

The Battalion

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Liberal Arts to require cultural diversity classes

By JASON COX

The Battalion

After two years of debate, the Texas A&M University Liberal Arts Council passed a resolution Tuesday requiring incoming liberal arts students to complete coursework in classes emphasizing cultural diversity.

The new policy, which was adopted by a 13-2 vote, includes six hours of study in international and domestic areas, three of which must be concerned with race, ethnicity or gender issues in the United States.

Council members voted to change the title of the requirement from "Cultural Diversity" to "United States and International Culture," because the council felt

'cultural diversity' was a politically loaded term.

Texas A&M student body president Brian Walker commended the name change, saying it would change students' perception of what the class was about. Walker said perception is "a strong part of the battle," but suggested postponing the vote until fall to give students a chance to further consider the issue.

Dr. Morgan Reynolds, professor of economics, said he opposes the resolution because "it threatens what a university is about, namely the free exchange of ideas."

"Left-wing faculty members could see this as an ideological gain that will increase their numbers," he said.

Reynolds said many people want such

a course implemented university-wide. "I think it debases the academic environment of free inquiry. They're trying to make it into a re-education camp rather than a college of liberal arts and ultimately dictate what to think instead of how to think."

Dr. Daniel Fallon, dean of the College of Liberal Arts, in a prepared statement said, "The College of Liberal Arts opposes the idea of a single course taught from a predetermined, ideological perspective, the kind of approach to complex issues that some have labeled 'political correctness.' Rather, the college affirms the value of allowing students to choose from a wide variety of existing courses on U. S. and international cultures."

Several minority faculty members af-

firmed the existence of tension on A&M's campus. It was mentioned that although the decision may cause further tension, it would be necessary to maintain future racial and ethnic relations and to ensure that the problem "couldn't just be swept under the rug."

Dr. Richard Stadelmann, associate professor of philosophy and humanities, criticized the potential course list, questioning why gender issues were included when they don't directly deal with a separate culture. He said the resolution was creating a "requirement in political correctness" and referred to the course list as a study in victimology.

The requirement wouldn't unite the University, but would do the opposite, Stadelmann said, resulting in hostility,

loss of contributions and damage to A&M's conservative reputation and legislative standing. A&M would no longer be known as an "island of stability," he said.

"The desire to create harmony is admirable, but the results will be the opposite," he said.

Dr. Richard Street, professor of speech communications and theater arts, replied that the possibility of the requirement causing student unrest is "paranoid thinking."

Though a decision has not been made on a starting date for the new policy, resolutions of this nature are rarely subject to further administrative review before implementation, according to Texas A&M's office of University Relations.

Court reverses death penalty for 2 convicts

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

HUNTSVILLE - Two death row inmates, elated to learn Wednesday their murder convictions had been reversed by the Texas Court of Criminal Appeals, said their new trials would confirm their innocence.

The court Wednesday threw out the conviction of Francisco Cardenas, a Mexican national, for killing a Fort Bend County sheriff's deputy who had stopped to question him as he hitchhiked.

Jackie Barron Wilson, originally from Lubbock, also won a reversal of his conviction for abducting and killing a 5-year-old girl from an Arlington apartment.

In a third reversal, the court rejected the conviction of a Dallas man, Gayland Bradford, for a 1988 murder during a robbery in Dallas.

"This is good news," Cardenas, 27, an illegal immigrant from Mexico, said. "It's a miracle. I thank God."

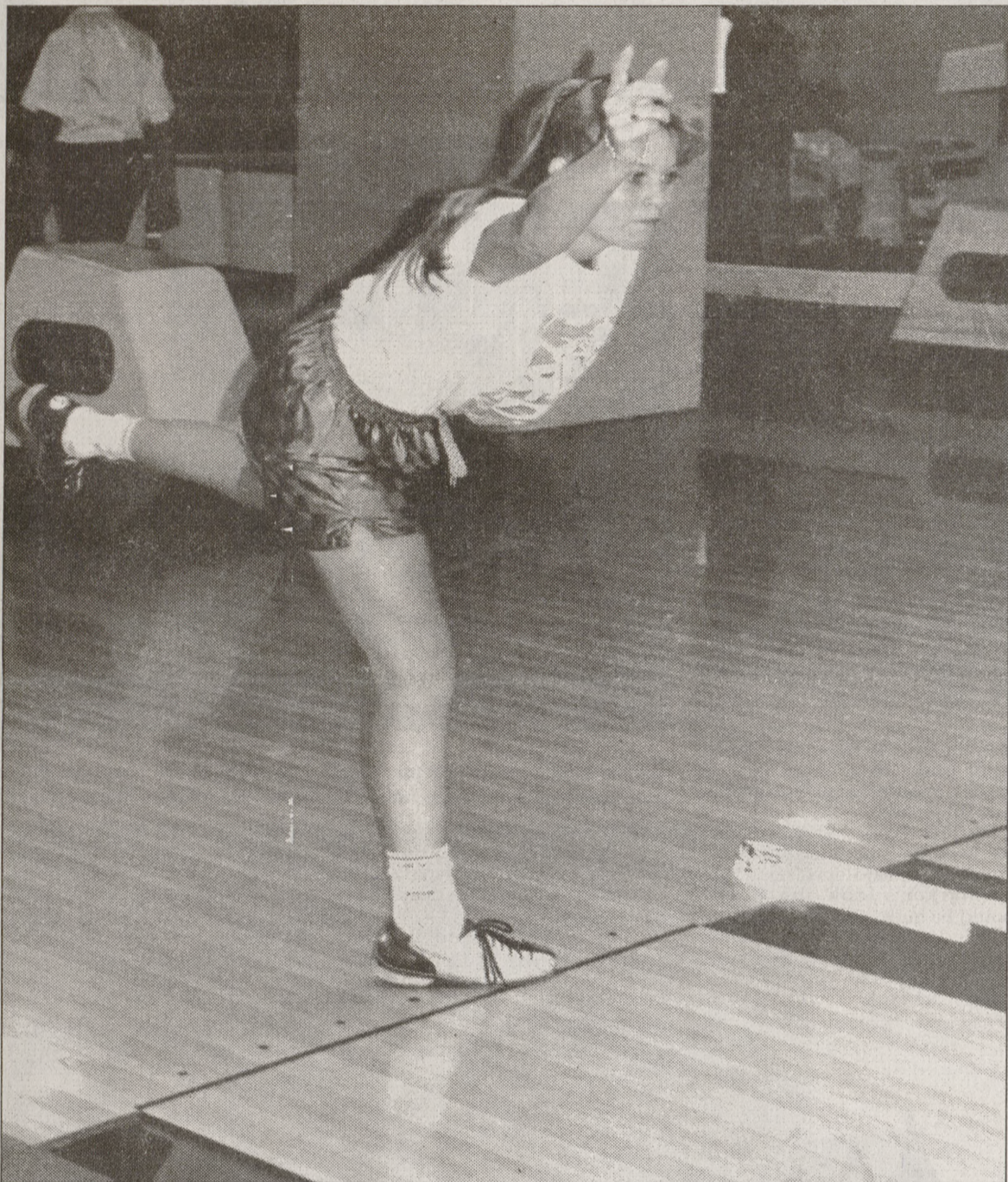
Cardenas was convicted of shooting Eugene Heimann, 34, five times after the Fort Bend County sheriff's deputy stopped him March 21, 1988, as he hitchhiked near a home that had just been burglarized.

Cardenas and his brother, Juan, drove off in Heimann's patrol car, used the car to stop a motorist and then fled in that car. They later were arrested in Houston.

Bradford was found guilty in the 1988 shooting death of convenience store security guard Brian Edward Williams during a robbery.

The appeals court said Bradford's constitutional rights were violated during the punishment phase of the trial because the judge wouldn't allow the defense to offer certain psychiatric testimony unless Bradford also was examined by a state-selected expert.

Style is everything



STACY RYAN/The Battalion

Rusti Jeter, a high school junior from Jayton, TX, shows off her bowling skills in the basement of the MSC on Wednesday. She is in town until Friday for the 4H Round-Up.

Additions include new labs

Chemistry Building reopens for classes after renovation

By JAMES BERNSEN

The Battalion

After four years of construction, the Chemistry Building is completely renovated and will be open for classes in August.

Mike Rosynek, associate head of the Department of Chemistry, said the renovation is the conclusion of 10 years of work on the building.

Construction began with the addition of a new wing, which was completed in 1986.

Rosynek said the Chemistry Building, which was built in five successive stages beginning in 1928, was so old that there was difficulty renovating some areas.

"Some of the mechanical systems were not even serviceable," he said. "Many labs were never designed or intended for modern lab work."

Ron Carter, academic business administrator for the Department of Chemistry, said because the building had not previously been renovated, the facilities were unable to meet the department's needs.

"The facility was constructed back in the 1930s, and the utilities were obsolete," he said. "The instruments you do modern science with require better facilities."

Rosynek said the obsolete teaching labs were replaced with a portion of the building

constructed in 1986, and the freshman chemistry labs were transferred to Heldenfels Hall.

"The teaching labs vacated in older wings were renovated for research lab space, offices and other support facilities," he said.

Tim Donathen, assistant manager for Texas A&M Facilities Planning and Construction, said the new labs will be much better and safer now that they have been renovated.

"The entire building was taken out of service during the renovations," he said. "But they (renovations) were very much needed."

Carter said there is still a minor mechanical air conditioning problem in the building, and he hopes the problem will be approved for repair.

Local writer urges blacks to interact with media

By LISA ELLIOTT

The Battalion

Blacks are not getting fair representation in the media of Brazos County, said Sunny Nash, a nationally acclaimed writer and photographer, at a Progressive Leadership Luncheon Wednesday sponsored by Alpha Phi Alpha.

"There are two ways to get in the news," Nash, a 1977 journalism graduate from A&M, said. "You can write it and report it, or you can commit a crime."

Blacks are in the media far more often for the crimes they

commit than the good they do, she said.

Nash said more blacks should get involved in the media. She said they have to have a plan and not expect anyone to take them by the hand and lead them to success.

Edward Haskin, committee member for the Progressive Leadership Luncheon, said one possible way for the black community to get better representation in the media is to develop a better relationship with them.

"You have to make the effort to make a friendship with the media," Haskin said.

Haskin said the way to get noticed is to get involved in organizations such as sororities and fraternities and work with the community.

During an open discussion, one member of the audience said one thing the black people of Brazos County can do to get more involved with what the media covers is by writing and calling the television stations and newspapers and letting them know what is important to blacks.

Nash said families should make raising children more of a community effort, as they did in the past.

"The television is not a babysitter," she said. "More often that's where children are being exposed to these kinds of negative attitudes."

Nash said when she was a child, the whole neighborhood watched after her and made sure she was punished when she did something wrong.

"It was a community-wide effort to raise kids," she said.

Nash has a column in the Bryan-College Station Eagle and is the publisher of Legacy, a journal dedicated to understanding black cultures.

Bill creates funds for young farmers

By LAURA HALEY

The Battalion

An experiment to determine the best way to keep an agricultural interest in Texas has resulted in the Young Farmer Loan Guarantee Program, which goes into effect Sept. 1 and will provide up to \$50,000 in loans to farmers between 18 and 39 years old.

"H.B. 1287 is a vital piece of legislation for the future of the agriculture industry in Texas," said Texas Gov. Ann Richards, who signed the bill into law, in a prepared statement. "It will provide young farmers with the funds they need to build a prosperous future for themselves and add to the economic base of Texas."

The bill was sponsored by Rep. Pete Patterson, D-Brookston, and Sen. Bill Sims, D-San Angelo, to promote agriculture growth in Texas.

Robert Kennedy, deputy assistant commissioner for agriculture finance, said the loan money will be available by November 1994.

The program will be funded by a voluntary \$5 charge on farm license plates.

However, he said there may not be enough money to go around because the payment is voluntary, and there is no way of knowing how much money will be generated for the program.

"We have to do the best with what we have with the way the program is set up right now," Kennedy said.

Clay Carsner, Sims' legislative assistant, said the \$5 charge is just a starting point to see how much participation the program generates.

Amelia Martin, committee clerk for Patterson, said loan applicants must have four years of practical experience to qualify for loans under this program. This is done to make sure applicants know how to handle a large farming operation.

"We're looking for someone who's actually done it and knows they're good at it," she said.

But she also said participation in 4-H Clubs and Future Farmers of America may count for up to two years of the practical experience requirement.

Dr. Zerle Carpenter, director of the Agriculture Extension Service, said he doesn't foresee the practical experience requirement to get the loan as a problem for college graduates because most gain experience "along the way."

The extension service will be working directly with applicants interested in receiving a loan through the Young Farmer program.

Carpenter said the applicant must submit a plan which includes how the money will be used, financial projections, and a pay back plan. Extension service personnel will give advice and evaluate the plans submitted to them.

Plans that are considered feasible will be approved and sent to the loan board. However, not all plans approved by the extension service will be granted loans, Carpenter said.

Martin said, "Loans will be made only as far as the money will go." Despite possible financial difficulties, Carpenter said the program will open another door for those who are interested in pursuing an agriculture career.

"We are pleased that it looks like another revenue source will be available for young people in agriculture," he said.

This is one reason Sims said he sponsored the bill.

"The program gives young men and women a chance for a career in agriculture that they might not have had otherwise," he said.

Federal judge orders U.S. to release Haitians

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NEW YORK - A federal judge on Tuesday ordered more than 150 HIV-positive Haitians released immediately from the U.S. Navy base in Cuba. He called their incarceration "outrageous, callous and reprehensible."

U.S. District Judge Sterling Johnson came down hard on the Bush and Clinton administrations in his ruling in a lawsuit filed on behalf of the refugees.

"The detained Haitians are neither criminals nor national security risks," Johnson wrote. "Some are pregnant mothers and others are children. Simply put, they are merely the unfortunate victims of a fatal disease."

He ordered that they "be immediately released."

Many of the 158 refugees have been at a dilapidated camp at Guantanamo Bay for nearly 20 months. The camp could be closed within a few weeks if the government doesn't appeal Johnson's ruling, said Michael Ratner of the Center for Constitutional Rights.

White House spokeswoman Dee Dee Myers declined to comment on the ruling.

Johnson gave a grim description of the Haitians' living condi-

tions at the U.S. naval base:

"They live in camps surrounded by razor barbed wire. They tie plastic garbage bags to the sides of the building to keep the rain out. ... The Haitian detainees have been subjected to predawn military sweeps as they sleep by as many as 400 soldiers in full riot gear. They are confined like prisoners."

He said the government had also failed to provide adequate medical care for them.

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