

THE BATTALION

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Josefy: Mentorship a top priority

By Dan Orth
THE BATTALION

Student Body President Matt Josefy said in his State of the University address Wednesday evening that mentorship, academics and tradition are his biggest priorities. Josefy outlined the programs he and his staff have worked on to improve mentorship, his main emphasis as SBP.

He said he wants to focus on strengthening three relationships in mentoring: the freshman-upperclassman relationship, the student-faculty relationship and the student-former student relationship, specifically in their areas of study.

In his mentorship programs, Josefy said he wants to focus on getting freshmen involved and headed in the right direction.

"Anything we can do to catch freshmen, the better our University is," he said.

Chuck Sippial, vice president of administration, said he believes mentoring is important for freshmen because upperclassmen can show them the ropes. This would benefit the students by leading them in the right direction, he said.

"It would be wonderful if a freshman had an upperclassman they could go to and say, 'I know what you are going through,' or, 'If you have a problem, come to me,'" Sippial said.

In the academic arena, Josefy said he wants to push experiential education, which focuses on teaching how to apply what is being learned in the classroom.

"It only makes sense that we provide students with the opportunity to see the direct applications of what they are learning in the classroom with what happens in the real world," Josefy said.

Another emphasis this year is on communication between students and student government, Josefy said. The Senate will hold the first "Senate Listens Week," which will attempt to identify and address student concerns.

Josefy has initiated a program to inform students of hot issues on campus through Aggie Matters. Thus far,

he said he has noticed positive results in increased forum participation.

He touched briefly on diversity and upcoming events dealing with diversity issues, including the new tag line for the year: "Great people, great solutions."

Josefy said he challenges students "to show that the Aggie Spirit is alive and well" during Push Week, a series of events and activities that will take place in the days leading up to the University of Texas game.

Jason Impullitti, a senior technology management major, said change is inevitable, and he hopes future administrations will follow through with some of Josefy's initiatives.



JOSHUA HOBSON • THE BATTALION
Student Body President Matt Josefy addresses students, faculty and staff Wednesday night at the State of the University address. Josefy plans to focus on mentorship, academics and tradition this year.

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Princeton Review ranks A&M one of top 351 colleges

By Sonia Moghe
THE BATTALION

Princeton Review once again named Texas A&M one of this year's top 351 colleges.

To gauge the schools, various academic, financial and social factors were taken into account. Additionally, several other top-20 lists were compiled, ranking several specifics of these factors.

According to The Princeton Review's Best 351 Colleges, 2004 Edition, which came out in mid-August, A&M made it on to several top-20 lists, boasting the third best "Jock School" and having the fifth best "Town-Gown Relationship" in the nation.

A&M's tight-knit community atmosphere and student involvement are evident in its No. 14 "Everyone plays intra-

mural sports" ranking and its No. 6 "Students Pack the Stadium" ranking.

However, a No. 20 ranking on the "Class Discussions Rare" list has brought concern to current and prospective students.

Several professors have noted this problem and are currently attempting to fix it, including Dr. Susan Egenolf, an English professor at A&M. She has taken pictures of the students in one of her larger classes of more than 100 students holding numbered cards so she can learn their names. Successfully learning all the names helps facilitate running class discussions.

"Some people think you cannot do discussions in large classes," Egenolf said. "I clearly disagree."

Perhaps A&M has little class discussion because it is

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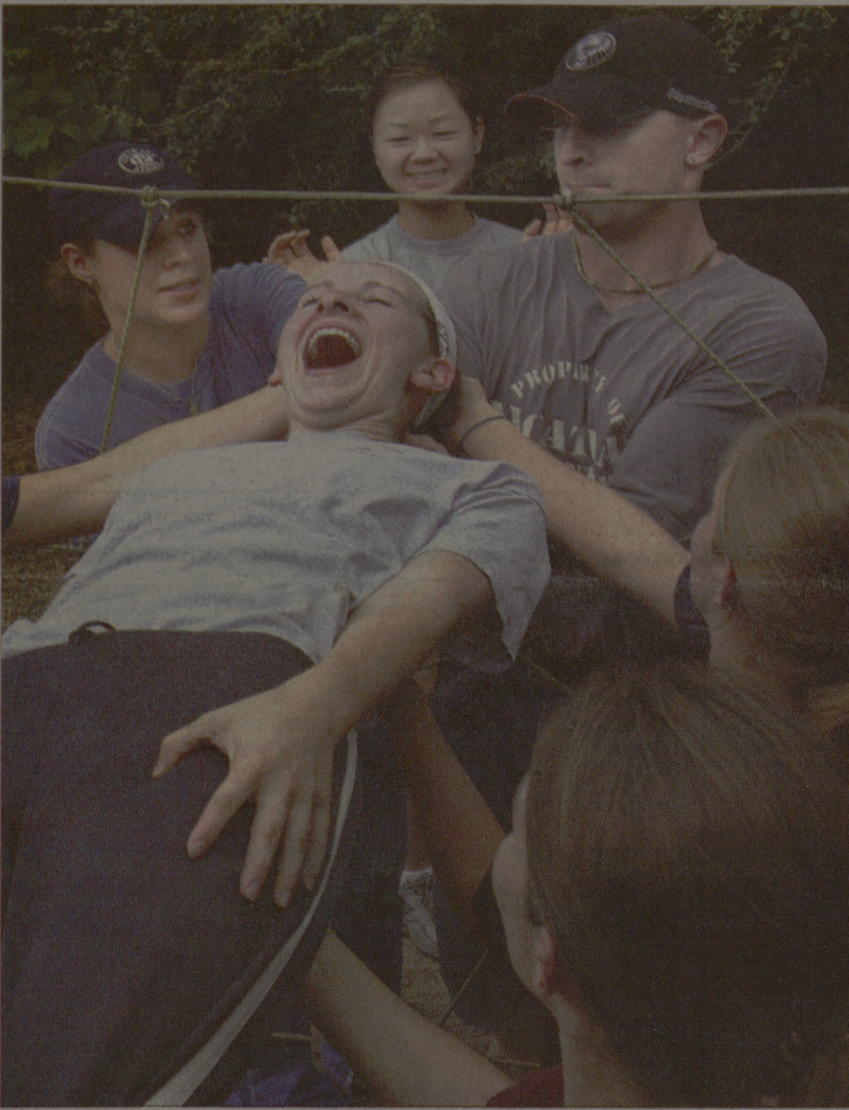
PRINCETON REVIEW RANKINGS

The Princeton Review ranked 351 colleges on a variety of factors in top-20 lists.

- A&M ranked:
- 3rd "Jock Schools"
- 5th "Town-Gown Relationships"
- 6th "Students Pack the Stadium"
- 12th "Alternative Lifestyles not an Alternative"
- 20th "Class Discussions Rare"

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SOURCE: THE PRINCETON REVIEW

Laugh out loud



SHARON AESCHBACH • THE BATTALION

Venture dynamics team members, (from left) junior international studies and political science major Lynette Munoz, senior finance major Jennifer Wu and senior electrical engineering major Mike Hall lift senior marketing major Lauren Lord through a spider web of bungee cords Wednesday afternoon at the ropes course located off Harvey Mitchell Parkway for their venture dynamics class. The class, instructed by Grant Irons, teaches team building and trust exercises through outdoor adventure courses.

Web system to replace BONFIRE

By Bart Shirley
THE BATTALION

The BONFIRE student information system used to check schedules, grades and transcripts as well as access student and faculty phone numbers will be replaced by a Web-based system on Oct 5.

"If it helps access for students, (then) that's a good thing," said Leanne South, director of college relations in the College of Liberal Arts.

Tom Putnam, director of Computing and Information Services, said the decision to change the system was made late last spring. The CIS department had originally planned to replace the entire A&M system, but those plans had to be changed due to this year's budget cutbacks.

"This project is being given priority," Putnam said. "We went ahead and decided to do this now because people like it."

The new system will provide the same services as the current one and will have several benefits over the old system. It will incorporate both Student Financial Services and Student Financial Aid.

"We're very, very excited," said Larry Malota, associate director of Student Information Management System. "Now it's a truly Web application."

Malota said the new system will allow for a much higher level of security than the BONFIRE system. Information will be available through a single session rather than multiple sessions and multiple sign-ons to the BONFIRE system.

Pankaj Mittal, a graduate industrial engineering major, said he agreed with Malota. He said students often get disconnected from the current system and waste time navigating numerous different screens.

"I think that interactive will be more useful," Mittal said. "It would save a lot of time."

Putnam said the new system will be accessible via the NetID students use to access their Neo accounts. He said this will help students in terms of organization and security.

"The old system provided access by Social Security number and date of birth," Putnam said. "That information is known by many."

He said the NetID is information that only the students themselves know, which will allow SIMS to better maintain network security.

"This is a vast improvement, and I think we're moving in the right direction," Malota said.

He said SIMS is open to suggestions from students once the system is online. Right now, he said his office is receiving feedback from students at the registrar's office and student workers in his office.

John Hancock, a senior agricultural and life sciences and entomology major and former Texas A&M-Corpus Christi student said the system at Texas A&M-Corpus Christi was superior to the one here, so he is positive about the new system.

"I think with the amount of money we pay, we ought to have the best they can give," Hancock said.

The new system can be accessed at myrecord.tamu.edu starting Oct. 5.

"If (the new system) helps access for students, (then) that's a good thing."

— Leanne South
College of Liberal Arts
director of college relations

Students robbed on north campus

By Sarah Szuminski
THE BATTALION

University Police Department officers are working to develop a composite of a man who robbed two Texas A&M students at gunpoint outside Haas Hall early Saturday morning.

Elmer Schneider, associate director of UPD, said the students were returning to campus around 3:25 a.m. when they were approached by a man asking for directions to an address in Bryan. About two minutes later, the man exhibited a

small silver handgun in his left hand and a large tire iron in his right.

He asked the students for any valuables they were carrying, and they offered him a small amount of cash and a cell phone. The man was uninterested in the phone but took the cash, Schneider said.

"They (the students) used good judgment in their response, which was to comply with his demands," he said.

The suspect then told the students to walk away, Schneider said, and when they looked back, he had disappeared.

The students notified a Haas resident

adviser immediately following the robbery. The incident was then reported to the UPD.

"It's important to get police notified so they have an opportunity to respond," Schneider said.

Because vehicles, officers on bikes and security guards are on patrol, there is a possibility someone will be nearby when a crime on campus is reported, he said.

The UPD was unable to locate a suspect but shared information of the robbery with College Station and Bryan Police Departments.

See Robbed on page 2A

What to do during a robbery

The University Police Department Crime Prevention Unit advises students to follow these recommendations if they are ever robbed.

- Do exactly what the robber says, and don't make any sudden moves.
- Remain calm and be as alert and observant as possible.
- Don't try to be a hero; take no action that would jeopardize you or someone else's safety.
- Take a good look at the robbers, but do not stare.
- Do not discuss the robbery with anyone until after you have given information to police.

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SOURCE: TEXAS A&M POLICE DEPT.

Revised Aggie ring requirements benefit students

By Lindsay Broomes
THE BATTALION

Transfer students will be sporting their Aggie rings sooner than expected due to a recent drop in the number of residency hours required to obtain them.

"Back when I was in school, it was different," said Kelli Hutka, Class of 1997, the director of Campus Programs for The Association of Former Students. "You only had to have 30 residency hours to receive your ring."

In 1994, the requirements were

bumped up to 60 residency hours, 95 total hours and a minimum 2.0 grade point ratio. This semester, these requirements were altered again. Students who complete 45 residency hours, 95 total hours and have an overall 2.0 GPR are eligible to order their rings.

More students are entering Texas A&M with multiple high school and transfer college credits, causing them to fail to meet the requirement until they receive their degree, Hutka said.

"I am very, very excited," said Meagan Burney, a senior education major. "I was worried about not get-

ting my ring until after graduation, but the new requirements are awesome."

Hutka said it is important that every Aggie has his ring when he crosses the stage at graduation.

"The Aggie ring identifies you with values and reflects the integrity an Aggie holds," she said.

Matt Kainer, a senior civil engineering major, said he believes the changes should only apply to graduating transfer students who want their rings before graduation.

"If transfer students are not in jeopardy of graduating without their

ring, they should go by the 60 hour rule," Kainer said.

Graduate students will also be affected by requirement changes. Previously, graduate students did not qualify for their rings until they received their diplomas. This meant they did not actually receive their rings until approximately nine weeks after their graduation date.

Graduate students are split into three categories and different changes

See Aggie ring on page 2A