

Playing by the rules

Texas A&M students should have to sign a written Aggie Code of Honor

Aggies do not lie, cheat, steal, nor tolerate those who do." It is the phrase Aggies love to spout off as they ex-



JOHN LEMONS
columnist

pression in the code of honor that binds all Aggies. But as the statistics in the office of Student Conflict Resolution Services (SCRS) show, talk is one thing, action is another. While Aggies may lie or steal, they definitely do not tolerate those who do. Since Aggie students have a trouble living by the Aggie Code of Honor, maybe it is time to put the muscle behind the phrase. The Aggie Code of Honor needs to be put in writing for all A&M students to

According to SCRS, there were 105 cases of scholastic dishonesty reported throughout the 1997-98 school year — six in the fall and two in the spring. Although these numbers by no means constitute an epidemic of cheating, they do show cheating is occurring on campus. We must also remember that these cases occurred when an instructor actually caught a student cheating and then initiated the University's scholastic dishonesty process — there is no telling how many students went away with scholastic dishonesty during the last year.

Putting the Aggie Code of Honor in paper, however, is not meant to stamp out all cheating, but to hold

Aggies accountable to the code.

Having students sign the Aggie Code of Honor amounts to forming a written contract between students and the University. A written contract will always be stronger than a verbal agreement.

Not every university is as lax as A&M in encouraging students to act honorably. The University of Virginia uses an honor system that is considerably more muscular than the Aggie code of honor. A&M could learn a thing or two from Virginia's honor system.

At Virginia, most instructors require their students to sign a statement with the every test they take. The statement reads, "I, (student), do hereby certify on my honor that I have derived no assistance during the time of this examination from any source whatsoever."

If an instructor or student charges that a student has violated Virginia's honor code by lying, cheating or stealing, the University's student-run honor system handles the case. Cases are investigated by students, arraigned by students and heard by student jurors. If a student is found guilty of lying, cheating or stealing, the student receives the honor system's single sanction — expulsion from the university.

Nicole Eramo is the Assistant to the Honor Committee, the group that coordinates Virginia's honor system. Eramo said the Honor Committee processed about 50 cases per semester during the 1997-98 school year. Out of those cases between 20 and 30 students go to trial each semester.

"About 75 to 80 percent [of cases] involved scholastic dishonesty," E-

ramo said.

It seems odd that the Virginia, a school roughly half the size of A&M, has so many more scholastic dishonesty cases than A&M. Unless, that is, Aggies are getting away with cheating because A&M does not take the issue seriously enough.

The first step to taking honor more seriously at A&M is quite simple — have students sign a statement agreeing to follow the Aggie Code of Honor. Students could sign this statement in each of their classes at the beginning of each semester or with every test they take, much like students at Virginia.

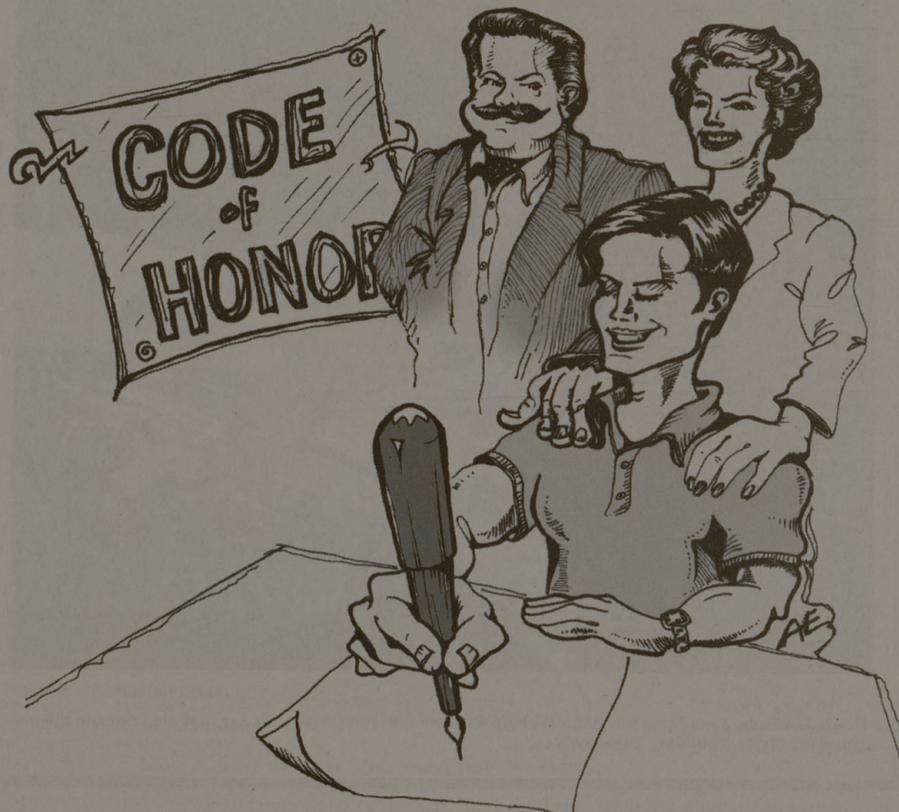
There are privileges that come with the responsibility of a beefed up honor system. Students at Virginia frequently enjoy the option of take-home tests. Furthermore, trust flourishes in an environment where honor is treasured.

"I think it [the honor system] makes people more comfortable that their word is going to be trusted by a professor," Eramo said.

Requiring students to sign the Aggie Code of Honor is about equivalent to a mother nagging her children. Yes, nagging is irritating, but it works. Had their mothers not nagged them when they were children, many Aggies would not brush their teeth, eat their vegetables or make their beds today. Nagging can be a very good thing.

And putting the Aggie Code of Honor in writing may just be the kind of nagging Aggies could use.

John Lemons is a graduate student in electrical engineering.



Students hassle with buses, parking at Bush Library

I got a little riddle for ya Ags. It's 105 degrees with 90-plus percent humidity.

It's high noon, sweat is running down your back, you've been outside for 30 minutes and your sunburn is about to lead to spontaneous human combustion.

A Parking, Traffic and Transportation Services officer is leaning on a moped or sitting under a shade tree sucking down Gatorade and glaring at students like it's Nazi era Germany and they want to see your "papers." OK — what are you doing?

That's right (you guys are so smart) you're waiting for a bus at the George Bush Presidential Library Complex.

Over the course of the past couple of semesters, PTTS has begun to control the parking lots at the Bush Complex by assigning two full-time staffers to all-day duty writing tickets and turning people away from the Presidential Library and the Bush School.

The transportation difficulties to and from the Bush School are only compounded by being forced to deal with the less than pleasant demeanors of the parking lot monitors.

One finds it difficult to hold these employees responsible for their negative and, at times, hateful approaches to customer service. They dislike being made to stand in the heat all day as much as the students do and at times their understandable frustration shows.

The Bush School is an excellent resource for students but it must become easier to travel to and from. Although the application of parking rules and bus routes is the responsibility of PTTS, it is the administration's responsibility to give PTTS the resources it needs.

As much as we would like to blame the problem on Tom Williams and his band of parking nay sayers, it is really not his fault. The real responsibility for the parking and transportation woes faced by students at the Bush School belongs with the high-level administrators that play key roles in bringing new additions like the Bush Complex to A&M. These administrators have big-time lives and take home even bigger salaries to keep A&M on the cutting edge of Texas higher education. These "power players" use A&M's amenity list as a resume and they flourish or flounder by their record of success.

Their desire to bring the Bush Complex to A&M was



LEN CALLAWAY
columnist

an incredibly sound decision that will prove to be a long-term benefit to the A&M community. The poor part of that decision, much like so many other decisions made by the administration, was made with no regard for the students of Texas A&M and the way the facility would be used. Sure, the Bush Complex has tremendous resources to offer students and this argument is valid; however, the resources cannot be utilized if students cannot get to them in a relatively timely manner.

Time and again the administration makes decisions in order to bring a new facility or service to A&M so that our collective calling card will be more impressive. Then, the administration worries about the particulars — particulars like whether the students can effectively use the new service.

All of that being said, it is time to leave the ranting behind and look for positive alternatives to the current situation.

There are so many different stories floating around out there in administration land as to who owns the land the Bush Complex occupies and the relevant parking lots that there is really no way to know who owns or leases what. Call some administrators and ask them what the deal is — they will all tell you something different.

All sorts of alternatives have been discussed but the same answer always comes back from the administration — "not gonna do it."

Now it appears as if PTTS is asking for a \$30 per semester raise in the student services fee so that it may refurbish the older buses and purchase new ones. They never say "not gonna do it" when it comes to taking our money.

Parking lots may be out of the question but students at least have the right to timely and reliable transportation to and from their classes.

In addition to specialized bus routes around highly visited areas of campus like the Wehner shuttle and the Bush School-Irigan shuttle, PTTS needs to conduct a realistic survey of what it will take to make a noticeable difference in on-campus transportation and then lobby students for the correct amount.

There may not be an easy solution to the transportation problems on our 5,200 acre campus, but if we are willing to pay for it, the least the administration can do is put forth some effort to make it come to fruition.

Len Callaway is a senior journalism major.

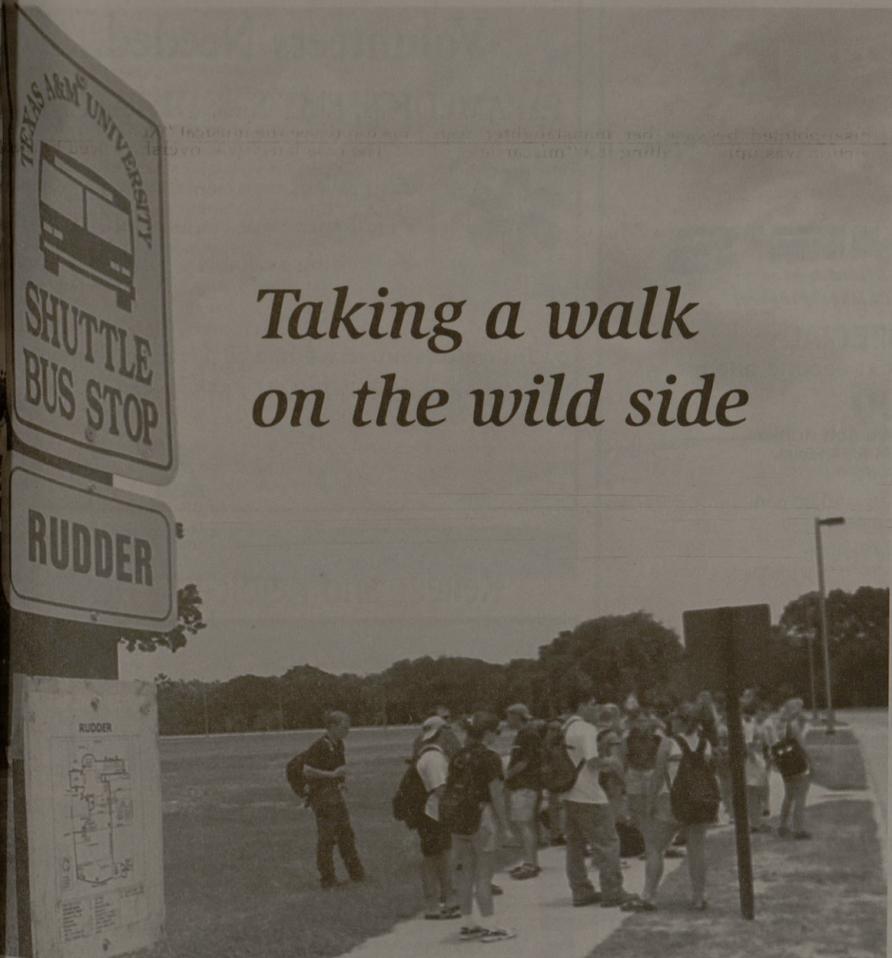


PHOTO BY JAKE SCHRICHLING/THE BATTALION

Taking a walk on the wild side

ist, and the church that I was raised in specializes in freedom of thought and religious expression.

Growing up we taught all the major religions of the world so we could gain an understanding of our own spirituality. No one is persecuted for what they believe, so in keeping with this I can not pass any judgement against anyone else. However, there seems to be some flaws in the submission of women in the Christian faith.

The first sects of Christianity, before Rome had adopted Christianity, did in fact have female priests along with male priests.

Over time this practice had been denounced. Also, if a woman according to the Bible needs to be led by a man in matters of finance and household decisions, what does a good Christian woman living alone do? Does she need to consult her brother, or father on how to spend

her income?

Since a woman who does not defer to men is considered to be false in her teachings, why would any good Christian man want to marry such a heretic?

Submissive, but not inferior seems to remind me of a certain time period of our history, when separate but equal was considered just and right.

After all, is putting "tradition" before professional merit really going to improve the quality of your faith?

Amy Taylor
Class of '00

Columnist fails to support idea

In response to April Towery's June 11,

column:

You'll forgive me if I'm a bit unclear on Towery's phrase "societal adaptation" and what exactly constitutes one and what doesn't. In her column, she describes such an adaptation as men no longer kissing one another in church or Israelites choosing whether or not to eat rabbit. OK.

But how can she argue that allowing women to become pastors is not such an adaptation by society? I believe that at the time of this and the other epistles' writings, women were unequal in the eyes of the male-dominated society.

Any women who acted otherwise would obviously be a harlot, heretic, or another undesirable person.

In today's society (a completely different time, country, etc.), most educated persons recognize that women should not be considered inferior to men and do have the ability to become

whatever they desire.

My main problem with her argument is that she states "The issue is authority. Women should not be in a position of authority in the church" and never gives any credible reasons why this should be the case.

She says that every male on this campus can out bench-press her — well, thank God preaching and ministering don't depend on physical strength.

The quote from Brauch's book appears to undercut her claim, saying "The prohibition against their teaching is occasioned by their involvement in false teaching"

Of course false teachers, men and women, should be reprimanded — but what about those thousands of women pastors who are not "false teachers," who actually preach the Word of God accurately and lovingly to thousands of parishioners?

Should they be denied the opportunity to tell the story of Christ merely because they lack a Y chromosome? According to my interpretation, no. To do so would be placing the lamp under the bowl (Luke 11:33-36).

Mike Williams
Class of '94

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

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MAIL CALL

Submissive, not inferior old logic

In response to April Towery's June 11,

column:
For the past couple of days I have read very interesting points on the subject of a certain female pastor. I happen to be a Unitarian Universal-