the major changes in student attitude over the years.

"The idea used to be you're not an Aggie if you've got good grades," he said in all seriousness. He said, "Anyone with good grades was called an 'egghead.'" Dr. Potts has been with Texas A&M University since 1936 and is now the Associate Dean of the College of Agriculture here.

Students study more now — they respect academic achievement much more now than they did 25 years ago, he said.

"Students accept the fact as a group that academic pursuits are pretty high on the list," Potts said.

The University is getting better quality students than ever before, he said. The overall high school average

grade for Seniors will attend this campus next fall Semester is 89, Potts explained. It takes a lot of students with grades over 90 to produce that kind of an average, he added proudly.

As the university grows larger will the atmosphere become more and more impersonal? Dr. Potts says no. With an increase in students, more professors will be hired, he said. It will be up to both students and teachers to adjust to new conditions, he feels.

Dr. Potts also said he feels the student-teacher relationship is top priority. This is the reason he designed the Agriculture 101 class, he explained. It gives the Agriculture students a chance to ask questions and get to know someone in their department besides the advisor, he said.

"When we had 200 incoming freshmen in the program I could call them in and get acquainted. Now we have 700. Ag. 101 is my personal effort to relate to all the students," he said.

Dr. Potts also shared his personal opinion on why Texas A&M is so appealing to today's students and their parents.

He said that the 1960's when cam-

puses were being disrupted all over the country, Texas A&M stood its ground. The fact that A&M hadn't lost a class was widely publicized, he said. Potts said he believed this factor made parents begin to look longingly at this school as a good place to send their sons.

When non-compulsory corps was made effective, more sons were will-

ing to attend this university, Potts added.

Then girls were admitted to the university, he said. Only a few were admitted at first, though, he said.

"President Rudder was a smart man. He didn't open it up all at once, just a little at a time. This gave the former students a chance to get used to it," Potts explained.

However, Potts said some former students most likely had a deep in their hearts: "It's a daughter down there."

Sports is also a drawing Texas A&M, he added.

"Sports does more to bring students together than anything else," he said.

Student records private

name, address, phone, age, birthplace, degrees, activities, major, dates attended and previous school attended.

Grade reports — probably the hottest issue — and directory information affect the most Aggies at any one time.

Students may come by the registrar's office within a few days after registration to fill out a form preventing release of the directory facts. Lacey's office then notifies other campus departments which are also bound by the pact.

However, his staff talks to those wishing to do so to make sure they are fully informed of the implications. Many are concerned about possible release of names and addresses to commercial mailing firms, but few realize that in the case of a family emergency or a prospective employer, information on the student's whereabouts could not be released.

Since January, 1975, only 45 students have opted to have part or all directory data kept private, although 86,503 students have had the opportunity following each registration period.

Official notice is printed in the student newspaper, The Battalion, during each registration time.

Confidential information has remained virtually unchanged by the law's passage, except for transcripts.

Conversely from directory data, no confidential material may be re-

leased without specific written permission from the student. The law was in force at A&M before, but it has created a pact with transcripts.

Grade reports are now sent to student at the local address. Parents may only receive the report if the student is under 18, if the student gives written permission, the student is carried by the as a federal income tax extension.

In the last case, no parents notify A&M, grades go to them.

"In the area of transcripts, the law has been a disaster for student and former student Lacey.

No longer can transcripts be processed from telephone or four- or five-day delay now because written and signed authorization from the student is required before transcripts can be sent.

Even when a friend of a student or perhaps of a former student elsewhere, comes with a request, the friend must bear authority from the student in plus written authority signature may pick up the transcript. The friend must also carry identification.

Student records are not only confined to the registrar's office.

Once a year, The Battalion, the complete official university on student records. In notice, students are reminded to have records with the registrar's office, graduate academic counseling center, president for student services, university police or controller of accounts.

He or she may also have files student financial aid, health center, housing office. Corps headquarters, athletic director, payroll department, placement office or student advisor — plus department heads and advisors — student's academic areas.

Aggies may challenge some records directly related to them other records are inaccessible among them professors' grades and observation notes, university police records while in custody, employment records of a worker not a student, parental financial records and medical files maintained by A&M-employed professionals.

Some students prefer to have right to see records, notes particularly where letters of recommendation are involved. Students may fill out a written waiver to be authorized to see the files of the student. Included are A&M officials with a "legitimate educational interest" determined by Lacey, chiefs of other schools the student wishes to attend, certain federal-state educational agencies and others.

Records may be subpoenaed, the law says the student or former student must be notified by the subpoenaing party before the records can be turned over to the subpoenaing party, Lacey.

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