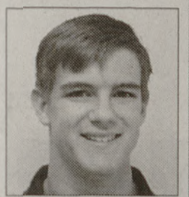


## Things to know as a freshman

**CHRIS HUFFINES**  
columnist



As I was moving into my dorm room this year, I realized that, this time last year, I was at Fish Camp. I am now a sophomore. I was by the grace of God that I survived last year to become the underclassman I am today. The trials and tribulations of the previous year have left me older, wiser, and in no small way, more attractive than I was as a newly-minted freshman. But, it was a hard road up. At night, I still wake up remembering those terrifying days when I was painfully aware that I had no idea what I was doing. I still remember getting lost trying to get to the Pavilion from the Academic Building, or begging one of my good friends from home to teach me how to do laundry, along with many more embarrassing mishaps. How I wished that some grizzled veteran of past school years would take me aside and tell me the important things I needed to know. And so, as a public service to the little Fishies, I present a personalized list of helpful hints:

1. White clothes should be placed in hot water; darks go in cold water.
2. Bleach socks and underwear. Do not bleach T-shirts.
3. Get to know your teachers. They're more likely to help a student who they think cares.
4. You can survive by setting your alarm to five minutes before class, but your grades will suffer. At least mine did.
5. PTTS is like your parents. They seem to be everywhere, know everything and they look for opportunities to punish you because "builds character."
6. Get used to coffee.
7. Don't make fun of the nice people wearing all khaki.
8. Texas A&M is not a university; it's a religion.
9. Learn the yells before Yell Practice.
10. Take a date to Yell Practice. Nink, wink. Nudge, nudge.
11. Officially, there is no hazing at A&M.
12. 1:30 a.m. is not *that* late.
13. Officially, there is no underage drinking at A&M.
14. Don't do your homework in the five minutes before class. It's hard to write legibly while sprinting across campus.
15. Ramen, ramen and more ramen.
16. Officially, there is no bureaucracy at A&M.
17. Every time they raise your fees, they really are strapped for cash.
18. Officially, dining on campus is fun, and it tastes good.
19. PTTS is like Monty Python's Spanish Inquisition: Nobody expects them, and their main weapons are surprise, fear and a ruthless efficiency.
20. Staying up all night is a necessity, not an option.

This, of course, is by no means a complete list. There is an entire host of knowledge remaining like: Don't make fun of your RA's boyfriend/girlfriend or "Never waste a quarter anywhere but in a washing machine." Not to mention, "Studying and television do not mix. You forget what happened in the show and the book" and "Make sure you have all registration materials handy before you go, including, but not limited to: your schedule, several alternate schedules, a pillow, a pot of coffee, a nice long book and a chair with good back support."

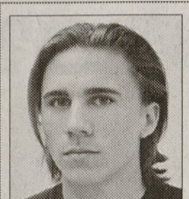
College is a great experience, and that is designed to help you grow into a better person. We are here to learn to think, question and analyze our way to a better future. Our talent is wasted deducing the reading patterns of our favorite cartoon shirt or who's sleeping with those illegitimate half-sister-in-law from our favorite study soap. However, if you follow these tips and practices then one day, yes, one glorious day you will be as cool as the class-who have come before you.

Chris Huffines is a sophomore speech communications major

# Learning the ropes

Freshmen must discover the ups and downs of the first year in college

So, you thought I was gone just because my by-line last year said I was a senior. Ha. Like sands in an hourglass, so are the years of my college career. But for some, the trek is just beginning. Once again millions, possibly even thousands of lost freshmen are roaming around campus with their little maps and their high hopes. Isn't it cute?



**MASON JACKSON**  
columnist

But unfortunately, even those who went to the obnoxious spirit-fest that is Fish Camp didn't learn everything they need to know about the intricacies of college life. To make the assimilation easier, all returning students should take it upon themselves to provide guidance for our bewildered (and I use that term affectionately) freshmen. I would like to illustrate the better side of what might at first glance appear to be major drawbacks about college life at this university.

**Drawback:** Some bookseller, let's just call him "Ol' Army Mason," sells you a textbook for \$90, buys it back three months later for \$16 and then resells it for \$90 again the next semester.

**Upside:** You get a jump on your economics classes by having seen first-hand how a cartel works.

**Drawback:** This applies primarily to male freshmen — Come Bonfire season, those of you living on campus will be awakened on weekends at five in the morning by a group of inbred, letter-headed, red-ass rednecks wielding axes, cursing your family and questioning your sexuality in an attempt to get you to help them cut down and drag around a bunch of trees.

**Upside:** After hearing your horror stories about the first weekend of cut, any halfway reasonable girl would be more than happy to let you bunk with her on the weekends. Maybe.

**Drawback:** The bar and club scene in the "twin cities" could only be considered exciting by one of those really cool people from Utah.

**Upside:** Can you say road trip?

**Drawback:** You have to be cautious in everything you do, because around every corner is another chance to break some Ol' Ag tradition.

**Upside:** Around every corner is another chance to break some Ol' Ag tradition.

**Drawback:** Your friend from high

school who is a football team walk-on at North Southeastern Boone County Community College says he thinks his team has a good chance of beating us this year.

**Upside:** Nobody likes a bully.

**Drawback:** As a student at a state school in a country that devalues culture as much as ours does, all liberal arts classes will be held in the ugliest, most dilapidated buildings on campus.

**Upside:** That homey "West Bank/Gaza Strip feel."

But all of this is only the tip of the iceberg. Everyone has to do their part to make the freshman class feel welcome. Because if they don't think they have some friends, they might do something desperate like join a cult. Or a frat.

Remember, if you haven't gotten a ticket for contributing, then you haven't taken one for the team.

Mason Jackson is a senior marketing major



## Students must differentiate between stress and pressure

Some may boast of prowess bold... Of the school they think so grand... But there's a spirit can ne'er be told — It's the spirit of Aggieland." Indeed.

As campus is inundated with the wide-eyed class of '01, one is reminded of another spirit that often occupies the air in Aggieland. That of confusion, mayhem and stress.

Legendary NBA coach Rick Pitino, when asked about the stress of play-off basketball, once said, "Stress! I don't feel stress. Stress is for those that are ill-prepared for the tasks that lie ahead of them. We all have pressure, I thrive on pressure."



**LEN CALLAWAY**  
columnist

This adage should be applied to students at Texas A&M. Pressure is unavoidable and can be better handled through adequate preparation.

For freshmen the rude awakening is looming on the horizon like an evil storm cloud. Each freshman has been chosen and given a chance to succeed at one of the world's premiere universities.

The cost of success will be great, but the rewards will be even greater.

Freshmen face the dreaded "weed-out" classes specifically designed to narrow the herd. The professors that teach these courses thrive on their ability to make young

scholars' lives miserable. Teaching is a necessary evil for some professors, who are researchers at heart, and genuine interest in one's pupils is apparently not important to some.

These are the classes that could, if allowed to, promote the development of stress in a young freshman's life.

The goal of every new student should be to determine a regimen that allows for some academic progress each day. The idea being to stay ahead (or at least current) with the course syllabus. This way one never really has the chance to get into a frantic situation — no doubt an idea that will be firmly embraced about two seconds after the professor announces the first pop quiz of the semester.

The college years are the time to (yes, party our proverbial asses off) but also to develop the patterns and habits that will allow us to be comfortable and healthy while succeeding in today's fast-paced and demanding world. Most of all, these years are the time to develop a certain resiliency to stress.

If one takes the time to people-watch during move-in and move-out on campus, one would see numerous faces twisted and contorted into some sort of painful-looking scowl. This is due to succumbing to stress and not handling the minor pressure associated with having to deal with A&M's bureaucratic environment. The class and study room pressure is much worse. One might wonder what will become of these poor souls who have allowed the A&M housing situation (or their parents) to get them flustered during their first few moments in beloved Aggieland.

It becomes apparent at times that some people have never developed the ability to be responsible for more than one task at a time — a deficiency that could cause the pre-degree death of a college career. Life at this university can be an overly complicated and prolonged juggling act.

Freshmen face other campus ills as well. Each year more and more dissenters join our ranks. These students are not proud to be Aggies, nor are they interested in the proliferation of Aggie ideals or practices. To these students A&M is not special, it's just another school.

It has become apparent that, in a way, freshmen are the life blood of a university such as this one. The traditions that some hold so dear could change and subside if new classes choose not to follow them or invent new traditions. Remember "sit down bus driver?" In the same right the "proress" of our institution will diminish if new classes do not learn to temper themselves into being patient and diligent in demanding situations.

For freshmen, these are the enchanted times. Experiences are still new, every weekend brings some new revolution and lectures bring new and sometimes interesting text.

Freshmen bring a different perspective and a certain nuance to our campus. Each new freshman class should be lauded and appreciated for the new life and spirit that it brings to campus.

Welcome and good luck freshmen, you'll need it.

Len Callaway is a junior journalism major



### MAIL CALL

#### Sororities deserve support of students

In response to Mandy Cater's August 29 column:

We have all come to Texas A&M for one reason: to be an Aggie. What extracurricular activities an individual chooses to participate in, Greek life, the Corps of Cadets or Student Government, is his or her own choice.

In order to continue growth with an organization, each group has its own way of recruitment, whether it be right or wrong in the eyes of other individuals. At the same time, every organization has room for improvement. We, as the Panhellenic Council, see room for our own improvement. At the present time, we are working toward betterment.

The A&M Panhellenic Council represents 12 sororities on campus. These 12 sororities offer women a chance for involvement and leadership on campus, academic en-

hancement and education on issues that women face daily.

At the same time, the 12 chapters spend many hours volunteering for Scotty's Home, The Still Creek Boys' Ranch, Mental Health and Mental Retardation and the Ronald McDonald House just to name a few. Chapters also raise anywhere from \$8,000 to \$16,000 a year for their individual philanthropies.

Panhellenic and the entire Greek community strive to support other groups on campus and we hope to receive the same support in return. The support shared between different individuals and organizations is what it means to be an Aggie.

Jennifer Burns  
Panhellenic President  
Class of '98

Robin Morgan  
Panhellenic Vice President

The Battalion encourages letters to the editor. Letters must be 300 words or less and include the author's name, class, and phone number.

The opinion editor reserves the right to edit letters for length, style, and accuracy. Letters may be submitted in person at 013 Reed McDonald with a valid student ID. Letters may also be mailed to:

The Battalion - Mail Call  
013 Reed McDonald  
Texas A&M University  
College Station, TX  
77843-1111

Campus Mail: 1111  
Fax: (409) 845-2647  
E-mail: Batt@tamvml.tamu.edu