

Study Abroad in MEXICO

Spend the first summer session of 1994 in Puebla, Mexico studying Latin American culture and advanced Spanish.

Informational Meeting:

Tues. October 19, 7:00PM

Academic 125

Dr. Aguirre and Dr. Espina, Program Directors, will be present to answer questions.

Study Abroad Programs, 161 Bizzell Hall West, 845-0544

Notes - n - Quotes

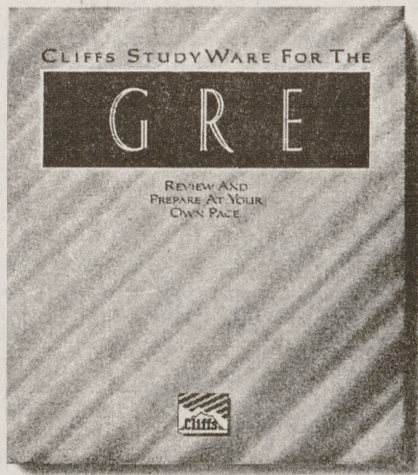
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BOTN 101	HIST 106	POLS 207	SCOM 105
ECON 202	JOUR 102	PSYC 107	SOCI 317
ECON 203	JOUR 273	PSYC 300	
ECON 322	JOUR 301	PSYC 307	

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CAMPUS

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THE BATTALION

Tuesday, October 19, 1993

A&M team researching fire detectors

By Cheryl Heller

THE BATTALION

A team of Texas A&M University researchers has found that the current national standard for fire detection systems is not adequate.

Dr. Larry Grosse, construction science department head and principal investigator, said the team has been researching smoke and fire detection systems for the past two years.

The last revision of the National Fire Protection Association standards recommended that detectors be installed outside of each sleeping area in the immediate vicinity of the bedrooms and on each story of the house. The association also recommended that people sleep with their bedroom doors closed, so the doors can serve as barriers to smoke and flames.

But, a closed door can be fatal if a fire starts in the bedroom, Grosse said.

"By the time the detector is activated, it may be too late," he said. "Detectors should be located in each room as well as in hallways."

The team hopes its research will have some influence on future minimum standard requirements for the placement of detectors, Grosse said.

"Our goal is to save a lot of lives," he said. "Each year 4,000 to 5,000 lives are lost in fires, and

by helping to upgrade the minimum requirements, I think we can significantly reduce those numbers."

The research team is assisting in the development of new fire detection systems that use carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide detectors, Grosse said.

"Every fire produces carbon monoxide and carbon dioxide, and the detectors we're testing measure the rate of rise of the gas within the room," he said. "They will determine if there is a fire and will not be fooled by false alarms caused by dust or steam."

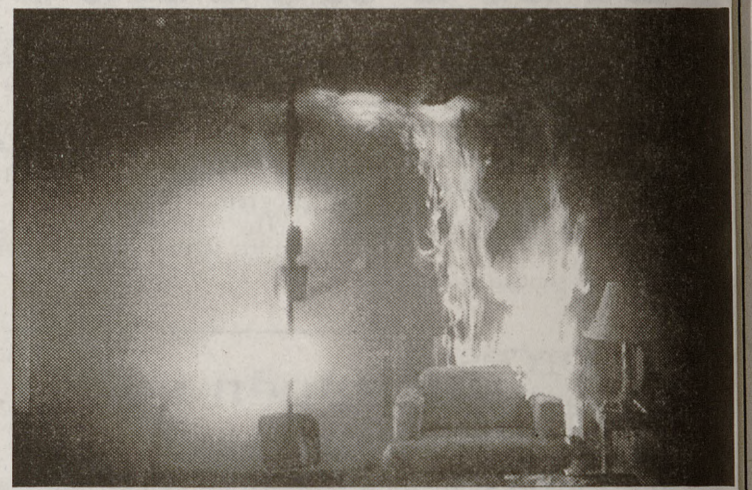
Grosse said false alarms are dangerous because they can cause people to deactivate their smoke detectors.

"When people have false alarms with their detectors, they get irritated and disarm them," he said. "The gas detectors should be much more effective."

The team is also investigating the influence of aging on smoke and fire detectors in accordance with the Consumer Products Safety Commission.

"The commission is able to evaluate performance of photoelectric and ionization detectors, which are all-around currently the most effective," Grosse said. "We have found that time does influence the performance of the detectors."

"After conducting over 1,200 tests, we found that a 15-year-old detector had a much poorer per-



Courtesy of A&M researchers

The research team sets a fire in its lab - a house furnished with fire-retardant materials in Taylor.

formance record than one that was 10 years old," he said. "The point is that just because you have a detector doesn't mean that it will work because the failure rate is substantial with older detectors."

Grosse said the team found that some new detectors failed as well.

"Just because a detector is new doesn't mean it's always going to work," he said.

College Station Fire Marshall George Spain said smoke and fire detectors should be tested at regular intervals and should have

their batteries changed once a year. "Pick a significant date, like a birthday, or any other day you'll remember, and make sure it's maintained," he said.

Making an exit plan to use in case of fire is also very important, Spain said.

"Have a plan that allows everyone to get out, and have a meeting place in front of the structure so everyone can see who got out of the building," he said.

"Schedule regular fire drills and make sure everyone can get out of their windows."

College Station firefighters test campus systems

By James Bernsen

THE BATTALION

Local firefighters are testing campus buildings to ensure that if a fire broke out, it could be put out efficiently.

The College Station Fire Department, working with the Texas A&M University Health and Safety Office, began checking the standpipe systems in some of the larger buildings

on campus, and will check approximately one building per week.

The standpipe system allows firefighters access to pressurized water on the upper floors of the buildings.

Firefighter Joe Warren said it is important to keep the systems maintained because even the fire department's tallest ladders can't reach the top floors on some campus buildings.

With the standpipe system, firefighters can access a water main in the stairwell on each

floor, he said.

Lt. Bobby Rogers, also with CSFD, said the system failed during an emergency, would be much more difficult to put out the fire.

"If it failed, we would just need more power, and that would mean more time would be involved," he said. "But the system, when it works, is effective for the firemen, we would not have to carry supply lines up the stairwell."

T-CAMP

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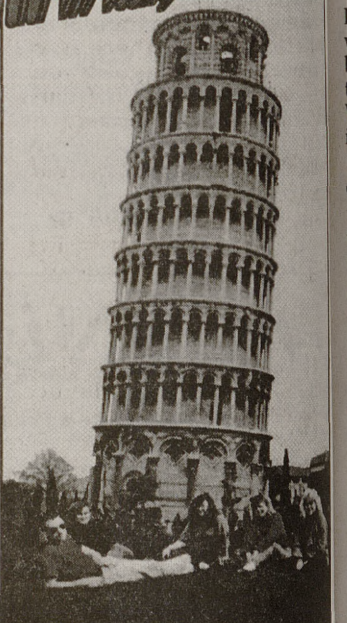
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