

AGGIELIFE

THE BATTALION

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We're not in Kansas anymore

Freshmen learn how to adjust to college life after their first month away from home

When Mason King, a freshman speech communications major, began his education at Texas A&M last month, his lifestyle completely changed.

"Once you get to college, you're responsible for all your actions," King said. "There's no one looming over you to always make sure you're getting everything done."

To many freshmen, college brings true freedom because there are no parents and essentially no rules.

Despite an often welcome sense of independence, many students initially encounter loneliness. Joe Ben Combs, a freshman business major, said once he set foot on A&M's campus, he immediately missed his friends and family.

"I'm really close to my family, and living away from them and not getting to see them everyday is hard," Combs said.

Many students deal with loneliness through involvement with various organizations, which offer the chance to meet new people and explore new interests. Because A&M's campus offers more than 700 organizations, students are offered a wide range of opportunities to fit their particular interests.

Becky Corbin, a sophomore speech communications major, decided to expand her leadership skills by joining a Freshman Leadership Organization (FLO) her freshman year.

"I was a part of ALOT (Aggie Leaders of Tomorrow) my freshman

year, and it really gave me an opportunity to meet new people and develop leadership skills," Corbin said.

Another way students deal with adjusting to college life is through religion. King said churches throughout the Bryan-College Station area are filled with students on Sunday mornings. King said his religion has helped him cope with the different kinds of stress he encounters.

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— Mason King
freshman speech communications major

"I have faith in Jesus Christ because his love never fails me. It's constant," King said. "When you come to college everything changes, even friendships, but he doesn't."

Because many students come to college without a set group of friends,

Stephanie Radney, a freshman poultry science major, said the transition from high school to college is difficult because of the shift in peer groups.

"If you don't come in to college with a peer group, it's very challenging to make new friends," Radney said.

Radney said her boyfriend is also a student at A&M and has made the social transition easier for her.

In addition to social stress, Combs said the academic part of life at A&M is a big part of the transition for freshmen. He said that many students do not realize how high the academic standards are at A&M until they go through their first round of tests.

"High school didn't prepare me enough for the challenging academics at Texas A&M," Combs said. "I know the study habits will come with time though, especially around mid-terms."

While frequenting parties and clubs is one way many freshmen jump into the college social scene, some freshmen realize they're here to get an education and make the grades in order to make their money worthwhile.

Mary Bridges, a freshman business management major, said she prefers to concentrate on her studies rather than on the party scene.

"I realize that I'm not at A&M to party and have a good time necessarily, but to learn and get an education in order to obtain the job I'm called to," Bridges said.



SARAH FOWLER • THE BATTALION

PEOPLE IN THE NEWS

Clarkson sets record on Billboard singles chart

NEW YORK (AP) — First she beat 10,000 aspiring pop stars to become the "American Idol" Now, Kelly Clarkson has set a record on the Billboard singles chart.

Clarkson's "A Moment Like This" jumped to the top spot

on the Billboard Hot 100 this week from its debut at No. 52, the biggest leap to No. 1 ever in the chart's history.

The song sold 236,000 copies in its first full week in stores, the first time a song has sold more than 200,000 copies in one week since 1999, said Geoff Mayfield, Billboard's director of charts.

"We're in uncharted territory,"

Mayfield said Wednesday.

"People really got a charge out of watching (American Idol) — participating in it, and voting on a single is a relatively inexpensive way to invest in the experience."

Clarkson unseated "Dilemma" by Nelly featuring Kelly Rowland of Destiny's Child, which had been on top for the

past seven weeks. "Dilemma" fell to No. 2.

Donahue wins top prize on 'Big Brother 3'

LOS ANGELES (AP) — A 26-year-old bartender from Los Angeles walked out of the "Big Brother 3" house with the \$500,000 top prize.

Lisa Donahue said she missed

her cat, Herman, the most during her stay at the Studio City home.

She credited her job with preparing her to get along with people from all walks of life and win the prize Wednesday night.

"I am a great team player who can get along with all types of people," she said.

Donahue said she was surprised to win against the last

housemate, Danielle Reyes of Fairfield.

"I was nervous. I was like, 'OK, she's a good player.' But she's a great, wonderful person."

Reyes, 30, brings home \$50,000 to her husband and two daughters.

Her plan to win "Big Brother 3" was: "As sly as a snake. I'll be fake as my implants."

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