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Seminars teach about process for financial aid

By Mary-Lynne Rice
Staff Writer

The Student Financial Aid Department is offering four general-information seminars on the financial aid process to prepare faculty and staff, advisers, deans and department heads who deal with students needing or receiving financial aid.

Representatives from each section of the financial aid department — Information and Counseling; Processing, which includes grants and student files; Scholarships, and Employment and Loans — will explain its regulations and procedures at the seminars, which will be on Thursday, Tuesday, April 6 and April 13. Taft Benson, director of financial aid, will give a general overview of department policy.

"We want to explain what the (financial aid) office does, how things are handled, how to apply for aid, how it's determined who receives aid," information and counseling administrator Dawn Derr said. "A lot of people are not aware that we're here. A student may be having financial difficulties and be unaware of his options and possibilities."

Many faculty and staff members also are unfamiliar with the services offered by the Financial Aid Office, Derr said.

The seminars are designed to teach those attending to give better direction to their students. Last year, more than 100 faculty and staff members attended the session, she said.

Appealing University decisions to revoke aid because of grade or credit hour deficiencies is an especially misunderstood procedure, Derr said.

"If a student wants to appeal the decision, we request a letter from the dean, a department head or an adviser," she said. "Some people have been concerned about that, and we want to alleviate any hesitation they may have about providing information."

"We just need the letter to say 'We think this student will do all right' from someone who has a better knowledge of the student's academic side than we do. Advisers are sometimes a little afraid that they'll be held responsible if the student flunks out the next semester — but they're not."

Because of confusion or misunderstanding of financial aid regulations, Derr said, some students who receive financial aid and work on campus have been told that they are no longer eligible to hold their jobs.

"That reflects badly on us," she said. "We're trying to explain a little better how everything works. Professors are learning and saying, 'I didn't understand that that's how it works.'"

Faculty and staff interested in attending one of the free seminars, held from 3 p.m. to 4:30 p.m. in 225 Pavilion, should call Derr at 845-3981 at least two days before the session begins.

Amnesty program causes confusion

DALLAS (AP) — A group of immigration advocates said a six-month extension proposed in a congressional compromise is not enough for the amnesty program, which critics say has been beset by confusion and fear.

"There still is tremendous confusion in the community" about the amnesty law's provisions, Vanna Slaughter of Catholic Charities said Monday.

Slaughter said thousands of eligible immigrants who didn't apply earlier because of fear or lack of money or information have stepped forward in recent weeks.

"We're seeing a lot of confused people who are just getting the message that they are eligible," she said.

The year-long amnesty program being administered by the Immigration and Naturalization Service ends May 4.

A bill introduced last week by Rep. Romano Mazzoli, D-Ky., would extend the amnesty deadline an additional six months, a compromise between those who favor a year's extension and those who oppose any extension.

Immigration advocates criticized the INS for reducing staff at several of its legalization offices and stepping up enforcement efforts, which they said could frighten away potential applicants.

"In this mass confusion, we want to make sure that everybody gets a fair shot," said Marcos Ronquillo, chairman of the Texas State Bar's immigration-law committee.

He said immigration advocates also favor a relaxation in INS regulations over the deportation of family members ineligible for amnesty.

Jury indicts man on charge of murder in deputy shooting

HOUSTON (AP) — A grand jury indicted a 23-year-old man on a capital murder charge in the shooting death last week of a Fort Bend County Sheriff's deputy.

Francisco Cardenas, a Mexican national, was indicted Monday in the slaying of 33-year-old Eugene James "Gene" Heimann.

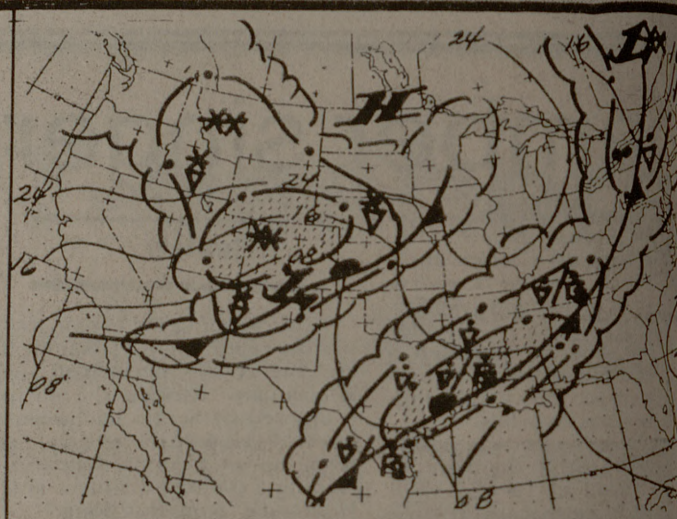
Heimann, a five-year veteran of the Fort Bend County Sheriff's Department, was shot and killed March 21 after stopping on Farm-to-Market Road 1462 to question two hitchhikers about burglaries.

Frank Follis, first assistant district attorney, said Cardenas also was indicted on a charge of burglary of a habitation and two aggravated robbery charges.

Cardenas' brother, Juan Jose Cardenas, 18, was indicted Monday on two charges of aggravated robbery and one charge of burglary of a habitation, Follis said. Elizabeth Flores Martinez, 20, also was indicted on a related burglary of a habitation charge, he said.

The trio is suspected of committing burglaries in residential areas.

Weather Watch



Sunset Today: 6:42p.m. Sunrise Thursday: 6:14 a.m.

Map Discussion: The cold front which passed Bryan-College Station yesterday at 11 a.m. will be stationary across Southeast Texas, with over running of warm moist air aloft to provide overcast skies, cool temperatures and intermittent drizzle of rain. The intense upper level low pressure system over the Central Rockies seems to have taken up semi-permanent residence and will generate another significant snow and severe weather event Thursday. Snow in the Rockies and thunderstorms from Texas to Ohio.

Forecast:
Today: Cloudy and mild with intermittent light rain or drizzle. Winds northeast at seven to 12 mph.
Tonight: Overcast with drizzle. Low 59. East wind three to eight mph.
Thursday: Mostly cloudy, mild, with intermittent showers and thunder showers, gusty southerly winds, 12 to 25 mph. High 73.
Weather Fact: Think of the atmosphere as an ocean of air which is continually motion, and continually changing, thus, forecasts must be updated according to the NOAA weather radio, available on a frequency of 162.55 mhz. It is your source of up-to-date local weather information, including observations, radio reports, severe weather advisories, and local forecasts. The local NOAA weather radio is operated by the weather service office, Waco, Texas.

Prepared by: Charles Staff Meteorologist
A&M Department of Meteorology

What's Up

Wednesday

- AGGIE HOSTESSES:** will have an informational meeting for new hostesses 6 p.m. in 225 MSC. Applications for new hostesses are available through 4 p.m. on the ninth floor of Rudder Tower.
- GRADUATE STUDIES OPPORTUNITIES:** Dr. K.A. Arnold will speak at 6 p.m. in 113 Biological Sciences East.
- AFRICAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION/NIGERIAN STUDENT ASSOCIATION/STUDENTS AGAINST APARTHEID:** will have a discussion about the "opinion" (published in *The Battalion* March 22) at 7 p.m. in 225 MSC.
- AGGIE TOASTERS:** will meet at 7 p.m. in 104 Zachry.
- ADULT CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS:** will have a support group for adult children (step study) at 7 p.m. in 145 MSC.
- UNITED CAMPUS MINISTRIES:** will have an Aggie supper at 6 p.m. in A&M Presbyterian Church.
- OUTDOOR RECREATION CLUB:** will meet at 7 p.m. in 510 Rudder to discuss upcoming trips.
- STUDENT GOVERNMENT:** Polling places for student body elections are at Sterling C. Evans Library from 8 a.m. - 9 p.m., Kleberg Animal and Food Science Center from 8 a.m. - 6 p.m., the MSC from 8 a.m. - 6 p.m., and Sbsa Dining from 8 a.m. - 6 p.m.
- RESIDENCE HALL ASSOCIATION:** will have a general meeting at 8:30 p.m. in 601 Rudder.
- STUDENTS AGAINST APARTHEID:** will have an organizational meeting 8:30 p.m. in 402 Rudder.
- EUROPE CLUB:** will meet at 10 p.m. at the Flying Tomato.
- CLASS OF '89 BOOT DANCE:** will meet at 7 p.m. in the MSC flag room to discuss plans for the dance.
- OFF CAMPUS AGGIES:** will have a general meeting to discuss the goal program at 7 p.m. in 103 Zachry.
- EL PASO HOMETOWN CLUB:** will meet at 8:30 p.m. in 510 Rudder.
- GAY STUDENT SERVICES:** will meet at 8:30 p.m. in 604 Rudder.

Thursday

- SAUDI STUDENT ASSOCIATION:** will present "Islamic: An American's Perspective" at 7 p.m. in 701 Rudder.
- ALPHA EPSILON DELTA:** will have a guest speaker at 7 p.m. in 302 Rudder.
- SOCIETY OF ATHEISTS, AGNOSTICS AND FREETHINKERS:** will have an open discussion on the principles of humanism at 7 p.m. in 502 Rudder.
- WRITING OUTREACH MINI-SESSION:** will present "Eliminating Wordiness" 6:30 p.m. in 131 Blocker.
- ADULT CHILDREN OF ALCOHOLICS:** will have a support group meeting 7 p.m. in 145 MSC.
- CAED GALLERY:** will present traditional folklore music of "Los Cuatro Capitanes" at 7:30 p.m. in 105 Langford.
- SOUTH LOUISIANA HOMETOWN CLUB:** will have an important meeting 7 p.m. in 510 Rudder.
- A&M CYCLING TEAM:** will meet at 6:45 p.m. in 229 Rudder.

Items for What's Up should be submitted to The Battalion, 216 Reed Mall, no later than three business days before the desired run date. We only print the name and phone number of the contact if you ask us to do so. What's Up is a Battalion service that lists non-profit events and activities. Submissions are on a first-come, first-served basis. There is no guarantee an entry will run. If you have questions, call the newsroom at 845-3315.

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