

A&M, Blinn enrollment largest ever

Graduate student numbers main factor in increase

By STEPHEN METCALF
The Battalion

Texas A&M enrollment has marked a milestone this fall, surpassing 44,000 students for the first time in school history.

"We have definitely been challenged to provide the same high-quality education and services this semester," said Texas A&M Provost and Executive Vice President Ronald G. Douglas.

A&M ranked as the nation's fourth-largest university last year with 43,442 students. This fall, enrollment increased by 639 to 44,081.

The breakdown of enrollment indicates mixed results for Texas A&M's Vision 2020 goals to increase graduate student enrollment and minority representation. Graduate student enrollment made up 467 of the increase, with undergraduate studies making up the remainder of the increase. Total graduate-student enrollment now stands at 7,328.

"We are at a point where graduate students make up 16 to 17 percent of our total enrollment," Douglas said. "Most universities have anywhere from 20 to 25 percent of total enrollment coming from graduate students."

Douglas said the emphasis on developing graduate programs is a means of improving the reputation of the entire University.

"Quite often, the reputation of a university is associated with the reputation of its graduate students," Douglas said. "In order to be a more comprehensive research University, we are looking at the production of new knowledge, and graduate students play an integral part in providing this to the University."

A&M officials were also encouraged by minority enrollment this fall, despite a reduction of African-American and Hispanic students on campus. African-American enrollment totaled 1,071, compared to 1,122 last year. Hispanic enrollment dipped by 75 students to 3,686.

Freshman enrollment of Hispanic, Asian-American and Native American students increased by 96, 20 and two, respectively. African-American freshmen enrollment fell by seven to total 174 this semester. Interim Assistant Provost for Enrollment Joe Estrada pointed to the increase in minority enrollment among entering freshmen as evidence of progress toward Vision 2020 goals.

"We will continue to explore all possibilities to make our enrollment more reflective of the population of Texas," Estrada said, "and that includes taking all possible steps to make qualified under-represented students more aware of the great opportunities at Texas A&M."

Record numbers secure Blinn's 10th-largest ranking

By ARAJI BHATTACHARYA
The Battalion

For the first time, Blinn College has surpassed a 12,000-student enrollment rate, with the Bryan campus encompassing 8,600 students.

"This semester marks 21 consecutive fall semesters of enrollment increases and secures Blinn's ranking as the 10th largest two-year college in Texas," said Dr. James Calarco, director of institutional research, in a press release.

Congruent with Texas A&M's census collection, Blinn reports its class figures to the state on the 12th day of class. This year's numbers reported an 8-percent increase in enrollment from last year. A boost in the area's population, higher A&M admission requirements and an increase in Blinn's technical program have contributed to the enrollment increase.

Gena Parsons, public in-

formation officer for Blinn, said a significant portion of Blinn's student population is co-enrolled in A&M. The co-enrollment rate has remained fairly steady recent years, as Blinn tries providing students with the best academic environment possible, in addition to more accessibility from the instructors.

"We have found that about 1,400 students co-enroll because either they can't get certain classes or times at A&M, or just prefer the smaller class setting," Parsons said.

Blinn classes hold 30 to 40 students, versus an A&M lecture class of several hundred students. However, Parsons said many Blinn professors are required to meet and exceed the standards set for an A&M professor.

"Blinn instructors are required to get a master's with 18 postgraduate hours within their discipline," she said.

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Student retells last memories of best friend's tragic death

By JASON LINCOLN
The Battalion

She never got a chance to say goodbye.

As Carol George stared down Runway 14 at Coulter Field Saturday, that was her solemn thought. Her roommate and her best friend, Sarah Miller, lost her life on the same field one year ago. The last words George told Miller were, "you'll be fine. Just have a blast."

Sarah Miller and the Cessna single engine aircraft carrying her on her first Aggie sky dive stalled out just seconds after takeoff, killing her and four others.

Now George is back on Coulter Field strapping on her parachute. She said the memory of Sept. 18, 1999, still haunts her with every jump.

Three weeks into the Fall '99 semester, the two freshman roommates had quickly become friends.

So when Miller decided to go sky diving with the Texas A&M Sky Diving Club, George was right by her side.

The two could not make the jump together because the plane was too small. George went first.

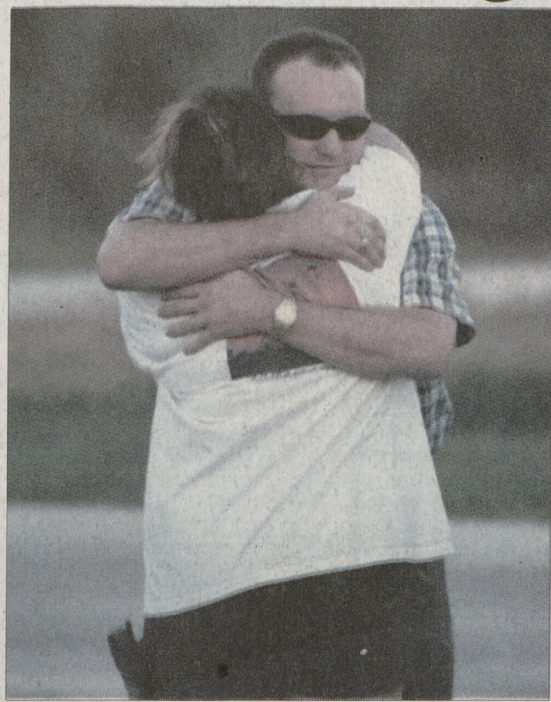
But that first jump did not go as planned. Instead of landing close to the hangar on her static line jump, a method which causes the parachute to be deployed automatically after leaving the aircraft, George landed about two miles away. It was almost sunset when she made her way back to the airstrip, where she received a warm embrace from her roommate.

"She ran up to me and said, 'I'm so glad you're ok. I was so worried,'" George said. "I told her, 'good luck, you'll be fine. Just have a blast.' That was the last time I saw her."

Just minutes later, George rounded a hangar to find a frantic scene with some people running for their cars, others staring off into the distance. When she followed their eyes, she saw the smoke.

"We all just dropped to our knees," George said. "Nobody would let me out there, and we just waited. We were all convinced they would be fine. After all, they weren't that far off the ground. We never expected what we got."

George's first clue to the severity of the situation was when ambulances rolled down the runway. Short-



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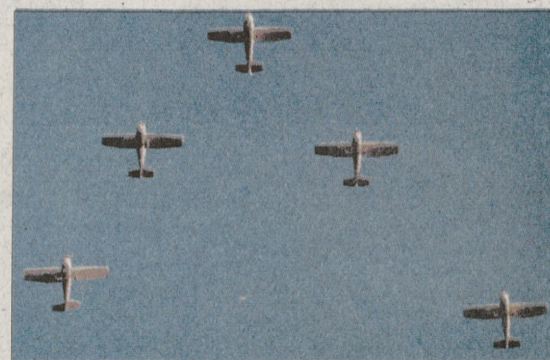
ly after, the word began to circulate that everyone was gone, except one. George was told that Miller was still breathing.

George called Miller's parents to tell them the news; they were shocked because they did not even know Miller was jumping.

George rushed to St. Joseph's Regional Health Center in Bryan to be with her roommate. But when she got there, she was informed that it was not Miller — they had misidentified the person, and it was Lela Futch, who later died.

A year and five days later, George was staring down the black tarmac again — remembering the day she lost her best friend.

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A missing man formation flew over Coulter Field on Sept. 18, (top) while onlookers remembered their loved ones (left). As part of the anniversary of the death of five Aggies, 61 sky divers jumped this weekend in remembrance of them.

Aggies commemorate anniversary with jumps

The Texas A&M Sky Diving Club made its return to Coulter Field memorable by ensuring that the memory of Aggies Lela Futch, Sarah Miller, Rob Puryear, Jonathan Warden and Mark Woodings leaves a lasting impression on the Texas sky diving community.

Five days after the one-year anniversary of the plane crash that killed five Aggie sky divers, the canopies were back over Coulter Field. A total of 420 canopies opened and landed on the grass in-field of the airstrip as part of the Ags Over Texas Memorial Sky Diving Boogie, a three-day, two-night jump in memory of the five killed.

"It has been a really intense week," said Aggie Sky Diving Club President Jenny Hajovsky, a junior psychology major. "This is what it is all about — everybody getting together like one big family. It has been a really special week for us."

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Face Off



STUART VILLANUEVA/THE BATTALION

Paula Joseph receives a face painting by Holly Reagle, a local artist, at the Sunflower Festival in Hearne Saturday. Reagle has been painting faces at festivals and for dramatic performances for four years.

Professor analyzes murders

By MAUREEN KANE
The Battalion

A mass murderer has been typically thought of as a psychotic person who cannot control his whims. However Dr. Robert Zajonc, a psychology professor at Stanford University, argued in a speech that massacres are never spontaneous and are products of deliberate intelligence.

Using the Holocaust as an example, he stated that massacres require "vast administrative apparatus and command a very substantial budget," and that victims of the Holocaust were "executed according to meticulously worked out plans."

"All human massacres are considered and organized and need important features of organization," Zajonc said.

This reasoning leads Zajonc to disagree with the common belief that parallels can be drawn between the behavior of humans committing mass murder and aggressive animal behavior.

Zajonc said that most books about massacres have been written

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System Board of Regents approve music degree

By VANESSA FOX
Special to The Battalion

The appointment of Dr. James S. Cole as interim president of the Texas A&M Health Science Center and a new music major at A&M were among the items approved by the Texas A&M Board of Regents during its two-day meeting at Tarleton State University. During the committee and board meetings, 32 agenda items were addressed and 14 reports were made regarding the A&M System.

Effective Oct. 1, Cole, dean of the Baylor College of Dentistry, will also serve as interim president of the Health Science Center institution.

A proposal for a degree program leading to a Bachelor of Arts in Music passed and will be submitted to the Texas High-

er Education Coordinating Board for final approval. If approved, the degree program, which will branch out from music and intertwine with disciplines such as philosophy and visual arts, will be offered at A&M through the College of Liberal Arts.

On Friday, the Regents approved the creation of the Bush School's Institute for Science, Technology and Public Policy. The family of former Lt. Governor Bob Bullock donated \$1 million to endow the program. The director of the new institute will be given the Bob Bullock Chair in Government and Public Service.

"It helps the research within the Bush school by bringing out outstanding faculty and research projects," said A&M President Dr. Ray M. Bowen. "The Institute for Science, Technology and Pub-

lic Policy will promote to become a better resource and to impact those students' area of study."

During a closed session, the Regents passed the project justification of the Football Complex and Academic Center. The proposal includes plans for a player's lounge, coaches' offices, team meeting rooms, football dressing and training rooms to support all football activities.

In addition to the proposal, there will be 25,000 square feet for an "all sports" Academic Center.

"We believe primarily that it will help existing student athletes and it will help recruiting indirectly," Bowen said.

In other business, the Regents approved the project for the physical plant for the Equine Theriogenology Laboratory to begin opening bids for funding.

Along with other universities within the system, the Regents granted and recognized individuals for academic tenure and emeritus titles.

During their visit to Tarleton, the regents were given a tour of the high-tech science building scheduled for completion this January. The Regents were also included in the ceremony of the ground breaking for the new student housing apartments to be completed next fall.

Throughout the two-day event, the Regents were given reports on progress within each university in the system. The reports included 12th-day-enrollment numbers, committee updates, actions taken by the chancellor and various construction projects. The Chancellor's Student Advisory Board also made a presentation.

Texas A&M and Blinn Comparison

	Texas A&M	Blinn (Bryan Campus)
Enrollment	44,081	8,600
White	85.7%	80.1%
Hispanic	8.36%	9.3%
African Amer.	2.42%	7.3%

BRANDON HENDERSON/THE BATTALION