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Weather: Partly cloudy with a high of 94 and a low of 74.

THE BATTALION

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106 YEARS AT TEXAS A&M UNIVERSITY

Report shows alcohol, drug problems

University officials say abuse, violations are not as bad as it seems

MAUREEN KANE
The Battalion

The numbers in a recent report by the Chronicle of Higher Education reflect that Texas A&M University has a problem with alcohol and drug violations.

Of the 29 four-year colleges and universities listed in the report, all located in Texas, A&M's main campus was reported to have the most alcohol violations and the second-highest number of drug violations.

During the 1998-'99 academic year, A&M reported 220 liquor-law violations, whereas the second-highest ranking school, Southwest Texas State University, reported 181 violations.

Brent Paterson, director of Student Life, said the problem is not as severe as it seems.

Paterson said A&M's high number of alcohol violations could be explained by comparing the student populations of the schools that were studied.

"We have close to 10,000 students on campus. We have more students that live on campus than those other institutions," Paterson said.

He said he did not know of any other reason for the high number of alcohol violations at A&M.

Director of Security and University Police Department (UPD) Bob Wiatt has another explanation.

"When we issue a citation, we count that as an arrest. That interpretation has been argued, and this year a definition was adjudicated by the Department of Education - these count as arrests. Many universities are not doing that, and this is where there is a conflict because universities are understating the problem," he said.

"Many universities interpret arrest as being confined in jail. However, the Department of Education defines arrest as stopping a person, that person being detained, being identified, given a citation and then allowing the person to leave."

Wiatt said he lists every citation he gives as an arrest, in accordance with the definition of arrest given by the Department of Education.

"We're having to keep statistics on places close to the University but off campus, like fraternity and sorority houses, that were previously under city police jurisdiction. Now the Department of Education says that we control those areas," Wiatt said.

Changes in federal reporting guidelines passed by Congress in the fall of 1998 require colleges to not only report crimes that occur not only

on campus, but those that take place close to campus in contiguous areas - areas adjacent to college campuses - as well. This new legislation has created a debate between city and University police over what areas are contiguous.

"We get a bunch of drunks as they cross University Drive onto Texas A&M University property. UPD picks up all those clowns coming across the street carrying booze in their hands. When they come across the street, that's our property, our jurisdiction. Northgate is in CSPD's jurisdiction, not ours. To go across the street (Northgate) and get picked up by UPD would be duplicative," Wiatt said.

Wiatt said he does not think A&M's alcohol problem is more serious than any other university.

"We have no more serious alcohol problems on this campus than any other institution and are no worse or better than any other institution. Students all over this campus and elsewhere do this, and every campus has the same problem with alcohol," Wiatt said.

Danny Shaha, coordinator for Student Judicial Services (SJS), described what is entailed in processing student alcohol and drug violations.

"We hold hearing, adjudicate violations that

happen on campus by any student enrolled at A&M. When an incident is reported to the office by police, we assess if there is enough information to charge for a violation. If so, we will charge a violation, then the student has the opportunity for a pre-hearing. We then set up a hearing, during which the student is found responsible or not responsible," Shaha said.

"If a student is responsible, sanctions are applied. The sanctions rank from a warning to expulsion from the University, and they occur for any violation in higher or lower degree depending on the case. We try to make it an educational process. If the student is found not responsible, the file is shredded, but we keep a record of the incident. We do not associate the student's name with the incident."

According to Shaha, there were 43 alleged alcohol violations during the summer of 1999, and 120 during the fall of 1999.

He also said the number of violations is small in relation to the student population at Texas A&M.

"I don't see A&M as having a larger issue with alcohol than other campuses, but we do have some education to do with our students," Shaha said.

TEXAS UNIVERSITIES LIQUOR LAW VIOLATIONS
1998 - 1999 ACADEMIC YEAR

32 Baylor
56 UT Austin
173 Texas Tech
181 Southwest Texas State
220 Texas A&M University

*according to the Chronicle of Higher Education

JP BEATO/THE BATTALION

Spinning wheel ...



Vicky Andrews demonstrates the use of a spinning wheel to spin wool for the Brazos Valley Embroider's Guild of America at the College Station Library. The group meets on Monday nights.

Research team analyzes diversity on A&M campus

KIM TRIFILIO
The Battalion

In Spring 1997, a research team analyzed the Texas A&M University campus climate for diversity. This study was a step toward attracting more diverse students to A&M.

The results show how students, faculty and staff experience A&M. More than 90 percent of faculty and staff agree that "diversity of the student body is important to the educational process," and more than 90 percent of all campus groups agreed with the statement that "diversity is good for A&M and should be actively promoted." Also, over half of the campus groups rated the Texas A&M climate as both "friendly" and "competitive." At the same time, groups were likely to characterize the climate as substantially inclusive and non-racist.

The University publishes a campus climate update three times a year to provide information on how the University is making improvements of diversity on campus.

Dr. Mark Weichold, associate provost for undergraduate programs and academic affairs, said the Academic Affairs Committee was created as a result of the campus climate study.

"We are to provide the provost and his staff with ideas and give recommendations on how to make the campus more diverse. We have very good discussions and we should come to a conclusion in about two or three meetings. We are still at the brainstorming stage," Weichold said. "The Academic Affairs Committee is not a permanent committee."

Becky Pettit, coordinator of diversity education, said the Diversity Training Institute is another program that teaches new skills to people involved in diversity education.

"The purpose of this program is to increase effectiveness in encouraging people to appreciate diversity. Here at A&M, we are leaders of multicultural education. We teach skills on diversity education," Pettit said.

Pettit said U-ACT, University Awareness for Cultural Togetherness, is a student organization that was created because Multicultural Services wanted to acknowledge the diversity on campus.

"U-ACT started in 1994 with a purpose to educate about different cultures. The campus climate study validates the work

that U-ACT does. In the study, respondents said they valued diversity, and the students were very interested in learning about that," Pettit said. "I know of at least four other universities that now have programs similar to U-ACT," she said.

Pettit said the Diversity Training Institute is primarily focused on faculty and staff members who work in multicultural education.

"We continue to be leaders because we use the campus climate study and show that you can use that data to drive the way we do our teaching and training. Not many institutions have done anything of this caliber," she said.

Carolyn Sandoval, assistant coordinator of diversity education, said the Diversity Training Institute is open for people nationwide to come and learn how to develop multicultural programs.

"We give them hands-on tools to work with. We also give them an opportunity to learn how they fit in a multicultural society. At the institute we talk about our campus climate study and give them ideas how to drive their initiative," she said.

Sandoval said many universities have modeled the programs at A&M.

"A&M is very progressive in our diversity programs. It really puts us on the map. We are probably one of the best kept secrets. I think people are surprised and very pleased with what we have here," Sandoval said.

Findings also conclude that most of the students surveyed indicate that diversity and multicultural awareness programs help prepare students to function in a diverse work environment.

Miguel Salazar, a junior history major, said he thinks the campus is diverse and students have many opportunities to get involved in organizations that promote diversity.

"We have students that come from all over the place. I know there's programs like ExCEL to get students involved in diversity, and I think it gets promoted a lot. I have a lot of friends who go to it and they are pretty excited about it. The programs are all there. You just have to go out and look for them," he said.

The study showed that African-American students are most likely to indicate encountering discrimination and harassment, but less than 5 percent reported such an incident to a proper University authority. The study also examined the source of discrimination. The main source of discrimination for undergraduates appears to be other students.

"I have never felt discriminated against here at A&M, but I have friends who have," Salazar said.

The study also revealed low levels of participation among Caucasian students in organized opportunities to learn about diversity. Only 35 percent of Caucasian students report participating in cross-cultural activities, and less than 10 percent attended Whoopstock.

Vicki Romine, a junior international studies major, said she does not think the campus is diverse.

"I don't think the campus is diverse at all. That is not what A&M publicizes, though," Romine said. "I have never heard of programs like Whoopstock until just now."

Petroleum majors decrease

Economy affects enrollment in engineering programs

JOSEPH PLEASANT
The Battalion

Petroleum engineers are few in number and in high demand. As the oil industry changes, fewer students are choosing the petroleum engineering route.

Enrollment in Texas A&M's Department of Petroleum Engineering dropped from 1,619 students in 1983 to 230 in 1999.

Dr. Charles Bowman, head of the petroleum engineering department, said the number of students seeking a degree in the field of petroleum engineering varies from

year to year because student enrollment tends to be a function of the job market.

"We have seen a falloff in the last two years; it tends to track the oil market," Bowman said.

He said that after a year of low oil prices and corporate downsizing, the number of students entering the department decreases.

Bowman said A&M currently recruits students in high school to enter the field of petroleum engineering because of the low enrollment.

In an attempt to increase inter-

est in petroleum engineering, Bowman said the department usually draws its students from the Houston area, where the oil industry is more widely understood.

Bowman said the nature of A&M's admissions process also affects the department's ability to secure students.

"This is a very competitive school, and some students [who] are qualified for the petroleum engineering program do not get in," Bowman said.

Amy Omar, reservoir engineer

See **PETROLEUM** on Page 2.

Satisfaction at Texas A&M

