

## First comes *love*, then comes ... **graduation**

*Students are advised to allow relationships to mature before marriage*

By MARIANNE HUDSON  
THE BATTALION

The sparkling glow of diamond engagement rings illuminate junior- and senior-level classes. Questions of what to wear to the date party have evolved to what bridal gown to purchase. Amid the teary-eyed proposal scenes and wedding plans, some couples panic, wondering

if they will have a wedding day. Many women dream of their wedding long before entering college. Television shows like Lifetime's "A Wedding Story" reinforce their desires for a glamorous engagement. Gregg Matte, minister of

Breakaway Ministries, said people focus too much on weddings and engagements. "They get starry-eyed on rings, gowns and flowers, losing sight that after the wedding, there is a marriage," Matte said.

Couples may rush from courtship to engagement to experience the excitement of being engaged.

"Relationships have to grow, trust has to grow, conversations have to grow, compatibility has to grow," Matte said. "When [couples] try to do 'miracle grow,' it's just not going to be ready."

Matte said that couples should ideally date for at least one year. By dating a year, they can see each other in every setting and emotion. He said it is difficult to keep one's best foot forward for an entire year.

Matte also said college is a wonderful opportunity to learn about oneself.

"I was 27 before I got married,"

he said. "That was a great age for me to get married. I was able to walk into a relationship more aware of who I was and who I would be most compatible with."

To many, college represents free-

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dom: freedom from parents, freedom from the work force.

Brian Fowler, a senior sports management major, said being in a relationship limits one's freedom.

"Once you get engaged and married, your life is not your own anymore," Fowler said. "You have to think of how your decisions will affect another person."

Fowler said that he hopes to visit Ireland after graduation and said he would not be able to do so if he were engaged.

Jeana Petruzzo, a junior elementary education major, said two people should have a mutual agreement that they both someday see themselves getting married.

"It shouldn't come as a complete shock to the girl when the guy proposes," Petruzzo said. "However, I don't think the girl should know everything from the date of the proposal to the cut of the ring before it happens, that part should be a surprise."

People choose to step toward engagement for various reasons and there are different opinions on when to get married, whether it's during college or after graduation.

"College is a season," Matte said. "When it ends, there is a tremendous amount of change. Everything will be new, and on top of that, having a new marriage can either be the greatest blessing because of security, or a real challenge."



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2-4 PM	Chem 102 Ch.21					Chem 227 Ch.10,14
4-6 PM	Chem 101 Ch.9	Chem 102 Old Exam (Kenct)	3-5 PM Biol 113 Lecture #4	3-5 PM Chem 102 Ch.21	3-6 PM Chem 102 Old Exam (Murillo)	
6-8 PM	Biol 113 Lecture #3	Chem 101 Ch.10	5-8 PM Chem 101 Ch.11	5-8 PM Chem 101 Ch.12	Chem 101 Old Exam (Meloni)	
8-10 PM	Phys 218 Ch.10	Phys 218 Old Exam	Chem 107 Old Exams	Chem 227 Ch.9	Chem 101 Old Exam (Conway)	
10-MID	Phys 208 Old Exam	Phys 208 Old Exam	Phys 218 Old Exam	Phys 201 Ch.12	Phys 201 Ch.13,14	
Math 142			6-8 PM Lecture #1	6-9 PM Lecture #2	6-9 PM Lecture #3	
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