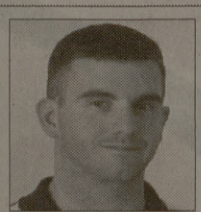


CAMPUS CONNECTION

Students with disabilities depend on professors' help

College professors are charged, among other things, with the task of preserving the academic integrity of student. However, instructors at Texas A&M DPAC had to balance this duty with a corresponding duty to be knowledgeable about use sensitive to the process by which students with disabilities exercise their legal rights to request accommodations.



ADAM COLLETT
columnist

student has a documented disability (suspects that he or she has one), the student sees a counselor in the Services Students with Disabilities (SSD) office for the documentation or the assessment by the counselor verifying that the student is legally entitled to reasonable accommodations under the law, then the student and the counselor work together to decide what specifically is needed.

According to David Sweeney, Coordinator for Adaptive Technology, extended test taking time, a reduced distraction environment, copies of overheads, electronic or recorded versions of learning materials and tests in Braille or large print are among the common accommodations.

Sometimes, Sweeney says, "the accommodations are as simple as putting in the front of the class." From there, the accommodation counselor and the student prepare letters to identify the student and the specific accommodations needed.

Finally, the student takes those letters to the professors where, ideally, the faculty member works with the student to see that the accommodations are carried out in a manner agreeable to both parties. However, it doesn't always happen that way. Luckily, according to Sweeney, "in almost all cases their cooperation is exemplary. In fact in some cases, they are overly accommodating."

Almost, however, means there are some out there who are not cooperating. Sweeney says he's never run into anyone who steadfastly refused to grant accommodations; rather, the problem is the SSD office encounters are faculty who initially complain and deny the request, but eventually comply. The hesitation on the part of professors seems to come from two places: a concern over the loss of academic integrity and a desire to protect intellectual property.

In the case of the former, Sweeney says, "accommodation does not mean compromising standards."

In fact, Sweeney stresses by the time a student brings a letter to a professor, the student has been carefully evaluated to ensure that the student qualifies for legal accommodations. And not all students who think their difficulties are disability-related are approved accommodations. "We do turn people away."

With the intellectual property argument, some professors refuse to give copies of overheads or refuse to let their lectures be taped on the premise that they might use the information in a publication some day. While this is a valid concern, it is somewhat exaggerated. A student with a disability makes those requests so that he or she can have the same barrier-free access to learning as other students, not to contribute to some black market for Chemistry 101 lectures.

Contrary to those instances, Sweeney does note with no outside pressure, the faculty has uniformly added statements of accommodations to all syllabi, and some professors have even tried to announce the statement at the beginning of each semester. This, in turn, has brought the SSD referrals and helped to serve more students.

Happenings such as these represent an improvement in the faculty's understanding of their legal responsibility, but more needs to be done. The students who go through the documentation and verification process with the SSD office are taking responsibility for their education and exercising their civil rights. They do not deserve to be unduly restricted in this quest.

A&M professors have the responsibility to learn about the process and to treat students in a manner appropriate with the law. Academic integrity and disability accommodations are not mutually exclusive.

Adam Collett is an educational administration graduate student.

STUDENT LIFE

Advertising abstinence

Beutel promotes sexual responsibility, moral choices

There it stood brazenly in front of Beutel Health Center for a week, screaming, "Hey Aggies, check this out." If you saw the sign, you could not help but notice it. It advertised Beutel's bargain-basement prices on condoms. Anyone who walked by the sign was made acutely aware of the fact that at the health center, 10 condoms cost only \$2.



JOHN LEMONS
columnist

Then, an amazing thing happened. The condom sign disappeared and a new sign appeared, proclaiming a rarely heard message on this campus — abstinence.

Beutel Health Center should be commended for promoting sexual abstinence outside of marriage. It is a conviction many Aggies hold, but few seem willing to discuss. This happens because many students on this campus choose to see sex as a health issue instead of a moral issue. Sex, however, is first and foremost a moral issue, and needs to be treated as such by Aggies.

Margaret Griffith, a Health Education Coordinator with the Health Education Division of the Student Health Center, said the division exists to help promote healthy lifestyles for students. She said the division presents programs to prevent irresponsible sexual behavior. Griffith also said the division incorporates abstinence in their sexual health programs.

"We're trying to let people know that we support that (abstinence)," Griffith said. "That's a thread that goes through all of our programs."

Indeed, that was the reasoning for setting out the abstinence sign last week. The sign advised that abstinence leaves one free from worry, free from pregnancy and free from sexually transmitted diseases. It even informed students if they need tips on abstinence, they should inquire inside.

Funny, I always figured the best tip on abstinence was, well you know, don't have sex. All kidding aside, the sign offers a valid point. Abstinence is free. Sex outside of marriage, can be costly. Of course, students on this campus have already had the consequences of unprotected sex drilled into their heads. They know about diseases and about unplanned pregnancies.

What they have not been presented with are the emotional and spiritual consequences of sex outside of marriage. People are not talking about feelings of guilt that occur from having pre-marital sex when one has been brought up to believe it is wrong. No one is talking about jealousy that can occur within a marriage when one partner learns that the other partner did not wait for them.

Nobody is bringing up the false sense of intimacy that exists in a relationship built around sex.

Sex is a moral issue. As evidence, consider how many services exist on this campus and in this community to deal with issues like date rape, sexually transmitted diseases and unplanned pregnancies. Consider how this community was stunned to learn an abortion clinic

is being built in Bryan. These are all moral issues that affect Aggies, and they all stem from the same subject, sex.

When sex is approached as a moral issue, the argument for abstinence cannot be ignored. Because sex is such an important issue on this campus, there should be more support for abstinence. This is an area where religious organizations at A&M could do more.

In 1994, the Baptist Sunday School Board ran a national abstinence campaign aimed at high school students, called True Love Waits. Students were encouraged to sign pledge cards where they promised to wait until marriage to have sex. Such a campaign could work here at A&M if campus religious groups worked together to present it. I believe students would be surprised to see how many Aggies would be willing to make an abstinence pledge.

Not everyone will choose to remain sexually abstinent until marriage. However, students who believe sex belongs within marriage, need to be encouraged in their convictions.

This beats being fed the line that condoms are the answer to everything, a train of thought that seems to be prevalent in sexual health education today.

The health center should be applauded for offering both sides of the story in sexual health education, and for showing support for abstinence.

Students, on the other hand, should remember that although condoms may be cheap at Beutel, abstinence is cheaper.

John Lemons is an electrical engineering graduate student.

CAMPUS CONNECTION

Board of Regents deserves thanks for work

Dear members of the Board of Regents,



MICKEY SALOMA
columnist

Many times you all must grow tired of hearing all the gripes of many disgruntled Texas A&M students. It must be especially bothersome when you see them printed in *The Battalion*.

As journalism majors know, the media thrives on exploiting weaknesses, however, this University has too many positive characteristics to look at the few negatives.

Many students came to A&M to not only earn a degree from one of this country's finest universities, but to gain something more.

They wanted to be Aggies, live the Aggie dream and to soak in all the wonderful things this University has offered its students since it was founded. A&M is considered a world-class

university and in my opinion, it is the best university in the entire world.

While some people like to complain about the arrogance and waste of Bonfire, the number of tickets they receive for parking on campus and the ridiculous sayings used in Aggieland, many students just see all this University has to offer and love it for the simple fact they are Aggies.

This University has so much to offer all of its students, which is a huge feat considering the size and diversity of the student body.

With the many organizations associated with this University, it is nearly impossible for somebody to feel unwelcome. A&M has organizations ranging from those who are into Japanimation to those who want to be military engineers and everybody in between.

Furthermore, it is almost impossible to escape the Aggie Spirit displayed by A&M's many students. One must merely attend an Aggie football game to find that Aggie living deep inside students' souls.

Not many other universities can boast about having a huge pep rally

held at midnight before each home game. At many universities, many students do not even have an idea what their school song is.

Even the least involved Aggie can recite most of the words of the "Aggie War Hymn."

Aggie Spirit can be found through all parts of our campus from the history of many of our campus' landmarks to each student that greets a fellow Aggie with a simple "Howdy."

It is safe to say Aggies care more about other Aggies than most other schools' students feel about their classmates. This is proven with the two greatest traditions on campus. These traditions are Silver Taps and Aggie Muster.

No other university gathers together to commemorate the loss of one of their own as Aggies do. The bells of Albritton rung for fellow Aggies have touched the lives of countless Aggies as well as those not fortunate enough to be Aggies.

Throughout Texas, people discuss the brotherhood shared by all Aggies. The Aggie ring has helped people just as much as the elusive Aggie diploma.

Not all Aggies gain the same Aggie experience. That just goes to show that A&M has so much to offer.

I chose to join the Corps of Cadets and the Fightin' Texas Aggie Band. My experience differs greatly from other Aggies, however I share a common bond with many non-regs and members of fraternities and sororities. This bond is a commitment to my beloved school.

It is commitments such as these that push us to say "Howdy," attend Bonfire cuts, stand at football games, and cry at the sound of the bells of Albritton.

The work of the members of the Board of Regents has ensured that students are able to gain the Aggie experience and more importantly, they ensure that countless other generations of Aggies will get to experience the same Spirit of Aggieland.

I'd like to thank the members of the Board of Regents and ask them to continue their hard work in order to preserve this University as the best in the world.

Mickey Saloma is a senior journalism major.



MAIL CALL

Pro-choice does not mean pro-abortion

This letter is in response to the recent controversy surrounding abortion, an eternally volatile issue. As a Christian, I am appalled at the way others malign and criticize in the name of pro-life movement. While it is true many followers of God are anti-abortion, it is also noted that a large number are pro-choice.

What many people fail to remember is that being pro-choice does not necessarily mean that one so holds belief in favor of abortion. One very popular viewpoint states that while everyone's personal convictions concerning abortion differ, every person should be allowed the civil liberty to make their own reproductive decision.

Another common misconception is that persecution is a Christ-

like virtue. This notion could not be farther from the truth. I do not intend to question anyone's Christianity. I am merely asking people to stop and examine their thoughts and actions. To all serious Christians, please look up these verses: Luke 6:37 and Mark 12:31.

Lynsey Kelly
Class of '01

Accompanied by 15 signatures

Clinic provides cop-out for immoral behavior

Abortion kills children. Period. If "up to 80 percent of Americans support a woman's right to a safe and legal abortion," then the majority of our nation supports murder, and you may always count me amongst "those who would have women return to the dark ages" of morality.

As for Planned Parenthood, it greatly benefits the populace of our nation who refuses to engage in pure and moral sexual activity, which is most often none at all.

"Contraceptive instruction" provides an excellent cop-out from the natural consequences of extramarital sex and "HIV testing" primarily benefits those engaged in sexual activity with sundry anonymous partners.

For the percent of those "five million women and men (receiving) reproductive health and edu-

cational services at Planned Parenthood" who do so while engaged in monogamous, heterosexual marriage, more power to you.

But I seriously doubt that percentage requires "nearly 900 clinics, especially not an abortion clinic in Bryan."

Carrie Beth Kendrick
Class of '01

Planned Parenthood not a crusader for women

How quickly anti-life advocates have forgotten the violence that accompanies the anti-life movement.

It is ironic that columnists Burton and Schaub wrote of Norma McCorvey as a violent, money-hungry, slanderer while their own ranks consist of the same.

One need only visit the Planned Parenthood business's Web site to see that anti-life advocates are more disparaging of pro-life advocates and violent toward women as the columnists claim of pro-life advocates.

Extremists on both sides — those who bomb abortion clinics and those who build them — are as misguided as they are ignorant. Planned Parenthood is the largest provider of abortions in the United States; they do the most to ensure that the multiple children of the past become the multiple abortions of the future. Planned

Parenthood is not a crusading vanguard of the women's "rights" movement; if they were, 80 percent of Americans are for abortion, they are sadly mistaken. anyone can make up "statistics" to prove their point (17 percent of all people know that).

Josh Maskow
Class of '01

Those who want abortions will have them

John Burton and Michael Schaub's column on the Planned Parenthood clinic cuts to the heart of the most fervent debate on campus.

The fact is people who want abortions will get abortions. Planned Parenthood can offer abortion services in Houston and affluent women will travel to them.

However, most won't travel 100 miles for the substantive counseling or education that will prevent unwanted pregnancies. Once established in Bryan-College Station, Planned Parenthood can actively reach out to people who are at risk and prevent unwanted pregnancies in B-CS with education and birth control, instead of a year or two later in Houston with abortions.

Furthermore, studies show that although affluent women will travel long distances to get abortions, poor women will go to the local drug dealers and the back alleys

for abortions. Although Planned Parenthood will prevent many of these unwanted pregnancies, it will also offer poorer women their legal right to a safe abortion.

This is the most important issue on the Texas A&M campus. Anyone wishing to know more about abortion rights or Planned Parenthood should attend one of the meetings scheduled on campus this week that deal with the issue.

Jeff Miller
Class of '98

Students taking exams late do more poorly

Stimulated by Professor Raymond Carroll's remark in March 6 Mail Call that students who call the day of an exam claiming to be ill and asking to arrange a makeup generally do worse on the exam than the class as a whole, I checked my records for my larger class this semester and found the following.

Of about 80 students still registered for the class, five (or over six percent of the entire class) called or emailed me claiming to have missed the first midterm exam due to illness (or, in one case, a failed alarm) and asking for makeups. Only one of the five called before the exam, two called shortly after it was over, and two did not call until late afternoon or evening the day after the exam. Two of the five nev-

er returned my messages regarding when and how to take a makeup, and the three students who did take makeups averaged 67 percent on the exam, whereas the overall class average was 79 percent.

I, like Professor Carroll, rarely disbelieve individual students when they tell me they missed the exam for legitimate reasons, and I usually do not require evidence of illness or a death. On the other hand, the sheer number of students who call after each exam leads me to doubt that all, if even the majority are physically ill rather than merely ill-prepared, especially when Professor Carroll observed, students who take makeups tend to do worse than those who are ready on time.

Gary Varner
Associate Professor of Philosophy

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@unix.tamu.edu
For more details on letter policy, please call 845-3313 and direct your question to the opinion editor.