

# U.S. Constitution celebrates anniversary of signing this week

By Katherine Arnold

THE BATTALION  
This week marks the 207th anniversary of the signing of the U.S. Constitution, and a Texas A&M professor says maintaining the oldest working constitution in the world is a true show of its strength. "The uniqueness of the Constitution is in the fact that it has lasted so long," Dr. Don Tomlinson, associate professor of journalism, said. "It may have only been amended 27 times, but it has been interpreted thousands of times."

U.S. Sen. Phil Gramm said in a news release the Constitution has been a testament to the trials of the country.

"Since its adoption, we have amended the Constitution only 27 times," Gramm said. "That is a testament to the remarkable vision of America's founding fathers."

Don Wilson, director of the Bush Presidential Library Center, said the United States has benefited from a versatile constitution.

"The Constitution is a unique document because it empowers the people, not the government," Wilson said. "The Bill of Rights sees to it that the Constitution serves the people of the United States."

Tomlinson said he thinks this versatility has given the country room to grow.

"The only way for a constitution to lay down the exact law would be for society not to evolve," he said.

Gramm agrees the Constitution has opened the door for interpretation.

"Some of the freedoms we all know, such as freedom of speech and the freedom of religion," Gramm said. "But others we don't know as well like the freedom to own property and to make decisions about where we work."

The Constitution, however, is fulfilling its purpose as a vague document, Tomlinson said.

"It is pretty evident that the Framers did not mean to be any more specific than they were," Tomlinson said.

## Crime

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cyclists are subject to the same laws as other drivers.

"By nature of the Texas Uniform Vehicle Code, bicycles are considered vehicles and are governed by the same rules and regulations of other vehicles," Williams said.

Williams said PTTs is involved in maintaining the bicycle lanes and assisting other departments in removing bicycles.

Currently, a committee with members from PTTs, UPD, and the Physical Plant are researching the most efficient way to remove illegally parked bikes, he said.

"There are times when bikes are chained where they shouldn't be," Williams said. "The most hazardous place is on hindcyc racks. But in general, students are good about where they park their bikes."

LeMay said there are several regulations bicyclists frequently ignore.

"The rules broken most often are running stop signs, riding at night without headlight (bicyclists must have one on the front of their bike and a reflector light on the back), and having good brakes," she said. "These are the three things we are concentrating on, and any other rules can be enforced too."

LeMay said the bicycle laws in A&M, College Station and Bryan differ.

"The laws vary as far as riding on the roadway," she said. "In College Station, they adhere to a very strict bike lane. The UPD is little more lenient because we just got bike lanes. In Bryan, they take bikes about wherever they want and it is very dangerous."

LeMay said that although there have been many bicycle injuries on campus, it has been several years since there was a fatality. However, she said, some of the accidents she has seen have been serious.

"Ride safely and think safe always," LeMay said. "Yield to the car, even if it's wrong, because you can't fight it on a bike. Always lock the bike up, even if you're only for just a few minutes."

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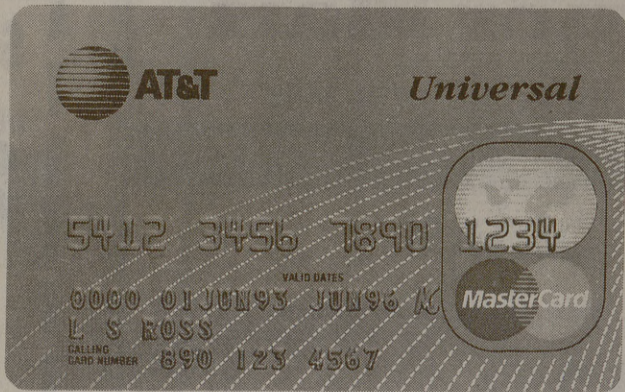
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"Simplify, simplify."

Henry David Thoreau

"Hey, that's not a bad idea."

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