

Student Forum  
February 16, 2011

**Announcements:**

1. Students can post questions, share ideas or voice concerns on Facebook at any time (link: <http://www.facebook.com/event.php?eid=140854102644294>).
2. Financial Aid programs are in jeopardy due to State budget cuts. Students who are currently enrolled in programs will likely continue to be funded. However, new students would be impacted. A&M-Commerce is putting together strategies for teachers who will graduate soon and who owe loans. The university will host information sessions to assist students.
3. Students are encouraged to keep their Campus Wide ID Cards secure as they provide access to buildings and services. Abusing the cards can lead to security and safety issues as well as higher expenses that may be passed on to students.
4. Students are encouraged to take pride in their campus and to report abuses, particularly graffiti. Reports can be made anonymously by contacting the University Police Department.
5. A&M Commerce has not reduced admission standards in order to increase enrollment. The average SAT score for incoming A&M-Commerce freshmen is 20.93, the average for the entire State is 20.08.
6. Students who no longer receive Advising through the University College are encouraged to let Dr. Mary Hendrix know if they experience any difficulty with future Advising.
7. Kimberly Herron with Financial Aid & Scholarships announced the winners of the FAFSA video contest and presented the winning video created by Coby Markum.
8. Students are encouraged to participate in the WeCare Surveys available at the One Stop Shop and to be vocal in their needs and their experiences so that any problems can be addressed, thus improving services and procedures for all students.
9. Residential Living & Learning Town Hall Meeting held monthly to address resident concerns. Next meeting 2/23/11 at 4:00 p.m. in SRSC Conference Room A.
10. Mane Event will be held March 5. Student Groups & Organizations are encouraged to reserve their information tables through the Enrollment Management & Retention office by calling or emailing JoAnn Chapin (903-886-5065 JoAnn\_Chapin@tamu-commerce.edu).

**Current Issues:**

<b>QUESTION / CONCERN / SUGGESTION:</b>	<b>RESPONSE:</b>
Concern: Editorial articles in the East Texan were offensive. Is	The faculty advisor is Fred Stewart. The Editorials express the combined opinion of the Editorial Board and are not censored. The

<p>there faculty oversight or restraint on what is printed, particularly foul language?</p>	<p>East Texan recognizes that some students will be offended by the articles but they do not intend to alter current publishing practices. The East Texan welcomes comments by way of email, telephone, or personal visit.</p> <p><i>Caleb Slinkard, East Texan</i></p>
<p>Concern: The university appears to be focusing on and treating Freshmen better than upperclassmen. In particular, why are iPads being given away to every incoming Freshman, and why is the university building a Freshman dorm instead of providing new facilities for students who are already on campus?</p>	<p><u>Response 1:</u> The University is focused on the success of every student. In one section of the Freshman Success Seminar course (approximately 30 students), students will be given access to an iPad on a temporary basis. If the student completes the rigid course requirements, the iPad will be given to the student permanently and free of charge. This pilot program was put in place when it was researched that only 1 in 3 incoming students have access to a personal computer. The pilot program is intended to help determine if access to a personal computer will increase student success.</p> <p><i>Dr. Ricky Dobbs, Dean of University College</i></p> <p><u>Response 2:</u> The University has built several new dorms over the past few years that have been primarily used for upperclassmen (Prairie Crossing, New Pride). However, the last freshman dorm was built in 1972. The new dorm is part of a four-year master plan that will include new housing as well as renovation of existing facilities that will directly impact upperclassmen.</p> <p><i>Dennis Koch, Director of Residential Living &amp; Learning</i></p>
<p>Question: If housing is available on a first-come, first-served basis based on the date of application, why are the football players living in New Pride? Why aren't they subject to the same rules?</p>	<p>The football players that are living in New Pride take up approximately 1/5 of the available beds. Therefore, they do not make a significant impact on the availability of first-come, first-served housing assignments.</p> <p><i>Dennis Koch, Director of Residential Living &amp; Learning</i></p>
<p>Question: Will students currently living in New Pride have to move to a different room or facility during the summer?</p>	<p>Students may have to move if particular circumstances occur such as renovations or summer camps. Information will be provided as far in advance as possible.</p> <p><i>Dennis Koch, Director of Residential Living &amp; Learning</i></p>
<p>Question: What is the plan for West Hall?</p>	<p>There is currently no plan to close West Hall and it is part of the four-year master plan.</p>

	<i>Dennis Koch, Director of Residential Living &amp; Learning</i>
Concern: It is difficult, if not impossible, to control the temperature of the dorm rooms at Whitley Hall either by adjusting the thermostat, or by opening the windows (due to the wasp problem).	<p>The University acknowledges that there are difficulties with the heating and air conditioning at Whitley Hall. There are also issues with the elevators and the roof. Plans are currently underway, and projects are already in place to improve the facilities. Students who have trouble with wasps should report it to their Hall Director or the Residential Living &amp; Learning Offices so that treatment can be immediately rendered. The university is doing all it can to control the wasps, but it is a difficult problem to eradicate.</p> <p><i>Dennis Koch, Director of Residential Living &amp; Learning</i></p>
Suggestion: Include school spirit and university history and ask instructors to wear blue and gold during Freshman Success Seminar courses.	<p>The suggestion was noted and agreed.</p> <p><i>Dr. Ricky Dobbs, Dean of University College</i></p>
Question: Would it be possible for students to access the Rosetta Stone language program that is available for faculty and staff?	<p>The program is currently available for faculty and staff only, but Dr. Hendrix will contact Human Resources to note student interest and determine if students could participate.</p> <p><i>Dr. Mary Hendrix, Vice President for Student Access &amp; Success</i></p>
Question: Why does the Ferguson Auditorium have a minimum guest requirement for reserving the space and why are groups from outside the university allowed to reserve rooms, making it difficult for student groups to reserve rooms they need for their activities?	<p>The Ferguson Auditorium is not staffed on a regular basis, making it difficult to provide adequate personnel and services. Based on the need to staff the facility and the large area of the room, access is reserved for large groups only. As well, the Sam Rayburn Student Center can accommodate most groups whether large or small. The university restricts reservations from outside groups (as well as faculty and staff events) to give students the opportunity to reserve rooms. However, most student groups do not allow for adequate time to place a reservation. Student groups are encouraged to book reservations well in advance of an event and if they have any difficulty, to speak with the Sam Rayburn Student Center Scheduling office.</p> <p><i>Todd Avery, Scheduling &amp; Technical Coordinator, Sam Rayburn Student Center</i></p>
Concern: The Morris Recreation Center has been broken and out	<p>The hot tub has been out of service due to the inability to determine the cause of the equipment failure. Jorge Juarez will continue to work</p>

<p>of service for several years.</p>	<p>with A&amp;M-Commerce Facilities to correct the problem.</p> <p><i>Jorge Juarez, Director of the Morris Recreation Center</i></p>
<p>Concern: A student who supported the Athletic Referendum has heard reports of inappropriate activity by football recruits. The student questioned whether recruits are monitored in their activities.</p>	<p>Students are encouraged to remember that the article in the East Texan reporting on inappropriate activity by football recruits was for a particular incident and that most recruits do not engage in such activities. As well, many articles have been written reporting favorably on athletes and activities supported by the Athletic Referendum.</p> <p><i>Adam Troxel, East Texan</i></p>
<p>Question: Could a parking lot be built near the Binnion/Ferguson area to accommodate students, particularly freshmen, who take core classes in the Binnion and Literature &amp; Languages buildings?</p>	<p>There are no current plans to build additional parking. However, parking is available at the One Stop Shop and in the lot directly behind the alumni center that would be convenient for the Binnion/Ferguson area.</p> <p><i>Dr. Mary Hendrix, Vice President for Student Access &amp; Success</i></p>
<p>Question: Why do student activity groups have to use Sodexo exclusively for catering?</p>	<p>Sodexo has exclusive rights only for events held in the Sam Rayburn Student Center. Therefore, if an event is held outside of the SRSC, catering can be accommodated however a group determines is best. Charles encouraged student groups to talk with him about their needs and budgets as his goal is to provide the best service at the best possible price.</p> <p><i>Charles Lear, General Manager of Sodexo</i></p>
<p>Suggestion: Provide a dedicated student job bulletin board at the Sam Rayburn Student Center and regularly update the online site so that closed positions are taken off the list.</p>	<p>Response 1: The suggestion will be given to Connie Mears, Associate Director of Operations &amp; Special Events for the SRSC.</p> <p><i>Dr. Mary Hendrix, Vice President for Student Access &amp; Success</i></p> <p>Response 2: Students have access to Lion Tracks which is a site devoted to assisting students in finding intern and career opportunities. This is also where job fair announcements are posted.</p> <p><i>Tina Boitnott, Director of Career Services</i></p> <p>Web Site: <a href="http://web.tamu-commerce.edu/studentLife/campusServices/careerDevelopment/lionTracks.aspx">http://web.tamu-commerce.edu/studentLife/campusServices/careerDevelopment/lionTracks.aspx</a></p>

Response 3: There are opportunities for students who received financial aid to reduce some of their loans through the College Work Study Program. Students who are interested in this option should contact the Financial Aid & Scholarship office.

*Maria Ramos, Interim Director of Financial Aid & Scholarships*