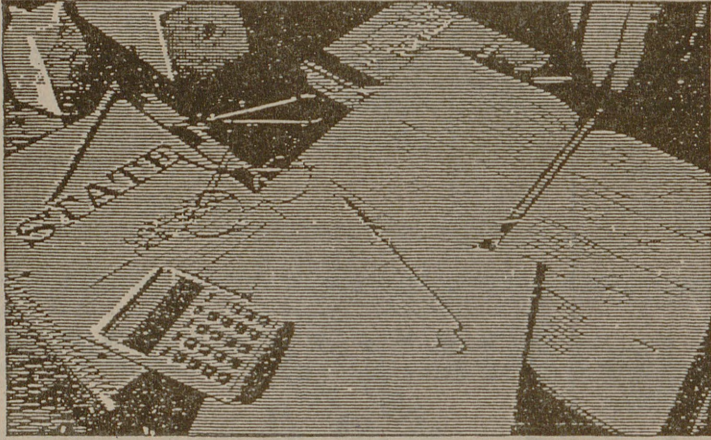


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International students try to gain acceptance, fit in

Understanding others makes adjustment easier

By Richard Tijerina
STAFF WRITER

International students may find it difficult to fit in at Texas A&M, but learning to sympathize with other's feelings can make that initial adjustment easier.

Mael Wassarweh, a mechanical engineering graduate student from Jordan, said gaining acceptance is the most difficult part of being an international student because they are different from everyone else.

"You're always different," Wassarweh said. "Everybody is looking at you a little bit differently. You don't always fit the normal - what everyone is used to. I've been here for a while, so I got over that adjustment a long time ago."

To make adjustment to life here easier, Wassarweh said the most important thing for an international student to understand is how other people think and feel.

"(Understanding) is the whole idea," he said. "You have to understand how the other people feel and just compromise between what you feel and what they feel. If you get somebody who's never dealt with an international before, then you're going to have problems dealing with them."

Wassarweh said exposure to different cultures makes it easier for people to adjust to international students.

Tina Wadkins, the adviser to the International Student Services, said international students often have trouble making friends with Americans. She said the ISS sponsors programs to help the students get acquainted with each other.

"I think it's difficult to become a really close friend to an American,"

Wadkins said. "I think they feel a little outside or isolated. We have all kinds of programs going on (to help them). They get to know each other very well, no matter what countries they're from."

Wadkins said the largest number of international students major in engineering. They hear of the University from several sources, including reports on how colleges rate and word of mouth.

"Someone goes back home and says they got a really good education here, and that they like being an Aggie and all those good things," she

"I think it's difficult to become a really close friend to an American."

Tina Wadkins, International Student Services adviser

said. "I think a lot of it is word of mouth. I don't know for sure, but most of the ones who come in say they heard about A&M from another student."

Wadkins said A&M has a reputation around the world as a research school that can provide a good education. She said one student thought A&M was the only university in the United States.

"I met one student from Malaysia and he said A&M was the only school he'd heard about in the U.S.," she said. "That's where he applied and that's where he came. He was so shocked to find out there were universities all over the place."

Wadkins said most of the international students at A&M come from the Pacific Rim countries - Korea, Taiwan and China.

"They're all coming here because of engineering and because that's the part of the world that's making money," she said. "The South American students used to be our largest group, but right now their economy is really bad. I can tell what the economy of the world is by who's coming in."

"I think they become real Aggies. They're in on the traditions, and there are Aggie clubs all over the world that celebrate Muster."

Wadkins said it is a requirement for international students to be able to speak English before enrolling at A&M. She said they must pass the Test of English as a Foreign Language (TOEFL) before gaining admittance to the University.

"We have a TOEFL that they take in their home countries," Wadkins said. "They have to make a certain score on that to come here. They have to pass that, and when they come here we give them another English test. If they don't pass that we make them take some English courses (while they're enrolled)."

Wassarweh said he chose A&M because the school offered a good education and was not as expensive as other schools.

"It's a good place to get an education," he said. "It's excellent here. My father came here a long time ago, and I'd also read about it. At the time when I came over here it was a good deal. It was a good education and not very expensive compared to other schools up north."

Wadkins said even though the University is beginning to adopt a policy of wanting more international students, the ISS has no recruitment program. She said recruiting begins in the future.

"We don't recruit at all," Wadkins said. "All the presidents I've worked under have had the idea that we don't recruit - it was strictly the word of mouth, but now it's changing. The policy hasn't been announced that it has changed, but the feelings have changed toward wanting more international students. We're trying to make this a real graduate and research university."

Ahmet Kuyumcu, a graduate student in engineering from Turkey, said he chose to transfer from the University of Texas at A&M because of the superior engineering program here.

"I was at the University of Texas studying English," he said. "My sponsor wanted me to find a good school in engineering, and I knew that A&M is a very good school in engineering."

Khalid Anser Haque, a graduate student in aerospace engineering, said he didn't apply to A&M until he had arrived in the United States because of a processing charge on international applications.

"I had heard of A&M before, but I didn't apply because they were charging \$50 on each application," Haque said. "I couldn't pay that in India because we have some problems with dollar conversions. I didn't apply until I got to the United States."

Summer positions open for student conferences

By Juliette Rizzo
STAFF WRITER

Students can apply now for summer conference positions and residence hall staff positions.

Positions for conference coordinator and conference assistant for the summer's New Student Orientation Conferences and the Continuing Education Conferences are vacant.

Students applying for new student conference positions will check new students and their families into the residence halls for their two-day visit.

A coordinator and an assistant will be chosen to help coordinate programming and housing for the continuing education conferences, which include various cheerleading workshops and a fireman's convention. Coordinators are generally

graduate students and assistants are generally undergraduates, Lesley Stoup, special events housing coordinator, said.

An orientation meeting for those interested in any of the positions will be from 6-7 tonight in 501 Rudder. Applications are available in any of the four area housing offices and will be available at the meeting.

Positions also are open for summer school resident directors and resident advisers. New applicants who do not have a residence hall staff position may apply.

Graduate students with resident adviser experience and student leadership experience are preferred for the position of resident director. Resident advisers are required to have at least one semester of residence hall living experience.

Applications for these positions are available in any of the area offices.

Business college requirements include common set of courses

By Holly Beeson
REPORTER

The acceptance requirements of the College of Business Administration are just as stringent as those of the College of Engineering - each requires completion of a set of core courses with a 2.5 minimum grade-point ratio in these courses and overall.

Dr. R. Malcolm Richards, associate dean of business administration, said the intent of the business requirements is to give all students the opportunity to be evaluated on a common set of courses.

"If we didn't have the core courses, a significant number of students would be taking what we refer to as soft courses, to build up their GPRs," he said.

Pre-business requirements have changed in recent years with high enrollment prompting some of the changes.

Prior to 1983, no differentiation between lower- and upper-division business courses existed. A student initially was admitted into the College of Business through a degree-granting program.

In 1983, a set of eight core courses and a 2.25 minimum GPR were required for acceptance into the college.

More stringent requirements were imposed in 1985, partly because of high enrollment. The minimum GPR was raised to a 2.5 to be eligible to enroll in upper-division courses.

When the College of Business imposed these requirements, students were prompted to be better students, Richards said.

"I think a large number of students were capable of doing better work," he said. "And when this added pressure was put on, I think they measured up."

College of Business is a major supplier of students to general studies and liberal arts for those who transfer out. Of the 345 students who left the business college last fall, 37 percent went to liberal arts, 33 percent to general studies and 14 percent to agriculture.

Of the 139 students who transferred into the College of Business, 36 percent came from engineering, 35 percent from general studies, 17 percent from liberal arts and 7 percent from agriculture.

Gillespie doesn't think anyone has to transfer out of the business program because they can't live up to the requirements.

"There isn't a single weed-out course at this institution," he said. "I'm led to believe most students can handle

"There isn't a single weed-out course at this institution. I'm led to believe most students can handle any degree program here. It's a matter of how hard they want to work."

— Dr. Sam Gillespie, assistant undergraduate dean

any degree program here. It's a matter of how hard they want to work."
A large number of students switch to liberal arts, particularly economics, Gillespie said. The liberal arts program accommodates a wide variety of interests.

Dr. Paul Parrish, associate dean of liberal arts, reasons students switch from business to liberal arts include job-related goals, preference of one discipline over another and academic performance.

"There's a pretty good balance between the number of students switching because they can't maintain a 2.5 GPR, and those who discover they have other interests," he said.

Other changes in the business college include accepting transferred credit from other schools.
Effective this fall, if a student is admitted under the 1989-90 catalog, the College of Business will accept credit hours, not GPR, for upper division candidates.

General studies and engineering are major suppliers