

## Devoid of Life

As the semester rolls on, students at A&M find their classes increasingly empty

BY MATT MCCORMICK  
The Battalion

In the following weeks, students will find parking spots are becoming more available, and the line for the snack machines is short enough so students can actually grab a beverage before class. Many students will also discover empty seats in the computer labs, so it will be easier to check their e-mail.

The number of students on campus dwindles as the semester progresses and students at Texas A&M are inducted into one of the lesser known, but just as important tradition of cutting class.

Omar Hinojosa, a senior agricultural economics major, said skipping class is often dependent on the size of the class.

"I tend to skip more in larger classes because the professor doesn't know you from the next guy," he said. "In a small class, if you skip, the prof will ask you the next time he or she sees you where you were."

Jordan Adams, a junior general studies major, said it is easier to skip in big classes.

"It's much easier in a big class because the professor doesn't even know you are gone," she said.

Many professors on campus try to keep their classes full by giving the students an incentive to attend.

Dr. Wendy Keeney-Kennicutt, associate director of first-year chemistry programs and a chemistry senior lecturer, said attendance used to drop off drastically, often falling to 40 percent, before she was allowed to move away from a set curriculum and make personal additions to it.

"I found it very depressing," she said. "As a teacher, you take it personally when the students aren't there."

Keeney-Kennicutt decided to add unannounced quizzes throughout the semester and has increased her average attendance to between 80 and 90 percent.

"Quizzes keep students in class long enough to see that attending class will help them," she said. Adams said she likes professors who use quizzes as incentives.

"I actually like it when professors use quizzes because I need a reason to attend," she said. "I get

better grades that way. I guess I am just one of those people who needs others to keep checks on me."

Jon Bond, a political science professor, does not offer quizzes as an incentive for his students to come because he said it would take up too much of his lecture time in a class with 260 students. So instead he said he likes to make classes interesting for the students.

"I work hard to make the classes worthwhile for the students," he said.

Hinojosa said interesting classes make it easier for him to make it to class.

"I try to make it to the class when I like the prof and he or she makes the class interesting," Hinojosa said. "If the prof really tries to get the class involved, the students are more apt to be relaxed and learn better, in addition to increasing attendance."

Adams said lectures that are taught basically from the textbook keep her from attending class.

"Usually, lectures that come straight from the book discourage me from going to class," Adams said.

Hinojosa said missing class has not affected his grades because he does not do it often.

"When I do miss, it is usually a large class and there are places like 4-0 & Go and Supplemental Instructions that allow you to catch up on the material."

Nick Reeves, a junior kinesiology major, said the times he has skipped really did not hurt his grades.

"I thought it was kind of funny that I only went to POLS 206 like five times all semester, and I made a B in that class," he said.

Michael Orlovski, a junior construction science major, said he would feel guilty about missing class often because he is afraid of getting left behind.

"I feel guilty about not showing up, and I don't want to miss anything," he said.

Although many students take advantage of programs like Notes-N-Quotes to cover the material they miss, some professors do not allow the note-taking services in their classroom.

Bond said he does not allow Notes-N-Quotes into his classroom because of past mixups. He said that one year, he had back-to-back classes, and the note taker from Notes-N-Quotes was only

SEE ATTENDANCE ON PAGE 5.

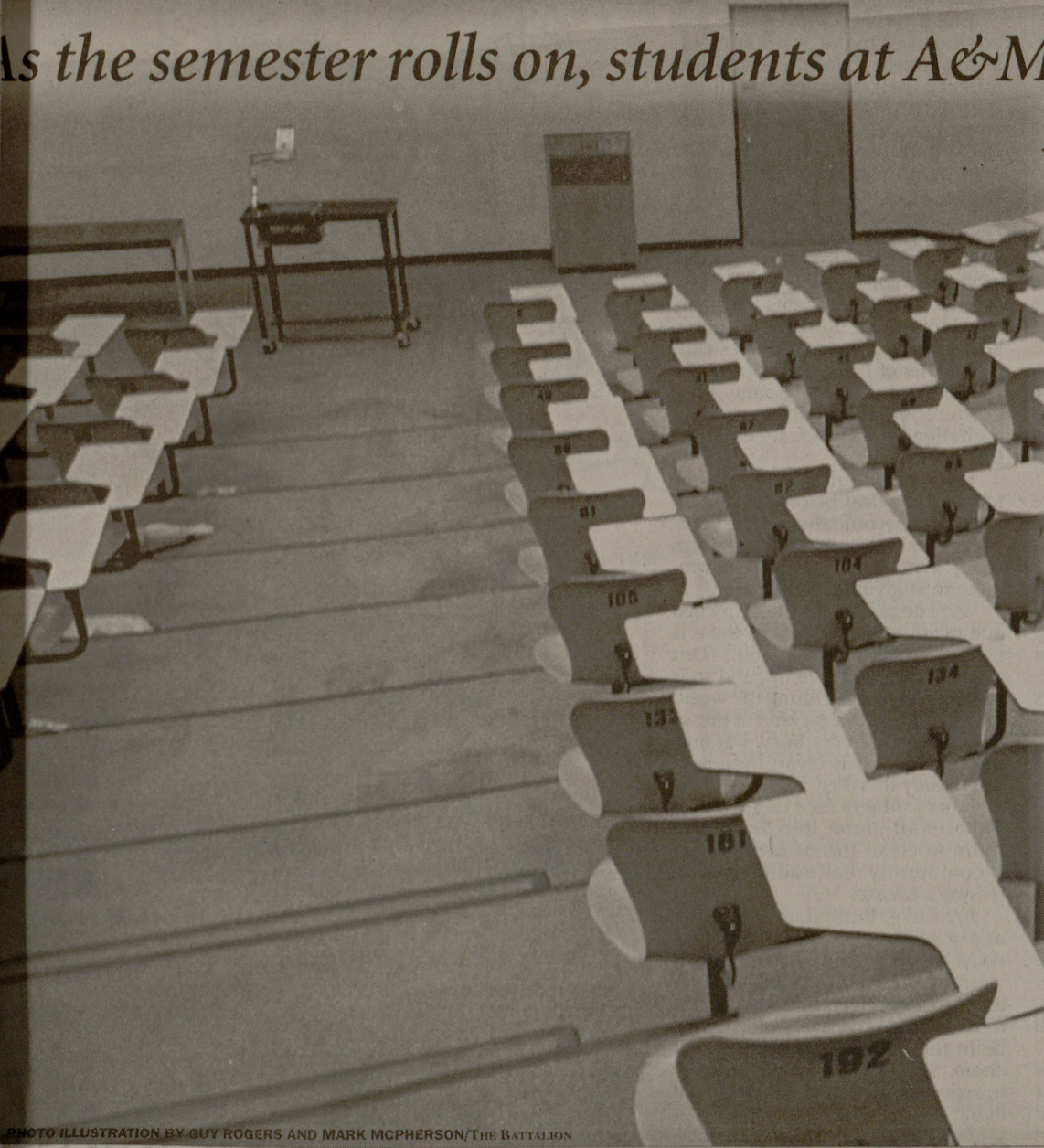


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