

in 1994 and that increasing number of professors will go to smaller classes and more direct access to professors. Other goals of the campaign, such as increasing the number of scholarships and better programs, will also benefit the average student.

excellence in athletics will greatly enhance the life of students," Gates said.

Thus far, the campaign has raised money for 19 endowed chairs. Excellence in Education scholarships given by the Texas A&M Foundation in 2002 to 100 students. In total, \$92 million has been raised for scholarships, including 588 scholarships for undergraduates.

Money has also been raised for graduate fellowships and chairs to lure and keep distinguished faculty.

Gates said the campaign is important because of the looming cuts in state funding.

"It's not about lobbying officials for more money," he said. "I want to be supportive of education but the money isn't there," he said.

Gates said that Gates has helped the University cope with budget cuts by putting an emphasis on spending efficiently.

The importance of research at A&M was discussed by those who believe it distinguishes A&M from other state universities and those who expressed concern that funding cuts will do little to help the average student.

What is done in the research labs in the morning is done in the classroom in the afternoon," Gates said.

President Anne Armstrong said that One Spirit, One Vision will give the University a chance to improve its weaknesses and boost its ranking among the top universities in the world.

One Spirit, One Vision make us not just in the top 100, maybe in the very top 10," Armstrong said.

The campaign began in 2001 and all donations made after that date will count toward the campaign goal.

BATTALION

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Dropping the Q-bomb

Today marks the deadline for students to Q-drop classes

By Lydia Stout
THE BATTALION

April Ponce, a junior geology major, had problems adjusting to her engineering course load as a freshman, but because she felt afraid to use her Q-drops, she ended up with a GPR that she is still trying to bring up.

Unfortunately, this is the experience of many new students who may not know when it is best to use their Q-drops.

"I don't think freshmen really understand Q-drops because the policy isn't explained as well as it should be at the very beginning," Ponce said. "I was scared that if I used Q-drops in my freshman year, it would make me look like a bad student."

Today is the last day students can Q-drop a class, and students must make a decision that could affect their entire college careers. The decision to Q-drop a class for new students can be difficult because they must decide whether it is necessary at such an early time to use one of the three chances they have to avoid a failing grade.

"If I had been more comfortable and known more about the policy, I would've dropped (the class)," Ponce said. "I regret it now, but I didn't want to waste my Q-drops, because with such a limited amount, I thought I might need it later."

Since then, Ponce has found the academic benefits that come from Q-dropping a difficult class that could negatively affect a GPR.

Ponce said that when she went to her adviser last year to Q-drop Math 152, her adviser counseled her to take the course again in a smaller class environment and did not make her feel inadequate for dropping the class.

"I am very glad I did it because I got a chance to take it over again at a community college with more individual attention," she

said. "That is really what I needed."

Like many students, Ponce has ideas on what to change within the Q-drop policy to better fulfill student's needs.

"I think the Q-drop policy should include one drop allowed each year with a limit of four and a later Q-drop date, so students can better assess whether or not to drop," she said. "The current Q-drop date forces students that may have only had one or two tests to decide whether they can pass or fail, and in situations when professors curve or simplify their tests later in the semester, a Q-drop could be misused in a class they really could've passed."

Even with her disapproval of the cutoff date of Q-drops, Ponce believes unlimited Q-drops could encourage laziness in students and appropriate limits inspire students to work hard.

William Marlow, an undergraduate nuclear engineering adviser, agrees. He said the Q-drop policy is sufficient for students' needs with the number that is currently offered.

"I am not convinced you need a large amount of Q-drops because then you breed an attitude of throwaway courses," he said.

It is a good resource to have, but use the three opportunities to drop wisely, Marlow said.

Stephen Davis, a sophomore international studies major, agrees that limited Q-drops encourage students to be responsible and not depend on taking classes over and over, but thinks that the last day to drop should be later in the semester.

"When the last day to Q-drop comes, you could still have two or three more tests," Davis said. "How can you make a judgment with only half of the information available?"

The choice to Q-drop puts pressure on students to estimate their potential grades and

make a decision based on limited information.

"(Dropping a class) is nerve-racking because it is hard to know if the class is worth it or if you will need the Q-drop later," Davis said.

Like Ponce, the question of whether to Q-drop came early in Davis' academic career. His decision to use two of his Q-drops in his first semester has eliminated problems associated with bringing up a low GPR.

"If it wasn't for Q-drops, I wouldn't have the GPR I have now. I believe they are most important to use in the first two years, when your GPR is just building," he said.

His experiences Q-dropping Physics 218 and Math 151 gave him a fresh start in his college career.

"If I hadn't Q-dropped I would probably have stayed in the engineering department to see if I could make it, but in the end I would have had a low GPR and a lack of interest in my field," he said.

Davis said that when he decided to drop his classes, his experience with his adviser was very critical and impersonal, lacking the advice he needed at the time.

"When I went to my advising office to drop my classes, my adviser seemed to put me in the category of a slacker and told me smugly to 'work harder' as if I wasn't working hard enough already," Davis said.

Although he lost money, Davis said he would gladly trade lost money and hours to keep his grades high.

Q-dropping has also allowed Wade Butaud, a junior nuclear engineering major, to excel in his college career.

"(Q-dropping) was one of the best decisions I ever made," Butaud said. "When I retook my class, I had a better grip on college life and I've excelled with A's since then."

"Q-dropping was one of the best decisions I ever made. When I retook the class, I had a better grip on college life."

— Wade Butaud
junior nuclear
engineering major



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- There are approximately 4,000 students in the 52 Greek organizations at TAMU making us the 2nd largest student organization
- The All Greek grade point average is HIGHER than the All University grade point average
- Aggie Greeks donate more than 8,000 hours of service time and \$25,000 to the community each year
- Fraternities and sororities model the way with their risk management initiatives, leadership programming, and campus involvement opportunities
- TAMU is home to several award-winning fraternities and sororities with plans for every single organization to be recognized as "the best" in the nation
- That Aggie Greeks came to campus on March 31, 1973 making us 30 years old today...

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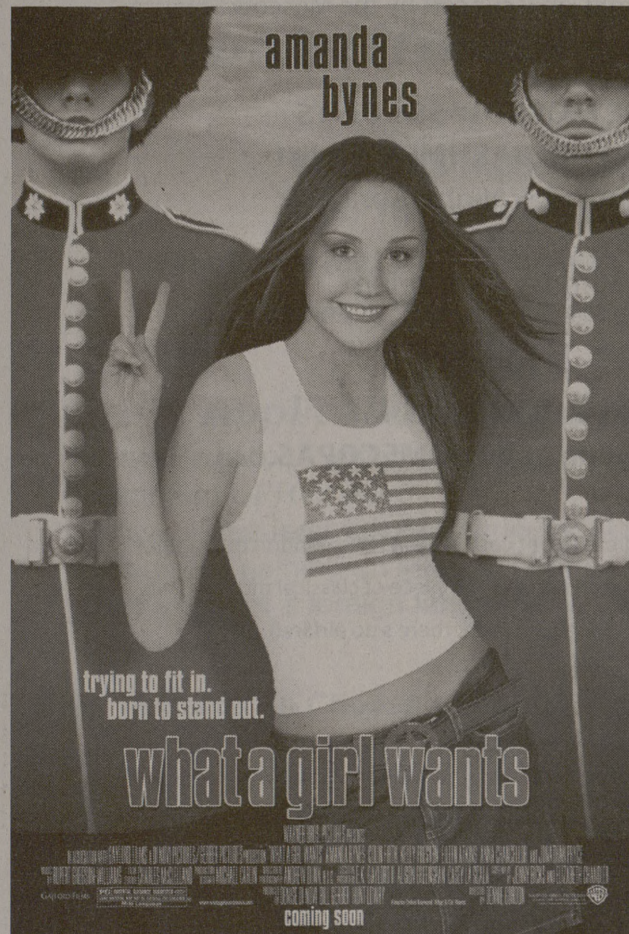
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