

THE BATTALION

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Rule change makes proving plagiarism by faculty difficult

BY STUART HUTSON
The Battalion

Aggies may not lie, cheat or steal, but a June 1999 revision to the University Rules and Regulations which mandates that intent must be proven to convict a faculty member of plagiarism, has some professors asking if the University tolerates those who do.

Colin Allen, associate professor of philosophy, said the revision followed an investigation of plagiarism charges between two professors of sociology that revealed Texas A&M — College Station's definition of plagiarism conflicted with the Texas A&M University System's definition of plagiarism. "Basically what happened was that the investigation was canceled until the differences could be rectified," Allen said. "While they were redefining the rules, the word intent came to be part of our campus' rules."

Allen said the inclusion of "intent" greatly increased the likelihood that professors would not be found guilty of plagiarism by the University.

"To prove intent, a person would usually have to prove some sort of pattern of plagiarism by the professor, which is extremely difficult to do," Allen said. "It seems like the University is saying 'we don't want to hold our faculty members accountable for plagiarism.'"

Harland Prechel, associate professor of sociology, pointed out that The University Student Rules

does not mandate that intent be proven for a student to be found guilty of plagiarism.

"The students are judged purely on whether or not they committed an act of plagiarism, while a faculty member is judged on whether or not he or she actually meant to plagiarize," Prechel said.

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— Colin Allen
associate professor of philosophy

"This is an embarrassing double standard that makes us hold our students to a higher standard than our own faculty, who are suppose to be the role models for our students to follow."

Robert Kennedy, vice president for research and associate provost for graduate studies, said that while the inclusion may make proving guilt difficult, it may often protect professors from abuse of power, false accusations and honest misunderstandings and oversights that may be made by other faculty members.

"There was considerable debate over the inclusion of this word by the Faculty Senate and Academic Program Council," he said. "But our policy does now include intent in its definition of plagiarism."

Max Amoss, a professor of veterinary physiology and chairman of the Faculty Senate Research Committee, said the Faculty Senate chose to include the word after hotly debating the issue because the word was needed to protect professors from allegations of plagiarism that may rob them of their reputations.

"We were referring to plagiarism in the narrow context of scientific research," he said. "In that context, a professor may use the good ideas of another professor without even realizing it, and we needed something to safeguard that a professor wouldn't lose his reputation over an honest mistake."

Mark Goodman, executive director for the Student Press Law Center in Washington, D.C., said the inclusion of the word intent often makes proving guilt in a plagiarism case difficult.

He said proving intent requires that whoever is judging the case to speculate as to what state of mind the defendant holds while committing the alleged crime.

"What you have to do is try to get into the defendant's mind, but the only way you can try to do that is by examining a lot of circumstantial evidence, which can lead to a subjective ruling by the judge," Goodman said. "There is rarely a smoking gun to indicate intent."



CHAD ADAMS/THE BATTALION
Rick Younts (left), senior adviser to Asia Pacific Affairs with Motorola Inc., and Dr. Julian Gaspar, director of the Center for International Business Studies, field questions from the audience at the George Bush Library.

Global disability Forum addresses future of China

BY STASIA RAINES
The Battalion

The director of the Center for International Business Studies said China has taken a huge leap forward in the last 20 years last night at the Kyle R. Younts Forum on United States-China relations.

Dr. Julian Gaspar, who spoke last night at the George Bush Library, said he thinks it is time to question if possible changes need to be made to continue the progress in China.

"The question we must ask is if the Communist party that successfully guided China through the last 20 years will be able to successfully guide China through its transformation in the next 20 years," he said.

Gaspar said a potential problem in China is the possibility of social unrest due to the huge economic disparity between the classes. Gaspar pointed to instances in which this disparity has

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College of Education faces reorganization

BY MATT LOFTIS
The Battalion

The Texas A&M College of Education is gearing up for a large-scale reorganization. The College will submit plans outlining the rearrangement to the Graduate Council tomorrow and to the University Curriculum Committee on Friday for consideration and approval.

According to a memo from Dr. Jane Conoley, dean of the College of Education, foremost on the list of changes is a transformation from five school branches to four, with more specialized areas of coverage.

The current configuration contains five branches named the Department of Educational Administration, the Department of Educational Psychology and the Department of Health and Kinesiology.

According to the memo, the Department of Health and Kinesiology will remain the same in both form and function, but the rest of the areas are preparing to undergo potentially extensive rearrangement.

The first of these changes will be to alter the names of the colleges to better fit function and scope. The College of Education will have four departments following the change, named the Department of Educational Administration and Human Resource Development, which will be a

The goal is to enhance the academic research & service functions associated with our technology work.

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combined form of the Department of Educational Administration and the Department of Human Resource Development, the Department of Teaching, Learning, and Culture, the Department of Educational Psychology and the Department of Health and Kinesiology.

According to a "Nonsubstantive Administrative Change Request" issued by the College of Education, the changes will increase the depth and breadth of research and instruction focused on adults, increase diversity among their student body to meet the needs of an increasingly diverse population and foster the creation of a nationally prominent program in educational technology and distance education.

The "Change Request" said the proposed reorganization will allow the College of Education to better serve the needs of the schools and citizens of Texas in the next century.

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CODY WAGES/THE BATTALION

Students at the Brayton Fire Training Center train for one of many firefighting-related scenarios Wednesday. Last night the students practiced on a mocked-up blaze involving oil equipment.

INSIDE Sports

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A&M safety quick to credit others for his success in football.

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Aggielife

• Looking closer at Kevin Spacey
Spacey speaks about his new acclaimed movie, *American Beauty*.

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Opinion

• Dumb & Dumber
Website address environmental concerns of Bonfire.

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Batt Radio

Listen to KAMU-FM 90.9 at 1:57 p.m. for an interview with Academy Award winner Kevin Spacey.

Administration names interim vice president

BY KENNETH MACDONALD
The Battalion

Charles Sippial, vice president for Physical Plant since August 1995, has assumed his new duties as interim vice president for administration. His new position was left vacant by Dr. Jerry Gaston, deputy chancellor of the Texas A&M System, and will be permanently filled after a nationwide search is completed.

Sippial said that while his job has changed, his mission to provide service to A&M remains the same.

"This is a career broadening opportunity," Sippial said. "It is a larger job with more responsibilities, but about the same amount of business."

Sippial said the transition has been very comfortable for him.

"Dr. Gaston is a good leader and mentor, it is easy to follow in his shoes," he said. "I appreciate the opportunity Dr. Bowen has given me."

Sippial will oversee Food Services, Parking Traffic and Transportation Services, Geographic Information and Graphic Services, Universi-



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ty Police Department, Human Resources and the Physical Plant.

Sippial was a supervisor of maintenance and operations at Air Force bases in the U.S. and Europe and retired as a Colonel. He was also director of the physical plant at San Diego State University for six years prior to coming to A&M.

Texas A&M President Dr. Ray M Bowen said Sippial's broad-base will aid him in his temporary position.

"Chuck Sippial has done an outstanding job in managing the varied facets of our Physical Plant," Bowen said. "I am confident that he will do an equally good job overseeing our overall administrative functions during this interim period."

Until Sippial returns, former assistant director Dick Williams will act as interim vice president of Physical Plant.

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Committee's contest offers \$3,000 prize for oratory skills

BY ROLANDO GARCIA
The Battalion

Six Texas A&M students will compete for over \$3,000 in cash prizes in the "What's the Word" oratorical contest tonight at 7 in the MSC.

The topic for the competition, sponsored by the Black Awareness Committee (BAC), is "Bias in the Media: How Stereotypes Are Perpetuated."

Tammy Henry, BAC president and a sophomore political science major, said the contest encourages dialogue on important issues and current events.

"There's a lot of subjects [students] need to speak out on, and this is a way for students to voice their opinion," Henry said. "And public speaking is also a skill you need in the real world."

Henry said the BAC hosted the first "What's the Word" contest last year. The topic was the ramifications of the *Hopwood* court decision that restricted using race as a basis for admission into a Texas institute of higher education and for awarding scholarships.

With the success of the previous competition, the BAC hopes to make the contest an annual event.

The Committee chose "Bias in the Media" as the topic for this year to incorporate several themes, primarily in light of minority groups recently criticizing television networks for not placing enough African-Americans and Hispanics in lead acting roles.

"This ties in several important issues because the media is how we get our information," Henry said. "We wanted a broad subject, and this can address not just race, but other stereotypes like gender and age."

Twenty-four students had originally applied, but preliminary rounds narrowed the field to the six finalists and each contestant will have five minutes to deliver his or her speech.

The first place winner will receive a cash prize of \$1,500. Second place will receive \$1,000, and \$750 will go to the third place finisher.

The judging panel consists of Student Body President Will Hurd; MSC Council President Bill Anderson; Rodney McCleendon, coordinator for Student Retention and Development at the Multicultural Services Department; and Carolyn Sandoval, the assistant coordinator for diversity education at Multicultural Services.