



Rain, Rain, Go Away

Although thunderstorms have clouded the skies, Texas A&M students manage to keep smiles on their faces. These students wait in

front of the Harrington Classroom Building until this particular storm lightens up.

Photo by MIKE SANCHEZ

Computer system to change at A&M

By SCOTT SUTHERLAND
Reporter

Every Texas A&M student and faculty member should have access to a computer by the year 2000, said Dr. John Dinkel, new associate provost for Computing and Information Systems.

Dinkel spoke at a meeting of the A&M Microcomputer Users Group Thursday and revealed his plans for the University's computer system of the future.

"It's a different computer world at A&M than it was when I first came here four years ago," Dinkel said, "and I hope that four years from now we can say we have the type of computer system a major university like A&M should have."

Dinkel foresees a computer system that is accessible to everyone.

The current system is only accessible by modems that allow computer owners to telephone into the system. Dinkel says this is unacceptable.

Ideally, Dinkel says he would like to see a computer in every dorm room and on every faculty desk.

He realizes this idea may be a little unrealistic, but he promised that Computing and Information would

continue its Micro Sales Center, the Memorial Student Center, who offers bargain prices to students.

If Dinkel's system became a reality, students could work on computer lab assignments at home or their dorms rather than spending long hours in the computer lab on campus.

Faculty members would be able to call up large amounts of data unobtainable by small computers.

Dinkel said he is confident about the future of computers on campus because he has great faith in the University's commitment to the program.

He gives the University credit for the growth and expansion of computer awareness.

Dinkel assured the group that is confident of the University's commitment to a modern telecommunications system by the early 1990s.

"The University deserves credit for where we are today," Dinkel said, "and with that in mind we should look forward to the possibilities."

Dinkel said along with the University's commitment he will need cooperation from all departments to make the system of real value to the University.

A&M offering speech communication degree

By CYNTHIA GAY
Staff Writer

From the sixth floor windows of the Blocker Building, the faculty members of the new Department of Speech Communication and Theater Arts can survey the class-bound audience below.

And ever since this department raised its curtains Sept. 1, students attracted by speech and theatrical studies have trooped to the Blocker penthouse to gain a broader perspective of life at Texas A&M.

Nineteen faculty members are now responsible for 130 students majoring in speech communication and 33 theater arts majors. Last fall the speech communication degree was inaugurated, while the theater specialty has been at A&M since 1977.

Department Head Kurt Ritter, said, "Texas A&M was the only major or minor school in Texas without a degree in speech communication." "We were a unit within the En-

"Texas A&M was the only major or minor school in Texas without a degree in speech communication."
— Department Head Kurt Ritter

glish department being nurtured and developed," said Ritter, who came to A&M three years ago. "Getting the degree was simply rounding out the liberal arts curricula. The creation of the department is really a reflection of administrative reality."

Dr. Roger Schultz, director of theater arts, added, "It's another indication that Texas A&M is emerging as a university in the true sense of the word."

Expecting to draw about 75 speech communication majors after the first year, Ritter said the sudden swelling of the ranks is partly because of transfer students.

"The level of growth has been quite astonishing," he said. Four years from now, the department

should have between 250 and 300 majors, Ritter predicted, and he hopes to propose a graduate curriculum within five years.

Both Schultz and Ritter are convinced the department's graduates will have not only communication skills for sale in the job market but also flexible tools that adapt to a variety of occupations.

Addressing his introduction to a theater arts class Wednesday, Schultz told his students, "You need to know how to think and how to respond," and the study of the theater will "make you a better person so you can make the world a better place to live."

Liberal arts are designed to teach students how to learn, Ritter said,

adding that students are in a better position to grasp new approaches and new techniques.

"We don't want to give students a false sense of confidence, but we have considerable evidence the liberal arts students have excellent track records," Ritter said.

He cited an ongoing 20-year study by AT&T stating that liberal arts majors are initially hired for lower salaries. But over the longer working term at AT&T, liberal arts majors own a higher perch on the corporate ladder. A recent survey of 50 companies by the Association of American Colleges reports that 97 percent rated communication skills as a "very important" quality for all job applicants.

And why are many qualified applicants rejected by employers? "Inability to communicate" or "Poor communication skills" was the answer from 65 percent of the hiring officers interviewed for the 1980 annual Endicott Report of Northwestern University, which surveyed 170

businesses and industrial concerns.

For these reasons, Ritter said one-half of A&M undergraduates take some speech course. Also, 100 percent of students majoring in business or education have a speech class or naming their curriculum, along with one-fourth of all engineers.

The variety of jobs available to speech communication majors ranges from marketing, management, and personnel to teaching, public relations and journalism, Ritter said, so the choice is completely up to the individual student.

When prospective theater students enter Schultz's office, he hands them a sheet of paper that begins: "You want to major in theater!! Well, it might be okay to 'play' for a while, but what are you going to do in the 'real world?'"

Schultz then lists 32 ways to earn a living, such as becoming an actor, producer, choreographer, lighting technician, stuntman and teacher.

Skunk tested positive for rabies in CS

A skunk found in the Southwood Valley area of College Station on Aug. 23 has tested positive for rabies, Brazos Area Shelter Director Kathy Ricker said Thursday.

Although it appears there is no human exposure to the skunk, Ricker said four dogs are under observation in quarantine.

Rabies is an infectious disease of mammals that is transmitted through saliva. Symptoms of the virus, which travels through the spinal cord to the brain, include fever, uncontrollable excitement and muscle spasms in the throat.

The incubation period for the disease ranges from 10 days to two years or more. Humans usually contract rabies from the bite of a rabid dog.

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— Spuds MacKenzie, the original party animal.

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