New Year’s Resolutions: Making a Fresh Start in the Spring Semester

New Year’s resolutions have become an enmeshed part of the U.S. culture. Countless individuals set resolutions every year, although unfortunately many give up on these resolutions due to poor planning. Given that a new calendar year and a new academic semester are beginning, it is an appropriate time to sit down and give thought to what resolutions you can make for the semester. A first step might be to set aside some quiet time (perhaps 30 minutes) to reflect on the Fall Semester. Consider the following questions: are there any regrets I have about how the semester went? Is there anything I would do differently if I could go back and relive the past 4-5 months? The answers to these questions can inform the resolutions you create.

As an academic and career counselor, I particularly recommend giving thought to your overall progress as a student. Consider factors such as your grades, time management habits, and study skills. Consider whether you are on track with your degree, and whether you have clear career goals. Once this review is completed, I challenge you to develop at least three resolutions for the Spring Semester. Ultimately, resolution is just a synonym for goal. If you set goals with these characteristics, this will help insure that you are not one of the many whose goals go unattained. Your goals should meet the following criteria.

- They are Specific (e.g. you can answer who, what, when, where, and why)
- They are Measurable
- They are Attainable
- They are Realistic
- They are Timely

In other words: set S.M.A.R.T. goals!

Some examples are listed below.
- I will call SCS today and make an appointment to address my time management habits
- I will meet with my advisor tomorrow to discuss how I can stay on track with my degree plan
- I will set aside at least 15 minutes for each of my classes to review my notes on the day of lectures
- I will spend an hour on Sunday utilizing DISCOVER to research career options

If you set SMART goals based on your particular needs and put effort into meeting these goals, this will very likely lead to improvement in your academic life. If your goals focus on issues such as personal concerns (e.g. relationship problems, depression, self-esteem), academic concerns (e.g. study skills, time management, concentration), or career concerns (e.g. changing major, exploring career options), remember that SCS is available to assist you. Good luck with carrying out your resolutions, and best wishes in starting out the Spring Semester with a positive and realistic mindset.

By Dr. Derek Bergeron
Student Counseling Services

FAFSA Renewal Workshop

Does the FAFSA renewal process have you seeing double?

Find answers to all of your FAFSA renewal questions at the FAFSA Renewal Workshops hosted by the Department of Student Financial Aid. Counselors will be available for one-on-one assistance with applications to answer your individual questions.

Space is limited, so sign up now!

Monday, February 18th 2-3 pm
Tuesday, February 19th 2-3 pm
Wednesday, February 20th 10-11 am
Thursday, February 21st 10-11 am

All workshops are located in Room 219 of the Pavilion.

Please Register at:
https://financialaid.tamu.edu/workshops.

DON’T FORGET: There is plenty of FREE help on-campus as well as several individuals who are here to help you succeed.

- Supplemental Instruction (S.I.) schedule: http://www.tamu.edu/cae/silist.shtml
- Department of Multicultural Services FREE tutoring: http://tutor.tamu.edu
- University Writing Center: http://uwcenter.tamu.edu/
- Mathematics Department Help: http://www.math.tamu.edu/teaching/helpsession/
- Study skills and time management workshops: http://www.scs.tamu.edu/academic/
- Student Learning Center Drop-In Tutoring: http://slc.tamu.edu/tutorschedule.pdf
Howdy! My name is Katie Tate and I’m a senior Allied Health major from Wall, Texas. I am part of the class of 2008 Regents’ Scholars. I’m also involved with the Regents’ program as a mentor for the class of 2010 and 2011 and serve on the Executive Board as the Social Chair.

I come from a very small town in west Texas. My parents always said that I was adventurous and loved to roam. I even remember when I was little I would wander from my mom when we would go to a store and she would have to search under racks of clothes for me. I guess this was an early indication that I was born to wander. I always dreamed of going abroad, so when I decided to come to Texas A&M I was determined to make that dream come true.

In my mind, studying abroad was a stepping stone to understanding myself better. I thought the benefits of studying abroad outweighed any anxiety I had.

My dad was always supportive of my decision to study abroad and in the end he actually is the reason I was able to go. He told me to live my life to the fullest. However, my mom insisted that it was a dangerous world and that I shouldn’t leave the comforts of home. Eventually I was able to reason with my mom explaining all the benefits and reassuring her that I would be safe. She realized I was just like her, stubborn and determined, so she gave me her consent.

I researched all of the opportunities that were available, putting the ball into motion. I went through dozens of brochures for the different types of programs available but one really stood out–Italy has always been a place of interest for me. All of the ancient architecture and history coupled with the beauty of the Tuscan hills and the famous works of art were irresistible. I decided that this was the program that I would apply for.

Tentatively, I turned in my application earlier than anyone else and waited in anticipation to find out if I was accepted…so was very disappointed when I got the email telling me I had been wait listed. However, I did not let that set me back. I found two more programs that were appealing and applied for both; I was determined to study abroad! I was accepted into the Germany Photography program and the Costa Rica Education program for the summer of 2008. I decided to enroll in the Costa Rica program because it was another place I had always wanted to go and I thought the experience would be beneficial.

Yet, there was another bump in the road. Not enough people enrolled in the Costa Rica program, so it was cancelled. Then, the next day I received notice that I had been accepted off the wait list to go to Italy! I felt like it was God’s sign that Italy was where I was supposed to go. I was really excited and so ready to take on the adventure.

I made an appointment with a study abroad advisor at the Financial Aid Office and they were able to help me get all the financial aid I needed. Finally, my dreams seemed to be so close. Let me tell you, I realize that the more you want something the harder you will work for it.

I applied for my passport in February, knowing I was going to be leaving for Costa Rica in late June. I figured this would definitely be enough time to receive the passport; but, once I was moved into the Italy program my date of departure changed to late May. I waited patiently for 8 weeks to receive my passport—which should have been more than necessary…but it never came. I called and waited on hold with the National Passport Office for sometimes over an hour. I became increasingly worried that I would not get my passport in time. My dad became increasingly worried that I would not get my passport in time. My dad

My dad drove 5 hours to College Station on Sunday night and we got up and left Monday morning at 5 a.m. to drive to the Houston Passport Agency. We waited in line for about 7 hours before I was called up. They informed me that they had sent it out 2 days prior and there was nothing they could do, even though I had told them not to send it and I would come pick it up instead. I reasoned with the guy and he eventually double-checked and found my passport in another area waiting to be sent. My persistence paid off! If I had just left I would have never been able to make my flight. I was so grateful to my dad; he was amazing about the whole incident and he really is the person that made my dream a reality.

I can’t even explain what a difference this trip has made. I learned so much during my six weeks in Italy. I tasted new foods and learned some Italian (mainly how to order gelato in Italian). I saw so many places and important historical sites and did so many things. My time there gave me a greater global perspective and an increased appreciation for the diversity of cultures. I will never forget the time that I spent in Italy and all the things I learned. I discovered a new side of myself in Italy, which has made me focus on the things that are most important to me. I value the support from my family, friends, Financial Aid advisors, and everyone else who made this trip possible.

“The World is a book, and those who do not travel read only a page.”
~St. Augustine

Continued from November 2007

To view steps 4-6, visit: https://financialaid.tamu.edu/regentsreview/SophNovember2007.pdf.

Step 7: Set an appointment and meet with a counselor in the Department of Student Financial Aid to discuss options for funding your program.

Step 8: Apply for Texas A&M Study Abroad Programs Office scholarship(s): Study Abroad Fellowship and International Education Fee Scholarship (for any credit-bearing global experience). Check for other scholarships via the Study Abroad web site and apply, if eligible.

Step 9: Attend any meetings required by program, as well as the Texas A&M pre-departure orientation meetings to obtain important information and resources for traveling abroad. Check out the Study Abroad web site, http://studyabroad.tamu.edu or subscribe to the listserv (“Join Listserv” on main page) for Texas A&M pre-departure orientation information.
Regents’ Scholars Program Blogger. Wanted. Regents’ Scholars Program bloggers will increase the visibility of the Regents’ Scholars Program through the creation and expansion of the Regents’ Scholars Program blogs.

Qualifications?
Regents’ Scholarship recipients preferred. Undergraduate students preferred. Ability to effectively manage time. Ability to work independently. Minimum GPA of 2.5.
For more information, visit: scholarships.tamu.edu

Regents’ Scholars Program Peer Mentors

Help welcome the Class of 2012!
Apply now to be a Regents’ Scholars Program Peer Mentor for the 2008-2009 academic year.

Benefits of becoming a peer mentor:

- Leadership opportunities
- Participate in training and the Regents’ Scholars Program Orientation on August 18, 2008
- Meet fellow Regents’ Scholars
- Regents’ Scholars Program Student Organization
- Mentor Freshman throughout the academic year
- Must have a 2.0 GPR or better

Applications due to Regents’ Scholars Assistant Coordinator, Drew Smith, by February 15, 2008.

Download the application online at https://financialaid.tamu.edu/regentsreview.

Please share the opportunity with your friends!

Hundreds of Scholarships
ONE APPLICATION

Apply Today! Deadline is February 1, 2008

scholarships.tamu.edu
Common Confusions:

- Picking a major and a career are basically the same thing.
- Choosing one major means giving up on all the others.
- The major I pick now will determine my lifelong career.
- Many students assume that choosing a major is the same as choosing a career (and vice versa). While these two choices can go hand-in-hand, choosing one does not automatically mean you have chosen the other. Choosing a major does not limit you to only one career choice; choosing a career does not limit you to only one major.
- Students can always combine their interests in more than one major. For example, students can complete double majors, co-majors or even concurrent degrees.

Also! Post-baccalaureate degrees do not have to be in the same area as an undergraduate degree. An undergraduate might receive their major in Health Administration, but earn their master’s degree in computer science. A student who majored in music might decide for a master’s degree in linguistics.

- Studies have shown that within 10 years after graduation most people are working in careers not directly connected to their undergraduate majors.

Just as some students change their minds about their majors, some graduates change their minds about careers. Over time, and with new technology, jobs change. New types of jobs are emerging every year, and most of us have no way of knowing what those jobs will be or what type of education will be needed in order to qualify for them.

Consequently, the current emphasis in career planning at the undergraduate level is on the development of general, transferrable skills (writing, speaking, computer literacy, problem-solving, team-building) that employers want and that graduates will need in order to adjust to rapidly-changing careers.

Bottom Line: People change; careers change.

Adapted from “Major Decisions,” by Michael J. Leonard. Copyright 1996-1999, The Pennsylvania State University. All rights reserved

What Does A&M Offer to Help?

The Academic and Career Resource Center contains books and computer programs on career topics including What Can I Do With This Major, specific information about various occupations, and resources for career planning and increased self-awareness.

No appointment is required to use these self-help materials from 8:30am to 5:00pm on weekdays.

A Green A&M in 2008

1. Each American throws away 4-6 pounds of trash each day.
2. Americans throw away at least 162 tons of garbage a year.
3. It would fill 1000 football fields piled thirty stories high.
4. Only 10% of America’s trash is being recycled.
5. If people recycled things like paper, glass, and aluminum cans, and other things that are in their garbage, trash would be reduced by 25%.

Learn how to be green in 2008 at http://recycle.tamu.edu/index.htm
The Regents’ Scholars Program is pleased to announce the 2008-2009 Regents’ Scholars Program Student Planning Board (RSPSPB). The RSPSPB consists of 6 student leaders (all former Regents’ Scholars Peer Mentors) who will assist with the planning and implementation of the Class of 2012 Regents’ Scholars Orientation. In addition, from January 25-27, 2008, the board will travel to Austin to attend the National Conference on Student Leadership’s Certified Leader Weekend Retreat.

Introducing...
Regents’ Scholars Program Student Planning Board

Gary Young ‘10
Chair
Gary will be working with the Academic session of the Regents’ Scholars Orientation this August. He is a General Studies major from Fort Worth, TX. Gary was a Regents’ Scholars Peer Mentor that helped welcome the Class of 2011 at the Orientation last August.

Salma Abdullah ‘10
Co-Chair
Salma will be working with the Financial Aid session of the Regents’ Scholars Orientation this August. She is an English major from College Station, TX. Salma was a Regents’ Scholars Peer Mentor that helped welcome the Class of 2011 at the Orientation last August.

DaNeetra Kersee ‘08
Peer Mentor Program Coordinator
DaNeetra will be working with the Student Life session of the Regents’ Scholars Orientation this August. She is a Human Resources major from Bryan, TX. DaNeetra assisted the Orientation Planning Committee for the Class of 2011 Orientation.

James Philip ‘10
James will be working with the Student Life session of the Regents’ Scholars Orientation this August. He is a Biomedical Science major from College Station, TX. James was a Regents’ Scholars Peer Mentor that helped welcome the Class of 2011 at the Orientation last August.

Madiha Rizvi ‘10
Madiha will be working with the Academic session of the Regents’ Scholars Orientation this August. She is a Business major from Beaumont, TX. Madiha was a Regents’ Scholars Peer Mentor that helped welcome the Class of 2011 at the Orientation last August.

Minho Seo ‘10
Minho will be working with the Financial Aid session of the Regents’ Scholars Orientation this August. He is a General Studies major from Seoul, South Korea. He was a Regents’ Scholars Peer Mentor that helped welcome the Class of 2011 at the Orientation last August.