Howdy!

First, being from Michigan, I think that is the first time I have ever used that phrase. However, as the new Assistant Coordinator for the Regents’ Scholars Program, I anticipate it will certainly not be the last!

Being a first-generation Aggie myself— as well as a newcomer to Texas— I am learning along with all of you the history and traditions that make Texas A&M so unique.

While I come with experience in Residence Life from Wayne State University in Michigan and Academic Advising from the University of Phoenix in Arizona, I definitely welcome any advice or questions you have pertaining to the Regents’ Scholarship or just in general.

Thanks and Gig’Em!

Drew Elizabeth Smith
Regents’ Scholars Program Assistant Coordinator

GRADE EXCLUSION POLICY
Courses excluded under this policy are not excluded when determining whether a student is meeting satisfactory academic progress requirements (hours completed and GPR) for federal and state financial aid programs.

Recipients of financial aid are expected to meet Satisfactory Academic Progress (SAP). This is defined as consistently passing 75% of the credit hours he or she registers for at Texas A&M and maintaining a 2.0 GPR. If the student does not complete this percentage of hours and/or maintain a 2.0 GPR, he or she will be considered ineligible for additional financial aid until the percentage completed reaches 75% or the GPR is raised above a 2.0. When determining SAP, we will include courses that have been excluded under the grade exclusion policy in the completion rate. The courses will count just as a NG (No Grade) or W (Withdrawal) count.

If you fall below the 75% percent completion rate or below the required 2.0 GPR and find yourself in jeopardy of losing your financial aid, you have the right to appeal. The appeal should demonstrate unusual circumstances which occurred beyond your control. If you possess extenuating circumstances, documentation should be submitted at the time of the appeal review with your financial aid counselor. Additional documentation may be requested upon review of the appeal. The submission of an appeal is only a request and does not imply that a financial aid hold will be removed or that approval of the appeal is forthcoming. Appeals should be submitted on line at http://myfinancialaid.tamu.edu. In addition to submitting the appeal you must contact our department to set up an appointment with a financial aid counselor.

If you have questions regarding your financial aid, please contact our department at 979-845-3236.
The Department of Student Financial Aid would like to inform you of several scholarship opportunities from the Sallie Mae Fund. Sallie Mae offers millions of dollars in scholarships each year, in fact, Texas is one of their “Million Dollar States” that they are supporting to open higher education to more students.

Now it’s your turn to reap the benefits of their dedication to the students of Texas. Sallie Mae has six scholarships available, three of which apply to our students at Texas A&M University. Feel free to look into the others. The following is a list of the scholarships and deadlines that are coming up:

- American Dream Scholarship    April 15, 2007
- First In My Family Scholarship  April 15, 2007
- Unmet Need Scholarship   May 31, 2007

You will find these scholarships online at http://www.collegeanswer.com. Each scholarship will have its own application. Best of luck with the application!

Aggie Traditions
“There’s a Spirit that can ne’er be told…”

Aggie Muster, April 21, 2007

On June 26, 1883, Aggies gathered together to live over again the victories and defeats of their college days. By April 21, 1903, this annual gathering evolved into a celebration of Texas’ Independence on San Jacinto Day. These early meetings included field games and banquets for Aggies to reflect and celebrate their memories of Aggieland. ‘Let every alumni answer a roll call’ wrote the former students. It was not until 1922, however, that April 21 became the official day of events for all Aggies. Thus, the annual tradition of Muster was born. The March 1923 Texas Aggie urged, ‘If there is an A&M man in one-hundred miles of you, you are expected to get together, eat a little, and live over the days you spent at the A&M College of Texas.‘

Still remembering and honoring the time spent in Aggieland, the tradition of mustering has grown in strength, meaning, and spirit. By 1929, the meetings had grown worldwide, and in 1942 Aggie Muster gained international recognition. Twenty-five men, led by General George Moore ’08, mustered during the Japanese Siege of the Philippine Island of Corregidor. Knowing that Muster might soon be called for them, these Aggies embodied the essence of commitment, dedication, and friendship. That small group of Aggies on an outpost during World War II was an inspiration for one of our greatest traditions.

Muster is celebrated in more than four-hundred places world wide, with the largest ceremony on the campus of Texas A&M. The ceremony brings together more Aggies, worldwide, than any other single event.

Applications will be available from http://scholarships.tamu.edu beginning March 1. The deadline is April 6, 2006.

Peer Mentors: Words of Advice

What do you take in consideration when determining your course schedule?

Virginia Baker    It never comes out the way you plan when you are lower level; then when you get to upper level, you don’t have much of a choice.

Andrew Brown    Organization meetings, no long spaces in between classes, time for working out or lunch with friends, not taking too many classes that are difficult in succession of each other.

Karina Castillo    I really don’t like eight o’clock classes, I try my hardest to avoid these. I use Pick-A-Prof to determine which professor to choose and what I like to call “MY BIBLE-128” (the course catalog you get your first week at A&M, yours will be 129!).

Raquel Derouen    If I’m on the right track or not, because I don’t want to take the wrong combination of classes that would potentially push me back a semester from my intended graduation date.

Rosa Hernadez    I take in consideration the amount of studying each class will require, how many times the class will meet, at what time during the day I will attend class, and determine if I have enough time to participate in extracurricular activities. I make sure I’m taking courses that apply to my degree plan.

DaNeetra Kersee    Since I have a job, I have to pick classes that are close together. I like to take math classes in the afternoon because I am more awake and I need to be more alert for more difficult classes.

Heather Reed    My personal needs in regard to time and courses that are needed for graduation. Also, try to look at where the classes are located and make sure that you will be able to get from class to class in the time that you have between them.
As you now know the week after Spring Break is a popular time for professors to give exams. Unfortunately, this can cut into your plans for fun and relaxation, but, hopefully, you were able to find time to study. However, if you didn’t do as well as you hoped there are strategies for improving on the next exam. In his book, How to Study in College, Walter Pauk gives the following recommendations:

1. Directly after the exam, while your memories are still fresh, talk over the exam with several of your friends. The bigger the group the better – this way you’ll be getting more information about how others interpreted the questions and how they answered them.

2. Don’t just note the grade and file it for future reference. It’s yours and you “paid” for it, so use it to learn even more. For example, go to the first questions you missed. Read and analyze them carefully to find out specifically what was wrong with your answers. Were they incomplete? Did you make careless mistakes? Did you really know the material?

3. Learn from your mistakes by taking the time to outline or even write better answers. Often, on the next exam, professors will repeat questions that many students missed.

4. Determine which of your study and test-taking techniques worked and which did not. Modify your strategies accordingly.

Finally, if you feel the need to discuss your exams with the professor by all means do so! Before your meeting, write out the questions you want to ask; then ask them in a constructive manner. Find out what the professor was trying to test with the questions, what ideas or facts he or she thought were important. This will help you to “read” future exam questions with greater accuracy. Above all, don’t be negative. Don’t argue with the professor or complain about the wording of questions. Don’t explain that you knew the answer, but time ran out. Such negative arguments cannot possibly help you.

Hopefully, these few tips will help you prepare for your next exam. Good luck!