

Local

Approval and implementation takes more than a year

Adding undergraduate courses is an involved process

By RUTH M. DALY
Battalion Reporter

Having an undergraduate course approved and added to a curriculum at Texas A&M University takes about one and one-half years, said Sue Matula, assistant to the dean of admissions and records.

To get a course added, faculty in the department that wishes to add the course must fill out a form — with 22 copies and a course syllabus, or outline, attached to each copy — requesting the new course. The form includes the proposed course name, course number, descriptive title and justification for the course.

Currently the faculty member(s) who want the course added fill out the form and submit it to Matula, who approves the request and sends it back to the department for approval.

This process will be changed so the department will approve the course form before it is submitted to her, Matula said.

After the department approves the course, the college must approve it. In some colleges the dean approves the course, while in others, a board approves the course.

For graduate courses, the course must be approved by a council made of faculty representatives from each undergraduate college before the form is submitted to Matula.

After the course is approved by Matula, the form goes to the curriculum committee which is made of five ex officio members, (including Matula, who is the secretary), representatives from each college and the library, and two student representatives. The committee meets once a month.

The curriculum committee reviews courses at least twice. If there are any questions about the course, the form is sent back to the department. If the committee approves the course the first time it is submitted, the form is approved again at the next meeting, then sent to the Academic Programs Council.

This council, made of all the deans, meets once a week and reviews the proposed courses.

Upon approval by the Academic Programs Council, the form goes to the Academic Council, which meets two or three times per semester.

The Academic Council is made of all deans, department heads and elected faculty representatives.

If the Academic Council approves the course, it is put into the next university catalog and sent to the Coordinating Board, Texas College and University System, in Austin.

The Coordinating Board bases approval on a set of codes and the size of existing inventory at the University. The board is made of governor appointees, who make degree plans, and a hired staff, who review proposed courses.

Course inventory is the list of courses the board has approved for the school year. There are 4,178 "teachable" courses for the 1980-81 school year at Texas A&M.

Matula said deletions as well as additions are submitted to the board to keep the inventory balanced. She said faculty are encouraged to drop courses that have not been taught recently. For the 1980-81 school year, 85 undergraduate courses were approved and nine were deleted. Forty-six courses were added for the 1981-82 academic year and 59 were deleted.

Matula said courses are not taught before a new school year even if they are approved before it begins, since the University has to wait until the new year to get funding for the course. New courses are usually introduced after students have expressed an interest in a subject to faculty members, Matula

said. She said most new courses are introduced as 489 courses — special topics classes — when many students show interest.

Classes may also be added if a department is expecting a new faculty member whose specialty will provide a new course, Matula said.

Numbers for new courses are for departments to decide, Matula said. She said there is no set numbering system at Texas A&M, but there are a few guidelines to follow.

The first digit for courses — 1, 2, 3, 4, 6 or 9 — designates the level of the course. The digits one through four denote levels for undergraduate classes: one designates freshmen level classes; two represents sophomore classes; three, junior level; and four, senior level classes.

Six represents graduate level courses and nine denotes classes for veterinary and medical school.

When a new course is added, Matula said the number assigned to the course should not be a number that has been used within the last ten years. Then students won't be enrolled at the University when the same number is used for two classes.

Architects' buildings lack safety ideas, prof says

By DENISE RICHTER
Battalion Reporter

Dr. Wes Harper, professor of architecture, said Tuesday that today's architects are designing buildings with little or no attention given to safety.

Speaking at a seminar on life-safety regulations, sponsored by the Texas A&M College of Architecture and Environmental Design, Harper said technological advances have made high-rise buildings possible and common.

However, fire-fighting in this type of building is beyond the capabilities of the average fire department, he said.

a course in life-safety designs, Dr. W.C. Roeseler, head of urban planning, said the seminar was planned to give students the chance to discuss with knowledgeable people the life-safety regulations that they will be working with as young architects.

Other speakers at the seminar included Dr. Pat Maher, associate professor of building construction; Dr. Charles Hix, dean of the College of Architecture and Environ-

mental Design; and Charles King, regional manager of the fire marshal's office located in Huntsville.

Approximately 125 people attended the seminar held Tuesday afternoon in Rudder Tower.

Harper also said many buildings today are designed with open interiors that make it impossible to contain smoke damage to the area involved.

In an interview prior to the seminar, Dr. Charles Estes, head of the Department of Architecture said life-safety regulations work at cross-purposes with the desire for security in buildings. To guard against theft and illegal entry, alternate building entrances and fire exits are locked. However, that runs counter to the idea that in the case of fire or general disaster, all building entrances should be open to speed evacuation, he said.

Regarding the state of fire and life-safety regulations and proposed legislation, Wayne Dye, assistant state fire marshal, said Texas has no state-wide building codes. Texas is a home-rule state, he said, with each city adopting its own codes. Dye was scheduled to attend the seminar but was unable to because of legislative commitments.

However, while each city may adopt its own code, it has no jurisdiction over rural areas, Dye said. Violations in these areas can only be dealt with by the state fire marshal's office, he said.

Three bills concerning life-safety regulations are up before the 67th Legislature: one calling for sprinkler systems and smoke detectors in new or restructured buildings over 75 feet high; reduced insurance premiums for installation of burglar alarms, smoke alarms, sprinkler systems or other protective devices; and smoke alarm and fire detection systems to be installed in multiple-residence buildings that do not have an exit to the outdoors in each separate unit.

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