

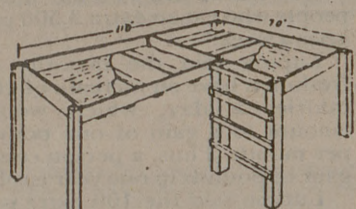
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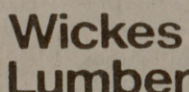
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Phone registration slowly overcomes initial 'headaches'

By Craig Sutherland Reporter

Almost two years after implementation, the telephone registration system can be labeled a success, Texas A&M University registrar Don Carter said.

Carter said the University should recoup its initial \$250,000 cost of the system within the next two years.

The cost of the system, which includes hardware and software used to interface the Touch Tone system with the school's mainframe computer, was incurred in the spring of 1985.

The recovery of the cost is a result of savings incurred by eliminating the temporary help required to work the terminals during the old registration process.

Carter said little money has been spent on maintenance costs since the system went into effect in the fall of 1986.

"We had the initial problems anyone has in implementing a major innovation," he said.

Although the mechanical problems of the system have been limited, Carter said, the registrar's office has had its share of headaches.

Most of the problems have dealt with the logistics involved in a telephone registration system for 39,000 students, he said.

Carter said the vocom unit, the hardware that interacts with the student caller, can handle only 32 calls at once.

Initially, the University tried reducing the number of students who could call each day by staggering the registration process by classification.

"The problem was all 8,000 seniors tried to call on the first day," Carter said.

Therefore, in Spring 1987 the registrar's office switched to the current system in which students at the University register alphabetically by classification.

Since the change, Carter said he has received positive feedback from students and faculty.

Rony Kahan, a senior economics major from College Station, said he is pleased with the time savings of the telephone system.

"I hated the lines we used to have to wait in," he said.

The primary objection to the telephone registration system initially

had come from counselors who were concerned students would not see proper advisement in filling out their class schedules.

However, Carter said he has not heard similar complaints in recent semesters.

Nevertheless, the University schedules now include a disclaimer stating that "academic counseling is available."

Mary Broussard, assistant to the dean of the College of Liberal Arts

The primary objection to the telephone registration system initially had come from counselors who were concerned students would not seek proper advisement in filling out their class schedules.

she also is pleased with the system, but she still recommends students see a counselor before registering.

Carter said telephone registration systems are becoming popular and the University has had numerous visits from representatives of other colleges across the country.

In fact, Carter said he has had inquiries from reporters at the Daily Texan, the University of Texas student newspaper.

"They said they were calling because all of their Aggie friends living in Austin (between semesters) were getting to stay home while they had to go wait in long lines to register," he said.

Albert Meerzo, the registrar at UT, said the Austin campus has no immediate plans to install a Touch Tone system, but it is a future possibility.

"We've been investigating different types of systems," he said. "And we have noted the success A&M has had with their phone registration."

Carter said the University has no plans to upgrade the system at this time. However, the registrar's office is looking for ways to better utilize the present system.

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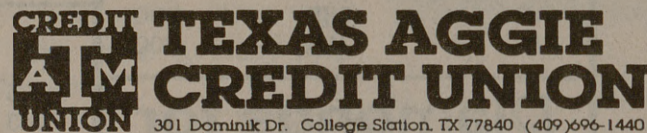
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Shuttle buses to alter routes throughout fall

By Donna Falcone Reporter

Bus operations and shuttle bus routes are expected to periodically change throughout the fall semester to accommodate problems brought on by the increase of construction on and around campus.

"It's going to be difficult to get around no matter what mode of transportation used during the fall," Doug Williams, manager of bus operations, said.

Beginning Aug. 29, students with shuttle bus passes will have the option of using satellite parking facilities, Williams said. Two areas have been designated for satellite parking, one at J.C. Penney in the Post Oak Mall and one at K-mart on Texas and Summit Street.

Students also will encounter a number of alterations in existing routes. The Cotton Bowl Route, which circles the entire campus, has replaced the Agronomy Route, and the Academic East Route has been revised to service students traveling from the Veterinary Medicine Complex and the Ocean Drilling Program to campus.

He said the use of the full-size express bus on campus will probably have to be done away with because of the difficulty in maneuvering around construction.

"However, when the dust settles and the streets are back to normal, A&M will have an extensive on-campus bus service," Williams said.

Bus Operations is doing a good job, even with construction obstacles, Williams said. The A&M shuttle bus system will operate with 35 full-size off-campus buses and 15 on-campus buses in the fall. Three additional full-size buses have been ordered and are expected to arrive during the fall, Williams said.

"It may not sound like a lot, but it makes a difference," Williams said.

In addition, 200 bus drivers will be employed to shuttle students on the nine routes off campus and five routes on campus.

All buses received an extensive interior cleaning over the summer, Williams said.

"Keeping the shuttle buses clean not only encourages students to ride them, but keeps vandalism at a minimum," he said.

Maintenance problems also have

been kept at a minimum with the majority of engines having been rebuilt, Williams said.

The price of a shuttle bus pass for both students and faculty is \$4. During the first week of school, bus passes will be issued at Rudolph Tower.

However, if a student has already paid the fee and had his student I.D. made, he will receive his I.D. with a bus pass affixed to it.

"This means 5,500 students won't have to stand in line," Williams said.

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