

THE BATTALION

106 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

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Disagreement leads to delay in 60-60-60 Q-drop bill's fate

BY STUART HUTSON
The Battalion

Students who may have expected their number allotted Q-drops to jump from three to four sometime this academic school year may just have to wait longer due to a disagreement between the Texas A&M Faculty Senate and the Academic Operations Committee (AOC) regarding the 60-60-60 Q-drop bill.

The bill calls for administrators to allow two Q-drops for the first 60 hours of classes and another two for the student's following 60 hours. The bill also calls for the extension of the Q-drop deadline from the 50th class day to the 60th.

In Oct. 1998, former executive vice president of administration for the Student Government Association, Bryan Minyard, said he hoped the bill would be instituted as early as this academic year. The bill was originally passed by the Student Senate in November of 1998, and was passed by the Faculty Senate the following January with a provision that the Q-drop deadline would remain the 50th class day.

Brent Spencer, chair of academic affairs for Student Senate and a senior microbiology major, said

Current Q-Drop System	Proposed 60-60-60 Bill
Number of Q-Drops given to each student	Number of Q-Drops given to each student
- 3 Q-Drops given to each student	- 2 Q-Drops given per each 60 hours of students' degree plan
Deadline for students to use Q-Drop	Deadline for students to use Q-Drop
- 50 days into the school year	- 60 days into the school year

ROBERT HYNCEK/THE BATTALION

the bill returned to the Faculty Senate, who then accepted the deadline extension. He said the bill was sent to A&M President Dr. Ray M. Bowen, who sent it to the AOC for approval and possible implementation.

"This is just the way that academic committee's at A&M work," Spencer said. "There may have been some people that expected the bill to be implemented quickly, but it was never really a truth."

Executive vice president and provost, Dr. Ronald Douglas said the delay of the bill was

caused by a disagreement between the AOC and the Faculty Senate about certain aspects of the bill.

"There has been a log-jam here because of a difference of beliefs about what is best," Douglas said.

"We have tried to get the issue resolved as quickly as possible, but it has dragged out, especially over the summer."

Douglas said a committee has been formed to resolve the differences.

Dr. Mark Weichold, associate provost for undergraduate programs and academic services, said the committee's member selection, which was finalized last Wednesday, will be composed of three members of the AOC, three members of the Faculty Senate and three students.

"The goal of the committee is to look at the bill and Q-drops as a whole to try to work out some provisions in the bill put in by the Faculty and Student senates that would be difficult to implement," he said.

Weichold said the problems include items such as what courses will be included in students' 60 hours and if the deadline can be pushed back.

Weichold said that after the AOC committee reviews the bill, it will probably return to the Student and Faculty senates to be passed in its modified forms.

Aggie architects to help design Dallas hospital

BY ERIKA DOERR
The Battalion

Keeping the needs and wants of children suffering from illnesses in mind, faculty and students in the College of Architecture are working on a 700,000-square-foot addition to the Children's Medical Center of Dallas.

J. Thomas Regan, dean of the College of Architecture, said the project will help the medical center address its changing clinical and parking needs, and fulfill its aim of becoming a world-class research facility for pediatric medicine.

"A project of this magnitude raises students' level of understanding to form concrete proposals," Regan said. "Texas A&M has the largest college of architecture in the country."

Regan said he is enthusiastic about the project and believes A&M faculty, students and former students will benefit from the effort.

"This is a real leap forward for the entire [College of] Architecture."

— Jeremy Tilley
junior environmental design major

"The College of Architecture has a great opportunity to work with two Texas firms — HKS Architects and Centex Construction Group," he said. "The payoffs for the students, those of learning and confidence, are immeasurable."

Thomas Smith, a junior environmental design major, said nine teams, each consisting of approximately two construction science students, two mechanical students, two designers, one architecture graduate and one construction science graduate are working on designs for landscape and buildings for the medical center addition.

Smith said the College of Architecture has worked alongside several architectural firms, gaining life experience in real-world situations.

"The student and faculty teams will present their designs and results at the Children's Medical Center on Dec. 8 to HKS Architects and Centex Construction Group," he said. "Each team will have a 20-minute presentation period followed by a 10-minute question-and-answer period."

A jury, consisting of the owner of the Children's Medical Center of Dallas, HKS Architects, Centex and an electrical-mechanical contractor will pick the top three designs, he said.

Jeremy Tilley, a junior environmental design major, said this project gives the Children's Medical Center architects fresh ideas and inspirations for designs.

"This is a real leap forward for the entire [College of] Architecture," he said. "This project incorporates departments from landscape, Hvac [heating and cooling systems], construction science and design teams."

Dr. John Bryant, assistant professor of construction science, said the five disciplines essential to the project are cost controls, design, architecture, mechanical-electrical and landscape architecture.

"Everything essentially revolves around the delivery schedule, when and how long the construction will take and the cost of building," he said.

Bryant said the architecture students are the sellers of their product; they must be able to solve the problems of parking and entrance access, while keeping in mind the needs of the children with illnesses.

"Around 320,000 square-feet will be used for outpatient, clinical and research facilities," he said. "Not only are the students and faculty working together to find the most cost-effective ways to build the addition to the hospital, but we are keeping the needs of the children in mind, as well."

George J. Mann, the project's co-director and the Ronald L. Skaggs Endowed Professor of Health Facilities Design, said the college's students have worked on major architecture projects like this one in the past.

"We have worked with the Children's Medical Center of Dallas before, in 1994," Mann said.

SEE ARCHITECTURE ON PAGE 2.

Health fair offers free screenings, entertainment

BY DIANE XAVIER
The Battalion

Health Fair 1999, "Step into health for the New Millennium" is today from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. in the MSC Flagroom, hallway and Rudder Fountain area. Health Fair, coordinated annually by Student Health Services' health education, will feature various campus and community health organizations promoting awareness of current health events and offering free testing.

Margaret Griffith, A.P. Beulich Health Center health education coordinator, said more than 40 campus and community organizations will participate in the event.

"This fair is for everyone in the Bryan-College Station communities to find out the resources available for them on and off campus," Griffith said. "It is really neat and important for people to learn about different services and health topics they have never thought about."

Free health screenings including HIV testing, cholesterol, glucose and blood pressure checks will be available.

In addition, free-flu-shot coupons will be distributed to the first 400 students who visit

Health Fair Activities

Free health screenings

- HIV testing
- cholesterol
- glucose
- blood pressure checks

Free flu shot coupons

- to first 400 students

Performers

- Aggie Wranglers
- Texas Aggie Dance Team
- Century Singers

ROBERT HYNCEK/THE BATTALION

and register at the Student Health Services table.

"The flu shot service will be really helpful, and students should take advantage of it because flu season is just around the corner," Griffith said.

Festivities include live entertainment by the Texas Aggie Dance Team, Aggie Wranglers and Century Singers.

"This event is well attended every year, and students really enjoy it," Griffith said. "This will also help students become aware of the different organizations on campus. We just want students to have a good time."

Throughout the day, participants can register to win from the 40 door prizes provided by area businesses and agencies.

Engine inspection



KIMBER HUFF/THE BATTALION

Nathan Osterman (left), a senior marketing major, and Cassidy Moore (right), a freshman biomedical sciences major, examine the engine of a Hummer as Bryan Masters (center), looks on. Osterman and Masters were recruiting for the Texas Army National Guard outside the MSC Tuesday.

Scavenger hunt

A&M Prof studies habits of Texas' vultures

BY BRADY CREEL
The Battalion

As the winter months approach, birds are often seen flying south in pursuit of a warmer climate in which they can endure the cold season, but one type of bird is likely to remain in Texas year-round—the buzzard.

Dr. David Phalen, a professor in the College of Veterinary Medicine, said buzzards are migratory birds, but those living in Texas can usually ride through the winter here.

"Their population is limited only by their food supply," he said. Keith Randall, a senior media communications specialist for the Office of University Relations, said most people do not realize the nature of these scavengers. In fact, "buzzard" is not even the correct term to use when referring to them — they are vultures. The turkey vulture and black vulture are two types commonly found in North America.

"Most people don't under-

stand buzzards, and even take them for granted," he said.

The birds are commonplace among ranches throughout Texas. Climate and other factors claim the lives of thousands of animals each year, and buzzards prey upon their carcasses. They are often seen on farms eating dead cattle, sheep, goats, pigs, and other farm animals, not to mention wildlife and roadkill.

Phalen said vultures are necessary for the environment because of their ability to clean up by scavenging.

"They clean up the countryside in a natural way, and in doing so, they provide a valuable service," he said.

The bird's digestive system is a product of evolution. Phalen said vultures are capable of eating almost anything, and they are not sensitive to botulism toxins, found in one-day old carcasses, which could kill humans.

"By eating what they have for thousands of years, they have the ability to break down

BUZZARDS A.K.A. VULTURES

OFTEN SEEN EATING DEAD CATTLE, SHEEP, GOATS, PIGS AND ROADKILL

CAPABLE OF EATING ALMOST ANYTHING AND ARE NOT SENSITIVE TO BOTULISM TOXINS

A LOCAL GROUP OF BUZZARDS CONSISTING OF CLOSE TO 100 BIRDS LIVES NEAR EASTERWOOD AIRPORT

JEFF SMITH/THE BATTALION

just about anything inside their stomach," he said.

Vultures locate their food through their acute senses of sight and smell. The birds will glide along by riding on warm air currents rising off the ground, which enables them to spend hours in the air with little effort. Although one might see a lone buzzard circling above, others more than likely are circling close by.

"They can glide around and scout out what's down below on land, and when one vulture sees another riding, others will ride too," he said.

SEE VULTURES ON PAGE 2.

Arkansas governor to speak on rhetoric's role in politics

BY CHRIS CARTER
The Battalion

Arkansas Gov. Mike Huckabee will speak about the future of rhetoric and presidential leadership tonight at 7:30 in Rudder Auditorium as a part of the George Bush School of Government and Public Service's Program in Presidential Rhetoric.

The title of Huckabee's speech, "Republicans From Backstreet to Mainstreet," will examine the development of the Republican Party in the southern United States.

Dr. Kurt Ritter, a faculty member of the Program in Presidential Rhetoric and a speech communication professor, said Huckabee's appearance is valuable because he is part of the future of political rhetoric.

"Because Gov. Huckabee is the youngest governor in the country, we are getting the perspective of the future of politics and rhetoric, as opposed to having someone who is at the end of their political career," he said. "It is interesting that Huckabee is one of several emerging political figures who do not have a background in law. I think

this may be a trend that could grow into the future."

The Program in Presidential Rhetoric is the research unit of the Center for Presidential Studies at Texas A&M which brought numerous dignitaries to the A&M campus for discussions on political topics affecting various facets of the presidential-political process.

Dr. Leroy G. Dorsey, a faculty member of the Program in Presidential Rhetoric and a speech communication associate professor, said the lecture is part of a continuing effort to educate A&M students on being a leader in a democratic society in the 21st century.

"The Governor's visit continues the tradition of this program of bringing great speakers from academia, the media, advocacy groups and government to the Texas A&M campus to educate future democratic leaders," he said. "This is a public service to the students of this university so they may learn what it means to be a leader in a society such as ours."

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1999

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