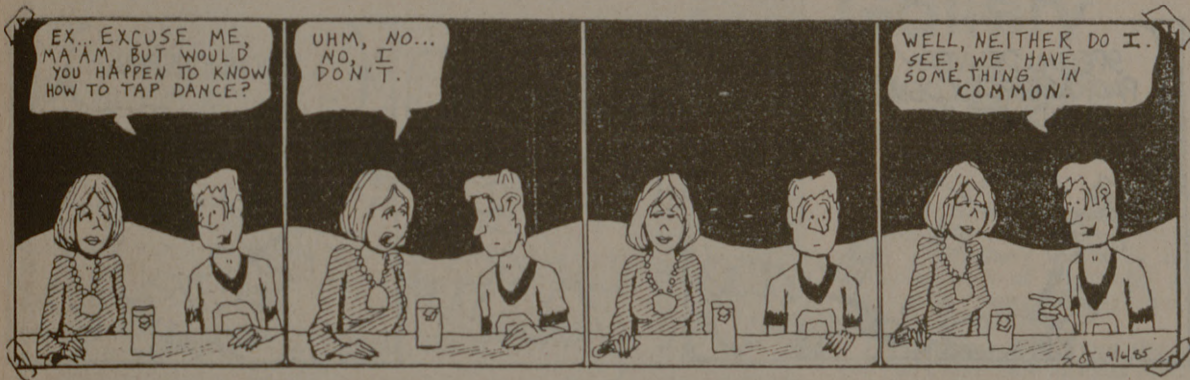


Warped



by Scott McCullar **Designated driver program started in B-CS**

By MEG CADIGAN
Staff Writer

Half of all people killed in drunk driving accidents are the drunk drivers themselves, says Dr. Kirk Brown, president of the local Mothers Against Drunk Driving chapter. And to combat this problem MADD and the National Safety Council are promoting the designated driver program. Brown says the designated driver program involves attending parties in groups and having the driver of the group abstain from drinking alcohol. MADD is providing lapel stickers for the designated driver to let others know where to find a safe ride home, he says.

"By letting friends drive drunk you are contributing to the possibility they could kill themselves," Brown says.

MADD has contacted local beer distributors, liquor stores, sororities and fraternities to promote the designated driver program, he says.

Brown says that this program could help protect various groups from legal action taken by families of those killed while driving drunk.

"Increasingly, victims' families have been successful in suing the organizers of parties," Brown says. He says another 25 percent of those killed are passengers of drunk drivers.

He says MADD is now developing a plan for helping drunk patrons of local nightclubs get home safely.

Any groups or individuals interested in getting designated driver lapel stickers or additional information on the program should contact MADD at 690-0512.

A&M center aids professors to improve teaching skills

By MARYBETH ROHSNER
Staff Writer

The guy who stands in front of your 8 a.m. class has a couple of Ph.D.s, an IQ of 200 and a vocabulary that would make William F. Buckley blush with shame. So, you're getting the best possible education for your money, right?

Well... maybe. Several studies indicate that even Nobel Prize-winning professors can have difficulty in communicating their ideas to students. With that in mind, the Texas A&M Center for Teaching Excellence was set up formally in 1983. The center works with professors and teaching assistants in sharpening teaching skills.

The center's director, Dr. Glenn Ross Johnson, says, "Until recently, nobody seemed to be too concerned with professors' ability to teach, and most professors have had no training in education. There's been very little effort, time or assistance in helping them interact with students."

The center offers a variety of free

services to professors and teaching assistants who wish to improve their teaching techniques.

The center frequently holds inquiry seminars on weekday afternoons for interested faculty members. On a larger scale, Johnson says about 40 professors and 100 teaching assistants attend the "Enhancing College Teaching" workshops conducted by the center at the beginning of each semester. In addition, the center also conducts an annual symposium during the spring. The symposium features guest speakers who provide helpful hints.

The center also works on a one-on-one basis with instructors who wish to improve their teaching.

Dr. Libby Gardner, assistant director of the Center, uses technology to analyze an instructor's teaching. Gardner says she frequently videotapes lectures to analyze the amount of time the instructor spends interacting with students.

"Students learn much better through active interaction with the teacher," Gardner says. "And some profs spend as much as 98 percent

of class time with no interaction with students."

Gardner, who works primarily with teaching assistants, also uses less complex methods of helping instructors.

She frequently attends lectures at the request of instructors to analyze lecturing methods. And, if the instructor wishes, she uses student evaluation forms to recommend changes in teaching techniques.

The most common problem, Gardner says, occurs in the area of course organization.

"The teacher ought to let the students know the course objectives on the syllabus," Gardner says. "Then they should make up the tests from those objectives."

Every service the center offers is completely confidential. The advice given to the instructors is not made available to anyone except the instructor who requested the analysis.

"Nobody wants to have their teaching analyzed if they think someone is going to run back to the department head and report," Gardner says.

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