Broadening horizons

University Plus offers classes beyond average curriculum

ERIC NEWNAM/THE BATTALION

Virginia Smith, a junior biology major, works a potter's wheel while Jay Proske, a sophomore engineering major looks on.

BY SUSAN OVERCASH
The Battalion

Would not it be great to impress the big date with Travolta-esque moves on the dance floor? Or, better yet, not only being able to pronounce the wine you order at dinner, but actually knowing that it tastes good before it reaches the table? How about spending an evening showing off artwork or pottery instead of looking at others?

Unfortunately, Texas A&M does not offer any wine-tasting classes, and how many can fit art classes into an engineering majors?

Even if A&M did offer an extensive art and crafts curriculum, most students would not have the time or money to participate. Students regularly miss out on developing facets of their personality that would truly make them well-rounded individuals.

Enter University Plus. Tucked away in the basement of the MSC, University Plus is a little known MSC program that offers a variety of inexpensive arts and crafts classes.

Cher McHan, University Plus manager, said the program is a perfect way for students to explore their creative sides.

"University Plus encourages students to balance their academic lives by building strengths through imagination and creativity," McHan said.

Traditional classes offered include swing, ballroom, Latin and belly dancing, language instruction, woodworking, painting and photography. Most classes are offered at the beginner and intermediate levels.

New classes, offered this semester, include wine-tasting class, massage for partners, therapeutic breathing, CPR and support for pregnancy and childbirth.

Laura Kamis, a pottery student and a senior speech communications major, said she became aware of University Plus because of the distinctive class offerings.

"I really like University Plus because they offer interesting, artsy classes not offered in school or classes that I'm interested in but don't have time to take as a credit hour," she said.

All classes are inexpensive, between 15 and 50 dollars an hour, and are designed for A&M students.

McHan said University Plus is a student driven, self-directed program where students are encouraged to bring in ideas and information for new classes.

Student workers with special interest or talent in a specific area teach many classes. Specific departments are also run by student workers.

Students are encouraged to visit the University Plus facilities.

Kim Callier, a pottery instructor and a sophomore chemical engineering major, said University Plus is a good place to hang out and have fun while learning a skill or craft.

"Not all learning is books," Callier said. "Here, you can expand your mind — do something different."

University Plus also offers a place for students to relax and release frustration.

"We're open until 10 p.m. at night so you can relax after class or work," McHan said. "It's non-alcoholic stress relief."

Jason McGarvie, a woodworking instructor and a junior construction science major, said he agrees that University Plus offers a stress relief.

"University Plus gives me somewhere to vent my frustration and stress from school," McGarvie said.

University Plus' extensive facilities are also available for students who want to pursue a hobby or craft, but don't have the necessary equipment and don't need to take a class. A semester shop card is available at a reasonable rate, and allows access for a full semester. Day passes are also available.

The University Plus facilities are currently in a remodeling stage to ensure space for as many students as possible. The facilities include a woodworking area equipped with tools and resources, a pottery room with two kilns, an area designed for stained glass construction, a hallway full of personal darkrooms with chemicals provided and a full photography studio. However, most students do not know these extensive facilities exist.

"It's a big area full of tools and resources and information," McHan says, "And its available to every student on campus."

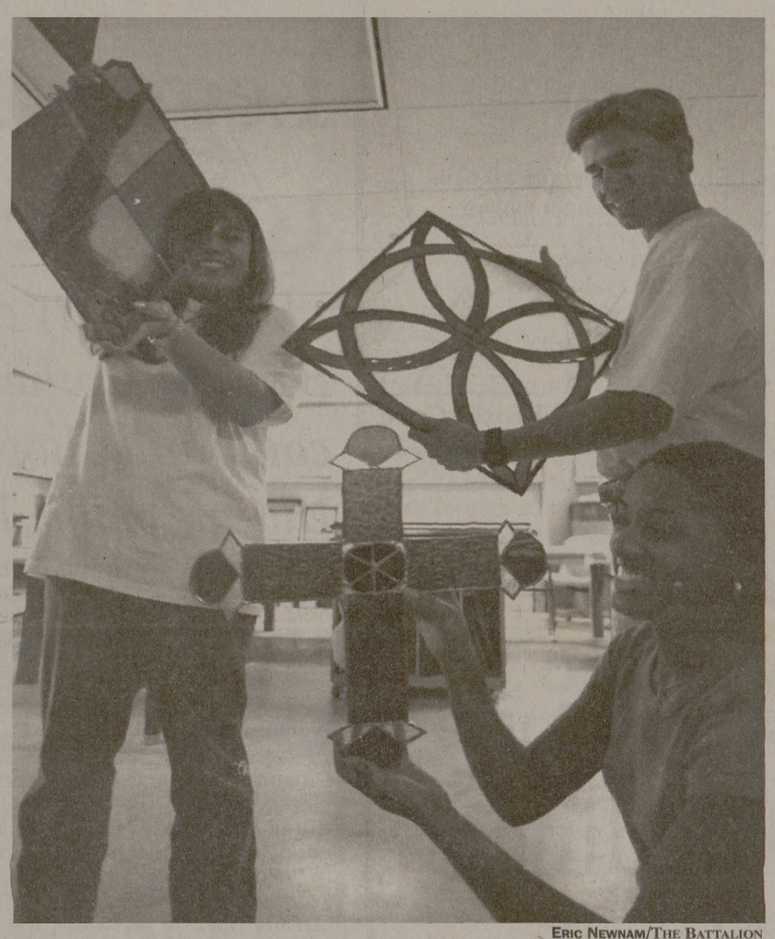
Although University Plus is funded by MSC Student Programs, much funding is self-generated through their custom frame shop and class costs.

University Plus also offers a variety of custom woodworking services and products. "Pretty much anything you can imagine," Callier said."We can do."

To register for a class, simply visit University Plus in the MSC or call at 845-1631.

The remodeling of University Plus is not the only piece of the program under change.

"University Plus is evolving," McHan said. "People should keep an eye on us."



ERIC NEWNAM/THE BATTALION

(Clockwise from left): **Leah Cordoncillo**, a junior international business major, **Chris McRae**, a junior bioenvironmental science major and **Virginia Smith**, a junior biology major, display stained-glass works.

VOLUME

Continued from Page 4

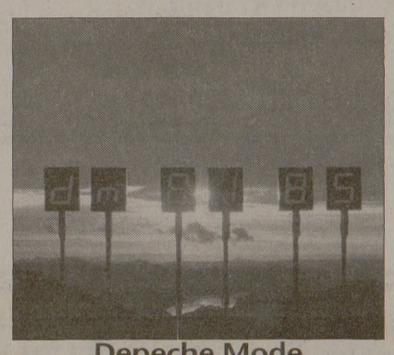
sound of their performance- an accomplishment worthy of tenure. (Grade: A)

—Michelle McNeely

Sugar Ray
14:59
Atlantic Records

For those who think Sugar Ray's 15 minutes of fame are up, think again. On the verge of becoming a one hit wonder, the band has baked up a solid batch of songs to satisfy the cravings of their sweet-tooth fans. "Every Morning" is saturated with summertime blues as fly guy Mark McGrath croons his way into the hearts of suburban America. The pop-rock candy of "Personal Space Invader" is filled with artificial flavors from the 80's, and KRS-One adds his rub-a-dub style to the recipe on "Live & Direct." Still unable to commit to a single music genre, Sugar Ray suffers from a lack of consistency in parts of the album. *14:59* does not contain all of the ingredients recommended for a great album, but is certainly enough to appease the appetite. (Grade: B+)

— Michelle McNeely



Depeche Mode
The Singles 81>85
CD courtesy of Reprise Records

Following the success of U2, many bands from the eighties have been trying to make a comeback in the nineties. However, other bands are missing the one secret ingredient that ties success and the eighties together — talent.

There is an exception, Depeche Mode, a band among the handful of bands that have always been around and always will be around has the ability to reach a wide audience with dark, deep baritone sounds.

Showcasing 17 hit songs from 1981-1985, *81 > 85* revisits what set the band on the track to the hall of fame.

The album is a must in a fan's collection, and a must if Depeche Mode music has always been a passion but the thought of buying five CDs is not appealing.

"People are People," "Blasphemous Rumors" and "Somebody," are among the highlights of the CD, but are not the only great songs collected together on this album. (Grade: A)

—Marium Mohiuddin.

Ani Difranco
Up Up Up Up Up Up
CD Courtesy of Righteous Babe Music

A little over a year ago, Difranco released *Little Plastic Castles*, her most radio-friendly album to date. The album kept the same vibrantly personal lyrics but made the music more accessible to fans not acquainted with Difranco.

With her recent release *Up Up Up Up Up Up* the queen of modern independent music keeps her powerful lyrics and explores a mellow funk groove previous albums such as *Puddle Dive* have flirted with.

While her percussive use of guitars still peppers *Up*, Ani has moved on to other styles.

The influence of blues pulsates through the album making it a much darker album for Difranco.

The album's strongest track is "Everest" where Difranco once again examines society's perception of her as the quintessential "freaky chick."

The album's weakest aspect is its monotonous tone, and the funk, while initially an interesting venture artistically, just turns funky.

Past Difranco albums have benefited from her eclectic style and ability to take listeners on a vocal roller coaster.

While *Up* may not be Difranco's best work, the album's stylings is a forgetable addition for true Ani buffs, but novices may find the album off-putting and feel like her head is stuck up in the clouds. (Grade: C+)

— Aaron Meier

Golden Key National Honor Society

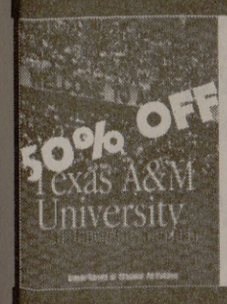
General Meeting
Tuesday, January 26th
8:30 p.m. MSC 292A

Part-Time Inventory/Warehouse

Universal Computer Systems is the industry leader in auto dealership business systems. Continued growth leads us to seek trainees who will learn our computerized inventory system, interact with our employees and distribute and monitor computer parts and equipment. Hours are flexible, Monday through Friday, 7am-10pm. These positions offer real world work experience and long term opportunity. UCS hires non-smokers only. EOE. To apply, please call our personnel department or visit our website.

UCS, Inc.
1-800-883-3031
www.universalcomputersys.com

Start off the semester organized



1998-99
All-University
Calendar

on sale for only $2.98
at the Texas A&M Bookstore

TAMU Career Center Workshop

Interview Savvy

During this seminar, you will have an opportunity to interact with a panel of corporate recruiters.

Over 700 employers will be recruiting on campus beginning early February. Get the facts about "how to interview" from these expert panelists!

Thurs,
Jan 28
206 MSC
5 p.m.

Panelists:
Ann Gibson, YMCA of Greater Houston
Stephen Austin, Ultramar Diamond Shamrock
Ron Novak, The Sherwin Williams Company

Career Center
209 Koldus Building 845 - 5139
aggienet.tamu.edu/cctr