

A&M mentors advise students needing help

by Brigid Brockman
Battalion Reporter

Do you have problems that nobody seems interested in? The professors and staff workers who are involved in the Texas A&M Mentors program are interested and willing to listen.

The mentors, who are simply "wise and faithful counselors," counsel students, direct them to programs that can help with specific problems and inform them of services offered at the University.

Assistant professor Dr. Shirley Black, who took over the program in 1981, said the program is more than a counseling service. Many students won't talk to a mentor because the students think their problems are too trivial, but she said that students should always feel welcome.



"They can come to us with all their little gripes," she said.

The program can be a way for students to communicate with their professors, Black said. The number of professors involved in the program has doubled since it first began. There are more than 250 faculty members who double as mentors.

She said there are many professors doing research work who don't get to talk to students as often as they would like. These professors are asking her to direct stu-

dents to their offices.

The program has received positive response from the students. Most students want to know their professors, she said, and want to be more than an identification number.

"Students like to have that small college feeling even though the University is growing so fast," she said.

A program is also being developed for secretaries to help inform students where they can go to get help.

Students soon will be able to pick up brochures which list the mentors for each college at the University. The brochures will be in dormitories and the Off-Campus Housing Center.

To help let students know who the mentors are, most of the mentors have "ATMentors" signs hanging on their office doors, Black said.

Lobbying tactics debated

by Kimberly Hix
Battalion Reporter

Students from the University of Texas at Arlington say student government will be effective only if universities join together when lobbying in Austin.

The Texas A&M Legislative Study Group disagrees. UTA is represented in Austin by the Texas Student Association, which also represents many other Texas universities.

Legislative Study Group director Mike Lawshe said students need more personal representation.

"TSA can't be effective," he said. "It works for too many universities to be truly representative of the students. Students need more than a voice in Austin, they need to be informed on state-wide issues that will affect them."

The Legislative Study Group researches current issues, then a recommendation is made to the Student Senate based on this research.

"The research is two-fold," Lawshe said. "The students' best interest and how issues will affect them is our first consider-

ation. Then we consider what the students want."

Group members attend organizational meetings and talk with students discussing current

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issues and possible effects of these issues, he said.

Fred Billings, associate director, describes the research as coming in the back door.

"It is gathering opinions, finding out how the students feel and then following through with what they want," he said. "This is the only way anyone is truly represented."

Lawshe said this is the job of the Student Senate.

"Technically the (Student)

Senate should find out what the students want," he said. "However, very little of this takes place. As a group we must work with the (Student) Senate."

The Texas Congress has commended the Legislative Study Group on its representation of Texas A&M and has cited it as an example for other universities to follow.

UTA Student Government has chosen not to follow this example.

John Gross, UTA Student Government treasurer, said that by joining TSA and interacting with other universities, common problems can be solved.

"There are certain general problems that all universities have," he said. "TSA is a way to solve them. As students we have very little power. Collectively, universities can have an impact."

"TSA is a vehicle for making life easier for college students. If it doesn't work, sell it and buy another," he said.

The UTA Student Government has tried lobbying without TSA.

TSA has spent money for lobbying that UTA's Student Government felt was not important, Gross said. Many of the issues were not vital to all the students in Texas, and the organization lost its influence.

Mattox's intervening in rate case opposed

United Press International

AUSTIN — There would be a serious conflict of interest if Attorney General Jim Mattox is asked to intervene in a telephone company rate case before the Public Utility Commission, a lawyer argued Friday.

Sara Cristol, of the PUC's general counsel, joined lawyers from General Telephone Co. of Southwest in opposing Mattox's request that he be allowed to represent residential customers in the company's \$85.5 million rate increase case.

General Telephone lawyer and Wueste Jr. noted that Mattox's office is already repre-

senting the PUC in a prior General Telephone case that is on appeal.

"Our position is that it simply takes away the due process we have," he said.

PUC Examiner Angela Williams said she will decide early next week whether to grant Mattox status as an intervenor in the rate hearings scheduled to begin April 18.

Amarillo attorney Eric Wolfram, who represented Mattox, said the attorney general has authority under the Texas Constitution to be made a party to PUC proceedings as an advocate of the public's interest.

But Wueste said the constitution provides that the attorney general must represent public interests, claiming the representation of individual consumers would be private interests.

Wolfram countered that the number of residential customers is large enough that they take on a public interest aspect.

Even though the PUC's general counsel represents all classes of customers, Wolfram said residential consumers have no "specific advocate" during rate hearings.

"He (Mattox) has no right to tell us what residential customers' rights are," said Cristol.

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