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B-CS named one of most prosperous areas in country

By C.E. Walters
THE BATTALION

Bryan-College Station is one of the 12 most prosperous areas in the country, according to the Oct. 14 issue of *Business Week*.
Of these 12 cities, Bryan-College Station has the lowest unemployment rate at 2.1 percent, said Gary Basinger, vice president of business development at the Bryan-College Station Economic Development Corporation. Bryan-College Station has had the lowest

unemployment rate in Texas for the last 81 months. At times the unemployment rate has been as low as 2 percent, Basinger said.

Texas A&M and Blinn College provide a large boost to the local economy, he said. With 13,000 employees, A&M is "a huge stabilizer," Basinger said.

"A&M is by far the largest employer in the county," he said.

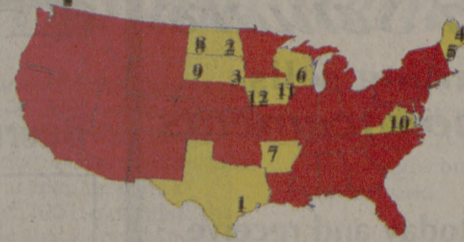
Calling the schools a safeguard against the economic woes of recession, Basinger said that students contribute to the local economy and Blinn's growth has provided more students with dis-

posable incomes. But growth has slowed in recent years, Basinger said, due to A&M's enrollment cap in the early 1990s.

Companies, he said, have also stepped up recruiting operations in the Bryan-College Station area and local companies have grown along with the rest of the area.

Basinger said the amount of seniors living in Bryan-College Station has also increased in recent years as former students return to retire in the community.

Top 12 Lowest UNEMPLOYMENT RATES



1. Bryan-College Station	2.1%
2. Fargo	2.1%
3. Sioux Falls	2.1%
4. Bangor	2.3%
5. Portland	2.4%
6. Madison	2.5%
7. Fayetteville	2.5%
8. Bismarck	2.6%
9. Rapid City	2.6%
10. Charlottesville	2.6%
11. Iowa City	2.8%
12. Des Moines	2.9%

Source: Business Week

MANDY ROUQUETTE • THE BATTALION

A&M named a top research university

By Melissa Sullivan
THE BATTALION

Texas A&M has ranked among the top 25 public research universities in six out of nine criteria, according to a recent report compiled by The Center at the University of Florida.

The report, "Top American Research Universities 2002," gauges rankings by comparing the amount of research dollars a school brings in to that of its contemporaries, schools of similar size with about the same number of faculty pursuing research.

The report includes institutions with more than \$20 million in federal research expenditures per year and focuses on nine areas of achievement, including total research, endowment assets, annual giving, national academy members, faculty awards, doctorates granted, postdoctoral appointees and median SAT scores.

Institutions are then grouped according to how many times they rank in the top 25 on these nine criteria.

A&M was ranked first in total endowment assets among public universities and ninth overall, ranking higher than schools such as the University of Texas at Austin and the Georgia Institute of Technology. A&M was also ranked in the top 10 public universities on total research expenditures, ranking 14th nationally, higher than private institutions such as Harvard and Yale.

"We have a large research operation here due to the quality of faculty and the research they do," said Bill Perry, executive associate vice president and provost. "If you have smaller universities with faculty just as good, the bigger university is more likely to have more expenditures."

The quality of faculty is an important factor in the University's performance, Perry said.

According to The Center's report, 17 faculty

Big guns



JOHN C. LIVAS • THE BATTALION

Junior sociology major **Ray McPadden** looks on as junior poultry science major **Daniel Laakso** inspects his reassembly of an M-16 A-2 rifle.

McPadden and **Laakso** are members of the Ranger Challenge Team which will compete this weekend in various timed drills at Fort Hood.

Authorities look for link to sniper in latest shooting

FALLS CHURCH, Va. (AP) — A woman was killed outside a Home Depot store Monday night, and police are trying to determine whether the shooting was related to the sniper spree responsible for eight deaths in the region in the past 12 days.

"A female has been shot and killed," said Fairfax County Police Lt. Amy Lubas. The woman was felled by a single shot at about 9:30 p.m., authorities. All the other deaths were also caused by one shot.

A police spokesman said roads were being closed in the area, about 10 miles west of Washington, D.C. The Maryland task force investigating the sniper attacks was conferring with Fairfax authorities to see if Monday's victim was the sniper's ninth.

Virginia State Police said they were on the lookout for a white Chevrolet Astro van, last seen traveling east on Route 50 from Falls Church. Interstates 66 and I-95 are nearby. Witnesses at some of the earlier shootings said a white van or truck left the scene.

The Home Depot is in the Seven Corners Shopping Center, a 450-thousand-square-foot strip shopping center with a parking garage. The center also has a grocery store, an electronics retailer and a pet supply retailer.

The body of the victim lay under a sheet in the parking lot in front of the Home Depot, on the first floor of a two-story structure, 30 yards from the store entrance.

Kristin Reed, a supervisor at the Barnes & Noble bookstore in the sprawling strip mall, said six employees were locked inside the store with an FBI agent.

"Cops and cops and more cops," Reed said of the scene outside. "There's a lot of people walking around."

Reed said no one heard the shot inside her store. But "a customer had just walked outside, then came back in and said 'I think I heard a shot.'"

See **Sniper** on page 2

Professor speaks about the 'other 1492'

Speech kicks off the Comparative Border Studies lecture series

By Brad Bennett
THE BATTALION

History should be seen from the bottom up, from the perspective of the people who didn't get to write the history books, University of California at Los Angeles history professor Teofilo Ruiz said Monday during a lecture at Texas A&M.

More than 100 people attended the kick off of the Comparative Border Studies lecture series, with Ruiz'

speech discussing Spanish events of 1492, the year that Columbus landed in South America.

Ruiz, chair of the Department of History at UCLA and an expert in Spanish history, spoke about the conquest and expulsion of Islam and Judaism from the Iberian Peninsula.

Ruiz mentioned Columbus during his Columbus Day talk, but only to show how other events were just as significant as Columbus' famous voyage.

"Columbus was crazy. Everyone

at the time knew the earth was round except for him," Ruiz said. "The most significant voyage of the 15th century was Vasco De Gamma sailing to India."

Ruiz said it was merely a coincidence that his speech occurred on the observance of Columbus Day.

"I sent professor Bornstein a list of five topics ranging from witchcraft to festivals and he choose 'The Other 1492,'" Ruiz said.

Isil Durma, a sophomore computer engineering major from Turkey, said Ruiz gave a good depiction of Muslims, but said Muslims are tolerant of other religions.

"Most Muslims have always been tolerant of all people," Durma said.

Ruiz related the problems of 15th century Spaniards to modern day by pointing out present persecution of minority groups. Laws at the time were similar to 20th century American Jim Crow laws that discriminated against blacks.

"There is always someone to blame for problems. Now, who is to blame for economic problems? Immigrants," Ruiz said.

Professor Daniel Bornstein, A&M history professor and organizer of the lecture series, said he choose Ruiz because he had heard him speak and knew of his reputation.

"I knew he was a good speaker and also a talented scholar and teacher," Bornstein said.

Faculty senate votes to eliminate computer science requirement

By Sarah Walch
THE BATTALION

Elimination of the computer science graduation requirement passed in the Faculty Senate Monday after some discussion for consideration by the administration.

"This requirement did make more sense in the 80s when it was first implemented," said Dr. Pierce Cantrell, associate provost for Information Technology (IT). "Do we want IT literacy at Texas A&M to be removed while other universities are strengthening their courses in this area?"

The University of Colorado at Boulder and the University of Missouri at Columbia are two universities Cantrell said have recently implemented more stringent requirements.

"As it exists, this requirement is really almost trivial; it would make more sense for each department to determine their own requirements," said Dr. Cady Engler, co-chair of the Academic Affairs committee and agricultural engineering professor.

The measure passed without the need for a show of hands.

The minority report which ignited so much debate at the senate's last meeting in September was handed to this year's Minority Conditions Subcommittee for

addition and review, said Dr. Robert Strawser, speaker of the Senate and accounting professor.

Instead, a one-page "Resolution on Diversity" was introduced, and caused more than an hour of heated debate before it passed.

A paragraph which inspired the proposal of four amendments described "the perception by numerous prospective students, faculty, and staff of an inadequate commitment towards diversity at Texas A&M University and the apparent negative effects of the Hopwood decision" as a factor which has hampered "recruitment and retention of a diverse body of students, faculty, and staff."

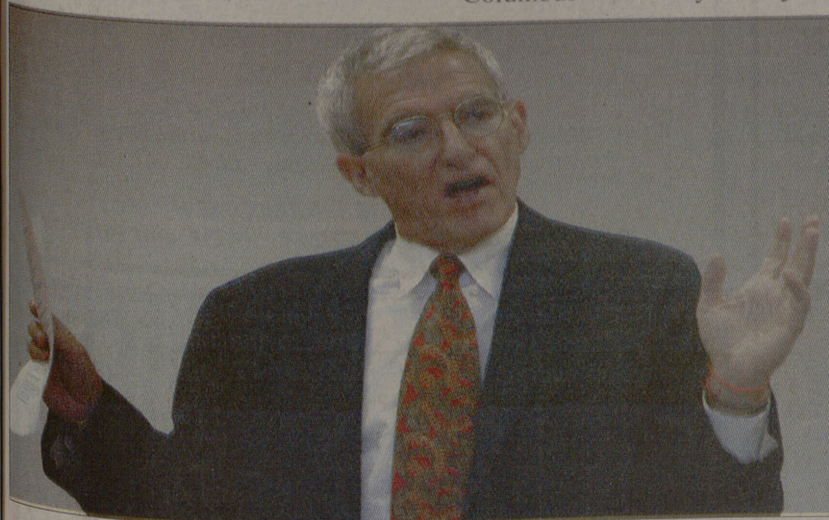
Early in debate, Dr. Bedford Clark, professor of English, proposed striking the paragraph from the record. He questioned the resolution's audience and purpose.

Dr. Paul Parrish, co-chair of the Academic Affairs committee and English professor, said the statement was merely an assertion of truth.

However, there is no way to offer such a statement as truth without support, said David Myers, an English professor.

"Other factors not addressed are that A&M was an all-male military campus in the South," Myers said. "This paragraph

See **Senate** on page 6



RANDAL FORD • THE BATTALION

UCLA history professor **Teofilo Ruiz** talks about society's persecution of minorities dating back to 1492 during

a lecture Monday night. **Ruiz** is a native Cuban who specializes in Spanish history.