

Filled classes limit options for students

By Susan Stubing Staff Writer

Everyone knows the poor girl who woke up early to register for next semester's classes...

nated person or persons who is authorized to raise limits," Ritchey said.

Individual departments have different criteria for granting raise limits, Ritchey said, and different numbers of people who have authorized signatures.

The psychology department, for example, gives each professor an authorized signature and the authority to raise his own class size.

In the undergraduate business school, however, approval must be granted in each department, and then the dean must sign the form.

Curtis Schatte, associate professor of English, said he tries to reserve several spaces in each English class to avoid raise-limit problems.

"I reserve a couple of slots and open them up to graduating seniors first," he said.

The Department of Speech Communication and Theater Arts, however, does not accept raise limits so easily.

To be added to a full theater or speech class, the student must be a graduating senior, Giovanna Turincio, a student worker in the department, said.

The student must prove he is graduating by presenting a letter from his or her department of major study to the speech and theater department.

Students who have an approved raise limits card must take the card to the registration center in Room 120 of the Pavilion to have the class added to their schedules.

Ritchey said it is difficult to determine from semester to semester which other classes will be in highest demand.

"We had one BANA (business analysis) class fill up the first day of senior registration this year," he said.

After the first day of registration, 2,743 students were registered, Ritchey said, 565 of whom had enrolled early.

Athletes, University shuttle bus drivers, student workers and students in the Texas Rehabilitation program are among those who may register early.

Classes for the spring semester are filling up as expected, Ritchey said. As of 8 a.m. Thursday, 19,015 students had preregistered, and 229 of the 6,711 classes were full.

If a class or section that a student needs to take is closed, Ritchey said, the student must go to the department the course is listed under and ask to have the class size limit raised.

"Each department has a design-

Teaching assistant: Students see English class as apprenticeship

By Steven Merritt Reporter

Most students see freshman English as an apprenticeship, said Rick Evans, a graduate teaching assistant in the Department of English.

Evans was the featured speaker Thursday in a colloquium sponsored by the College of Liberal Arts.

The colloquium, "What Our Students Understand About Freshman English and Why: An Ethnography of Three Freshman Classes," revealed the results of a study Evans conducted this summer on three freshman English classes.

Evans said that he compiled the results after attending 50 percent of class meetings, conducting student interviews and distributing questionnaires to the classes.

"My first question involved how students understand the concept of freshman English," Evans said.

"The second was to ask why they understand it that way. I wanted to find out if their understanding was an aspect of material culture or part of a lived experience."

Evans said that the students sur-

veyed varied in ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds, and they all generally agreed that taking English 103 or its equivalent should be an academic requirement.

"The students believed that a connection existed between success in college and success in life," Evans said.

Students considered the class a performance course, Evans said. He said they saw required reading and writing as performative acts, learning only how to perform instead of learning about the experience itself.

Evans said that he asked students to provide a synonym for the word teacher and received such responses as "lecturer," "instructor" and even "maestro."

"The maestro response is my favorite," Evans said.

Evans added that the responses

created different levels in how the students regarded the teacher synonym. They ranged from "supporter" or "guide" to the more intimate "friend" or "guardian."

Evans said that the primary teacher metaphor received from the responses was that of a giver of information. The most popular student metaphor was to that of an apprentice, or someone who learns some skill by taking lessons from a master. He added that in an apprentice situation, the student has faith in knowing that the instructor knows how to write, and this faith gives the student direction.

Evans also explored students' attitudes on reading, dividing responses into three areas: story reading, school reading and "popcorn" or "trash" reading.

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New agreement seeks to halt dumping of plastic garbage into Gulf of Mexico

GALVESTON (AP) — A new international agreement that takes effect Dec. 31 should halt the routine dumping of plastic garbage into the Gulf of Mexico...

"Marine debris is perhaps the most visible pollution in the Gulf of Mexico," Kathy O'Hara, director of the marine debris database for the Center for Environmental Education, said.

A provision in an international agreement known as MARPOL, an acronym for "Maritime Pollution," goes into effect at the end of the year, making it illegal for any plastic items to be discharged into the Gulf of Mexico within 200 miles of shore.

The provision, called "Annex 5," also bars discharge of any floating debris within 25 miles of the Gulf of Mexico coast and paper and glass within 12 miles.

Violators can be assessed civil penalties of up to \$25,000 per day per incident.

Criminal penalties of up to \$50,000 and five years in prison could be sought for blatant violators, Coast Guard Lt. Cmdr. Joel Whitehead said at a symposium on environmental quality in the gulf.

"Annex 5 is something very sweeping," he said. "It does nothing less than to change 4,000 years of maritime tradition.

Mariners have always dumped their trash at sea. To change it suddenly on the December 31 when this goes into effect is going to be something difficult to do.

"We do not expect the whole world to change, but we do expect ports and ships to show they are taking steps to show they are going to change."

The agreement, ratified by the Senate a year ago, also applies to oil rigs in the gulf, pleasure boats and to U.S.-flagged ships.

Nancy Stehle, deputy director for the environment for the U.S. Navy, said the Navy was caught by surprise by the ban on plastics but is embarking on a program to separate plastics from other trash on all of its vessels.

"The Navy is serious about its commitment to the environment," she said.

William Bettenberg, associate director for offshore minerals management in the U.S. Minerals Management Service, said he has been encouraged by a significant reduction of trash traced to more than 3,700 oil platforms operating in the Gulf of Mexico.

"The ultimate goal is to control wastes before they even reach the beaches," he said.

"The fact of the matter is there will never be enough policemen on the beat to catch someone throwing a foam cup overboard. The key to cleaning up debris in the Gulf of Mexico is public education."

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