January 2011

REGENTS’ REVIEW

HELP US LEAD THE SHOW!
Be a Regents’ Scholars Orientation Counselor for the Class of 2015!

Informationals:
January 26, 2011  Rudder Tower 402  7:00-8:00pm
January 27, 2011  Rudder Tower 402  7:00-8:00pm
Applications will be available at the informationals, or by emailing Casey at casey_gros@tamu.edu.

SAVE THE DATE! ✪ Regents’ Scholarship Freshman Banquet ✪ May 3, 2011
Attendance is REQUIRED for this event. ✪ Details TBD.

FAFSA RENEWAL WORKSHOPS

In order for you to continue receiving financial aid, including the Regents’ Scholarship, during the 2011-2012 academic year, you must complete the Renewal Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA). The FAFSA becomes available on January 1, 2011. The Scholarships & Financial Aid Office encourages students to submit the FAFSA form by March 1, 2011 to receive priority in awarding.

In order to complete the FAFSA, your student will need:
• Student and parent social security numbers
• W-2 Forms & any other records of money earned for both the student and parents
• Student’s 2010 federal income tax return
• Parents’ 2010 federal income tax return

• If filing electronically, PIN for both the student and the parents

In order to expedite this process, Scholarships & Financial Aid will be hosting several Renewal FAFSA/TASFA workshops for students during the Spring semester. Please attend these workshops if you need assistance filing your FAFSA. These events are scheduled for:
February 14, 2011  12:30PM-1:30PM
February 16, 2011  9:00AM-10:00AM
February 17, 2011  9:00AM-10:00AM
February 18, 2011  3:00PM-4:00PM

Registration is required. To register, you should visit:
http://financialaid.tamu.edu/workshops.


Answer the opinion poll on the top of page 3 to win A&M goodies!

IMPORTANT DATES

Jan. 13, 2011
Resident Halls Open for Spring

Jan. 17, 2011
Martin Luther King, Jr. Day

Jan. 18, 2011
First day of Classes for the Spring Semester

Jan. 23, 2011
MSC Open House

Jan. 26 & 27, 2011
OC Informationals

For the full calendar of events, see page 5.
FIRST YEAR GRADE EXCLUSION POLICY:

FAQs

What is a First Year Grade Exclusion (FYGE)? A fully admitted, currently enrolled Texas A&M undergraduate student who is “first time in college” may elect to exclude from his/her undergraduate degree and cumulative GPA calculation grades of D, F, or U. This exclusion shall be permitted for up to a maximum of three courses taken for credit at Texas A&M University during the twelve month period beginning with the student’s initial enrollment at Texas A&M.

Will my first year grade excluded classes remain on my official transcript? Yes and the classes will be designated on the transcript as excluded.

Are there any cases where I can’t use a FYGE? Grades for courses in which the student was found to have committed academic dishonesty will not be excluded from the GPA calculation, regardless whether or not the student completed remediation.

If I change my mind, can I have the FYGE reversed? Once a grade in a course has been excluded from the GPA calculation, the student will not later be permitted to have the exclusion removed or otherwise changed.

Are the excluded grades calculated into my GPR for the Regents’ Scholarship and Financial Aid? Yes, courses excluded under this policy are NOT excluded when determining whether a student is meeting satisfactory academic progress requirements (hours completed) for federal and state financial aid programs. If you have questions regarding your financial aid, please contact our department at 979-845-3236.

Will the excluded class be calculated into my GPR when I’m trying to get into professional school? While excluded courses will not be factored into the Texas A&M University GPA, students should be aware that employers, professional schools (including professional schools that are a part of Texas A&M University), undergraduate schools to which A&M students may seek to transfer, and graduate schools may recalculate the GPA to include such grades.

If I started in the fall of the year, do not attend spring semester and will return the following fall, what semesters count toward my twelve months of eligibility for first year grade exclusion? Your calendar began with your initial enrollment in the fall semester and continues through spring and summer.

Q Drop vs. FYGE

Q Drop

• Students choose to withdraw from a course prior to receiving a grade.
• A maximum of three (3) Q-drops are allowed during the student’s entire A&M career.
• Students must submit a Q-drop request before the deadline. Requests for late Q-drops are typically not approved.
• Students who drop below 12 hours will immediately be out of compliance with NCAA and International Student regulations. It also may affect financial aid and health insurance.
• Students will lose money and credits and may have to repeat the course if it’s needed for the degree.
• ALL 1-hour courses are “free Q-drops” and DO NOT count toward your 3 Q-drops maximum, but they DO count toward the State limit of six drops.
• If you drop a science lab and lecture in the same semester, it counts as 1 Q-drop toward the State limit of six drops. (Ex: OCNG 251 and 252 <lecture & lab> only count as 1 Q-drop)
• Q-drops and FYGEs affect academic progress differently as viewed by Financial Aid. Students receiving scholarships, loans, and/or grants should consult with a Financial Aid Advisor before deciding!

FYGE

• Students must have a final grade posted on their transcript before processing a FYGE; and students may wait until they file for graduation to submit the paperwork to process a Freshman Year Grade Exclusion.
• Students have the benefit of remaining in the class, giving it their best effort, and possibly earning an A, B, or C!
• Only three (3) final grades of “D”, “F”, or “U” may be excluded from the first year of credits at TAMU.
• Any course grade excluded is NOT calculated into the TAMU GPR.
• The final grade IS recorded on the transcript with a Grade Exclusion symbol (#). Excluded grades MAY be taken into consideration and/or reviewed by anyone reviewing transcripts for a selection process such as, but not limited to: professional or graduate programs, applying for transfer admission to other institutions, and/or scholarship agencies.
• Students remain enrolled at full-time status for the entire semester—health insurance isn’t affected.
• Once a student completes a class and a grade is posted, even if the grade is excluded the student can no longer attempt to post AP, IB or CLEP credit for that class. If a student Q-drops and doesn’t complete the class, the student can post previous credit for the class.
• FYGE allows students to save the 3 Q-Drops for later.
• Q-drops and FYGEs affect academic progress differently as viewed by Financial Aid. Students receiving scholarships, loans, and/or grants should consult with a Financial Aid Advisor before deciding!

For more information, please see your academic advisor.

Information retrieved from: http://gest.tamu.edu/Main/Qd%20vs%20FYGE%20-%20Fall%202010.pdf & http://admissions.tamu.edu/forms/registrarForms/GradeExclusionForm.pdf
“The best way to find yourself is to lose yourself in the service of others.” - Mohandas Gandhi

These immortal words of Mohandas Gandhi live on in the daily lives of many students on the Texas A&M University campus. In fact, Aggies boast that we host “the largest, one-day, student-run service project in the nation,” the Big Event. Selfless Service is even one of Texas A&M’s official core values.

The Regents’ Scholars Program encourages all students to “pay it forward” and serve the community in some sense. The Regents’ Scholars Student Organization (RSO) participates in several service activities throughout the year such as Replant, Big Event, going to a nursing home to visit with the residents, and many more. To find more service based organizations, please check out http://studentactivities.tamu.edu/online/search/index.

So what happens if you want to serve, but you aren’t sure where to go? Well Texas A&M has just the resource for you! AggieServe: Students Serving Aggieland is “a volunteer opportunity directory that connects Texas A&M University students, faculty, and staff to agencies and opportunities in the Bryan/College Station area.” On their website, http://studentactivities.tamu.edu/online/aggieserve/, you can search by keyword or date range so that you can find the project that suits you best.

There is no reason you can’t get involved and give back in the new year. So do something good for the community, build your resume, and have fun!

Information retrieved from:
http://bigevent.tamu.edu/
http://www.tamu.edu/home/aboutam/coreValues.html
http://studentactivities.tamu.edu/online/aggieserve/
http://brazosfoodbank.org/

What is your New Year’s resolution?
Send your answers to Ms. Casey Gros at cassey_gros@tamu.edu with “Regents’ Review Opinion Poll” in the subject line for a chance to win Aggie gear.

SERVING AGGIELAND
By Casey Gros

The fall of 2011 to spring of 2012 was an exciting time for continuing students at Texas A&M University. The year started off with the Student Scholarships application available online at https://scholarships.tamu.edu for all continuing students.

This is one application that will qualify you for several hundred scholarships, other than the Regents’ Scholarship.

Apply Today!
Deadline is February 1, 2011.

Questions? Contact Scholarships & Financial Aid at 979.845.3236 or email financialaid@tamu.edu.

*Not all scholarships are academic or need based.

FALL 2011-Spring 2012 CONTINUING STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP

The application is available online at https://scholarships.tamu.edu for all continuing students.

This is one application that will qualify you for several hundred scholarships, other than the Regents’ Scholarship.

Apply Today!
Deadline is February 1, 2011.

Questions? Contact Scholarships & Financial Aid at 979.845.3236 or email financialaid@tamu.edu.

*Not all scholarships are academic or need based.

OPINION POLL WINNER FOR DECEMBER

I have to say my favorite Aggie Experience is pretty hard to pick. But reflecting back on the Aggie experiences I have had I must say that The Maroon Out Game has been my all time favorite. I’m a first generation Aggie, so when they mentioned that we held the current record for most students at a single game in all College Football, I found it pretty hard to believe. After that game, I found it pretty hard NOT to believe. Walking in before the game began, was an intimidating sight. Even for me, because looking out onto the decks I could count with my two hands the amount of people sporting red.

The Aggie spirit is unlike any other I have felt. The stands swaying, the proud support of our “wrecking crew” and the overwhelming sight of seeing towels flying, after a fantastic win, amongst a sea of Maroon, was even emotional for me. For two days after that game my hearing was shot from all the yelling and excitement going on. And knowing that once again we broke our own record, piling 31,005 students, and I being one of those proud 31,005 made me smile and made realize, I love my Aggie’s. And I realized what I never understood before, that “from the outside looking in, you can’t understand it. [but] From the inside looking out, you can’t explain it.”

Katherine Madrid Aldana

Congratulations Katherine! Please contact Casey Gros to collect your prize.
I graduated…that’s right – I graduated! As of December 18, 2010, four and a half years after I started my undergraduate career at Texas A&M University, I walked across the stage, shook Dr. Loftin’s hand, and received my diploma in front of my wonderful family and my dearest mentors and friends. As of December 18, 2010, I officially became a part of the Association of Former Students. What a thought.

You know, graduating was the long-term goal that I set for myself. I always knew I was working towards it, but on a day-to-day basis I focused on my short-term goals – going to classes, completing my homework, doing well on my projects, exams, and papers. I worked towards my goal of graduating every single day, and when that day finally arrived, I was incredibly surprised at my own disbelief.

I steamed my graduation gown so that it looked nice and sleek; I ironed my clothes so that I looked like a professional graduate; I made sure that I wore my contacts so that I could see my family and friends in the crowd. I got into the proper rooms and into the correct lines, followed everyone out into Reed Arena and finally took my seat. I felt like a well-oiled machine.

It wasn’t until my row was called upon to walk across the stage that it really hit me. My long-term goal would be accomplished in the next two minutes. Slowly, I inched closer and closer towards the stage, and slowly, I felt my anticipation rise. I walked up the small steps that led to the stage, and whispered the correct pronunciation of my name to the caller. “Salma Abdullah Tejani!” was what I heard and I prompted myself onto the stage, taking one step after the other, each one with more and more confidence. Hearing Dr. Loftin congratulating me and wishing me well, and feeling the sturdy maroon tube that was the culmination of all my hard work in my hands was one of the most rewarding moments of my life.

As I left the stage, I smiled to my sister who was taking pictures, and enthusiastically waved the maroon tube in my hand to confirm that yes, I had my diploma in my hands. As I walked back to my row and sat down on my seat, I felt an extreme jubilation at what I had accomplished.

Now, I decided, it was time to set another long-term goal for myself – to get my Master’s in Higher Education Administration. I decided there and then that I would get back into the swing of academics like I always had, but with even more vigor than ever. In my case, a new semester means the start to a new degree. But in any case, a new semester means a new opportunity to prove yourself. The right way to start a new semester is to set specific, measurable, action-oriented, realistic, and timely goals, or SMART goals.

The SMART method of goal-setting has been incredibly helpful to me during my undergraduate career, and I believe that it will be even more important to me as I start my graduate career. The level of classes that I am going to be taking in a few weeks will be even more challenging and complex than my undergraduate classes, and it will be these SMART goals that will help me get out of my holiday slump mode. It will be these SMART goals that will allow me to focus on my classes so that I can accomplish my next long-term goal.

My long-term goal is to graduate with a 4.0 GPR for my Master’s Degree, but that is too broad of a goal so I need to manage this broad goal by dividing it into manageable chunks. My SMART goal for this semester is to manage my time so that I can become organized and devote at least two hours of study time for every hour of class that I am taking per week. My goal is timely and specific to this coming semester; it is measurable and action-oriented in the way that I explain how many hours I will study each week; it is realistic because I can easily fit 18 hours of studying in a week by dividing it into 2 – 3 hour chunks per day.

Writing this article, I can literally read where I was, where I am, and where I hope to be going. I am standing at the threshold of wonderful opportunities, and I plan to take advantage of each of those opportunities as they present themselves to me. I can’t wait to get started, but I can’t help but feel a bit reminiscent about my next journey…just as my undergraduate journey began with a handy dandy planner, so will my graduate journey.
### JANUARY 2011

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- More information about the items in red can be found on page 1 of the January Regents’ Review.