

AGGIELIFE

THE BATTALION

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Aggieland 101

New Student Conferences focus on Honor Code, community in line with University goals

By Amber Gray
THE BATTALION

To this day, Tiffany Dillon fondly remembers her New Student Conference. During one assembly the freshmen became a little confused as the yell leaders began teaching pass backs for the yells.

"All of us fish just did exactly what they did: pointed back at them and did the pass back," Dillon, a junior mechanical engineering major, said. "They all laughed at us saying 'No, only we point.' It's kind of a stupid story, but I still laugh about it."

Teaching the Aggie traditions is only one of the focus points during New Student Conferences.

"I had heard about Bonfire and the Corps before coming to A&M," Dillon said. "But I didn't know what it meant to be an Aggie."

By the second day of the conference, Dillon was learning that by being accepted into the University, she was also being accepted into the Aggie family.

"That was a great feeling for me," she said. "And even more so for my family, who knew that I would be well taken care of here."

Cynthia Hernandez, coordinator of New Student Programs in the Department of Student Life, said current conferences are not only focusing on academics and degree plans, but emphasizing that the new students are joining the Aggie community.

"We want the students to feel like more than just a number," she said. "We want them to know we are here to help."

The Conference also aims to instill several objectives of Vision 2020 into the Class of 2008.

"Following with one of Dr. Gates' initiatives, the Aggie Honor Code in and out of the classroom is woven through the orientations," Hernandez said.



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With the many changes accompanying the new year at A&M, students at the conferences are discovering what it's like to become part of the Aggie community.

"With the increase of diversity on campus we are teaching the freshmen to appreciate others," Hernandez said. "We all need to respect the diverse population of students here at A&M."

Throughout the past few years many changes have been

made to the conferences to meet the incoming students' needs and interests. One change made this year was shortening the conference from a three-day schedule to a two-day program.

Due to remodeling in Duncan Dining Hall, the location of check-in became another major change. Partnering with the 12th Man Foundation and The Zone Club, students' first program during the conference is held in The Zone.

"Meeting in one of the million-dollar rooms of The Zone has been really neat this year," Hernandez said.

"The students get a great view of Kyle Field, and for most this is their first impression of the University."

It is also important for the incoming students to learn more about the activities and organizations on campus to get involved during their time at the University.

"The Corps luncheon and ice cream social is one new change we've made to the program this year," Hernandez said. "They serve as an opportunity for students and parents to learn more about the Corps and to even join." Another new development this year was the implementation of Freshmen Dinner, where students get to eat and relax as a class.

"From what I hear this has been a tremendous benefit

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"Troy"

Starring Brad Pitt, Eric Bana, Orlando Bloom
Warner Bros. Pictures

Troy is undeniably a good film overall, but it has shortcomings that weaken its credibility. Watching the famous Battle of Troy on-screen is an astonishing opportunity, but for anyone who has read or studied "The Iliad" by Homer, he would be disappointed by the very altered storyline, which is full of holes in some areas. The 'love is worth war' theme is upheld and seen in various forms in the film, yet facts and myths are changed to make the story compatible with the Hollywood movie screen.

Some of the changes do not matter in the long run, but others greatly alter how the great epic of the Battle of Troy should be

remembered. The greatest disappointment is that the film does not explain how the gods and goddesses impacted the beginning and outcome of the battle. Achilles' half mortal, half immortal nature and his origin is never discussed, which leaves loose ends.

But in terms of talent, "Troy" is bursting with it. Pitt as Achilles and Bana as Hector do a remarkable job portraying their characters' roles as emotional and physical leaders of each army. Pitt is amazing as he steals the spotlight from others in several situations. Bloom portrays the youngest prince of Troy, Paris, in a stately manner and captures characteristics few others would have managed. The roles of Priam, King of Troy (Peter O' Toole), Agamemnon, ruler of Greece (Brian Cox) and Menelaus, King of Sparta (Brendan Gleeson) are strongly played and strengthen the purpose and storyline of the feature.

The graphics for this film are stunning and highly enjoyable.

The kingdom of Troy is a fantastic landscape castle along the seafloor. A scene where the thousand-large fleet of Greek ships sails towards Troy is captivating. Several vicious battles and a few one-on-one duels hold the audience captive in its seat.

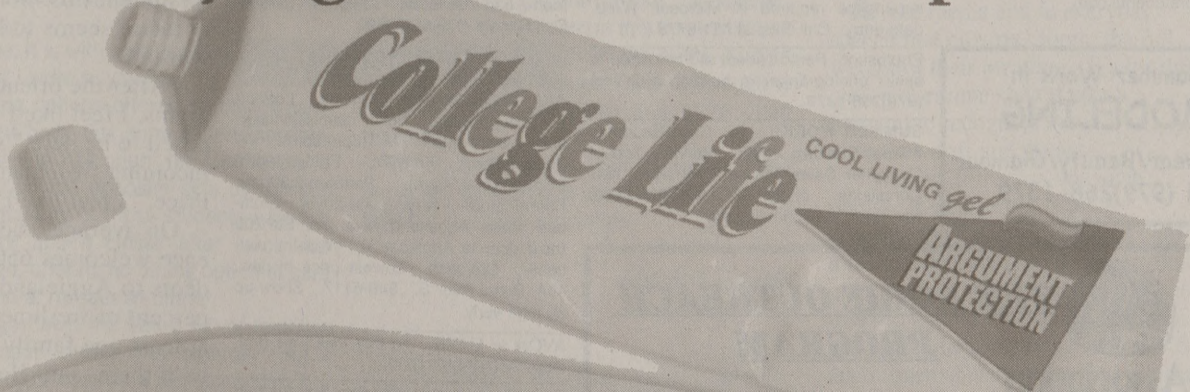
The talent and visuals, added with precise clothing and weapon replication, make "Troy" the award-worthy movie that it is.

-Christina Teichman

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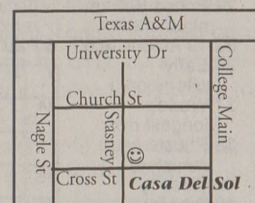
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