Texas A&M prides itself on the ability of Aggies to rally around a common goal. Now more than ever, it is important to remember that we are not only Aggies, but we are Texans. It is time to show the rest of the state of Texas what the Aggie Spirit is all about.

The goal is simple: raise as much money as possible to donate to two (2) of the relief funds that will assist those affected by these wildfires. The aim is to “Towel Out, White Out” for the Texas A&M home football game against Baylor at Kyle Field on October 15th. Everyone in attendance at this game is encouraged to wear white as a symbol of hope for the countless Texans who so greatly need it.

Maroon 12th Man towels are available to purchase online at http://www.aggiewildfirerelief.com/ Proceeds will be donated to the American Red Cross and the Texas Wildfire Relief Fund.

Greetings from Erin...

Howdy Ags!

Can you believe that it’s October and that you already have one month of classes under your belt? With mid-terms just around the corner, I want to pass along a couple helpful ideas:

1. Utilize the FREE tutoring available through the Student Learning Center, Student Counseling Services, and Multicultural Services. These offices offer assistance with many intro-level math and science courses, including chemistry, physics, biology, and calculus. http://scstamu.edu/academic/tutoring.pdf

2. Take advantage of your professors’ office hours. This is a great way to interact one-on-one with your professors and receive additional support.

As always, please let the Regents’ Scholars staff know if you have any questions. Remember that we are here to help you succeed. Good luck with mid-terms!

Thanks and Gig ‘em!

Erin Fisk
Regents’ Scholars Assistant Coordinator
Sophomore Programs
979.458.5345
erinfisk@tamu.edu

Congratulations to the 2011-12 Regents’ Scholars Orientation Planning Board!

Chair: Leticia Palomin ’14, Co-Chair: Mickey Rodriguez ’14, Jorge Aguero ’15, Mariajose Rosales ’14, Marlen Cornejo ’15, Samira Mansoor ’15
Many returning college sophomores find that the novelty and excitement of college has been replaced by massive amounts of stress. Many college sophomores find themselves disenchanted with their majors, college friends, or even their choice of university. If you are a college sophomore, you aren’t the only one feeling down in the dumps. Welcome to the sophomore slump.

You made it through your freshman year without dropping out or going crazy. You arrived at college as nervous as can be but managed quite nicely during that difficult first year. After making it through spring semester finals, you even survived that first summer at home with the parents - not easy for a college student who has had a taste of independence. So, given all the challenges you’ve made it through up until sophomore year, you’d think being a college sophomore would be a breeze. So why the sophomore slump?

Turns out, sophomore year is harder than you’ve been lead to believe. As college sophomores return to campus after the first summer away, they find themselves barraged with stress from every angle. The main stressors for college sophomores either deal with academics, personal life or relationships. While personal life and relationships can make sophomore year tough, academics tends to be the main roadblock for college sophomores.

Academically, many a college sophomore feels the pressure to declare a major. After following the advisor’s advice and sampling a variety of generals, the college sophomore may still not have found the right major and begins to despair of ever shaking the label of “undeclared student.”

Even if you are declared in a major and minor by sophomore year, you may share another common college sophomore problem: wondering if you chose the right major. Sophomore year is the time when many students switch majors, sometimes several times. These college sophomores are also feeling the pressure to declare and actually stick with a major, especially now that they have accumulated a ton of credits that they might not necessarily need. For example, I began my sophomore year of college as a music major and found that it was not the appropriate course of study for me. Faced with this academic sophomore slump, I took the typical path of college sophomores—I switched majors, eventually settling on Elementary Education. While relieved to be a college sophomore with a major that felt “right” I was newly stressed by my lack of Education credits, and by the growing certainty that I would be a five year student - a “super senior.”

The only solution I have found from this college sophomore problem is to continue to follow that dreaded advice from the freshman advisor: keep taking generals and trust that the right major will come along. If sophomore year is drawing to a close, meet with your advisor, who will help you make a last minute decision you won’t regret. Many college sophomores end up choosing the subject that they’ve accumulated the most credits in. My best friend, for example, had no idea which major to choose, even as she was preparing for her spring semester finals during sophomore year. She went over her transcript and discovered that she had taken more credits in psychology, as well as several courses (such as statistics) that fulfilled psychology requirements, so she decided to declare a major in psychology.

In the end, your choice of major doesn’t always matter that much, especially if you are a college sophomore who has enjoyed taking a variety of majors. Look at what you’ve been taking and what classes you enjoyed the most and what subject they fit into—that is your best choice of a major. If you’re afraid it won’t get you a good job, remember that many professions only require a bachelor’s degree, and that you’ll have a better chance of getting into grad school if you enjoy your major enough to study hard and do well in school.

The other academic concern of college sophomores is worry over taking upper level courses. These can be more interesting and applicable to your major than freshman classes, but they will certainly add stress to your sophomore year. The amount of study time increases substantially, as does the necessity to earn a decent grade in your classes; college sophomores are no longer able to make excuses about how their classes “don’t matter,” especially if those classes are prerequisites for other upper level courses or even internships.

The first thing to do before taking harder classes during sophomore year is to renew your commitment to excelling. As a college sophomore, just getting by in generals will no longer cut it. Figure out the areas in which you struggled as a freshman and resolve to make the necessary changes as a college sophomore so you escape the academic sophomore slump. If this means taking a class in study skills in order to improve your study habits, do it. Many college sophomores find that simply shifting their time from partying to studying is enough to ensure a higher grade point average. Others may need to study less and schedule a little relaxation time.

Many college sophomores find that some level of an academic “sophomore slump” is unavoidable, but with the proper preparation, they can make the impact of the sophomore slump less devastating by planning and getting help from advisors. If you are serious about turning things around, there is no reason why you shouldn’t have a successful sophomore year.

Adapted from http://www.associatedcontent.com/article/2121957/college_sophomores_how_to_avoid_the.html?singlepage=true&cat=4 by Gretta Gust
10 Ways to Get Out of the Sophomore Slump

1. Take a class for fun. You might be feeling “slumpish” because you have to take tons of pre-reqs before you can get into the nice, meaty courses required for your major. Or you may not even be sure what to major in. Either way, add a little spice to your routine by taking a class just for fun. It can be yoga, ballet, an art class, or anything that’s out of the ordinary for you.

2. Join a new club or organization. Your first year in school, you were probably so busy adjusting to life as a college student that your time management skills were -- shall we say -- less than stellar. But now that you know the ropes, join a new club or organization that will provide you with a creative outlet and something enjoyable to do each week.

3. Get involved in student government. Even if you’ve never done student government before, see if you can represent your residence hall, your academic class, or even a constituency you belong to (like transfer students, for example). It can be a great way to keep you motivated to talk to other students, stay on top of current issues, and develop some leadership skills. (Not to mention that it looks good on your resume.)

4. Volunteer on campus. No matter where you go to school, chances are that there is some kind of volunteer program you can join. See who needs volunteers this year and don’t have the time to volunteer. Try to combine both your financial needs and your need for change into an off-campus job that is interesting and something new.

5. Volunteer in the local community. Maybe a change of scene is more what’s needed. If so, see what volunteer options are available in your local community.

6. Mentor first-year students. You just might be in the sophomore slump because you are doing well in college -- which means that perhaps you can be a good role model for incoming first-year students who need some guidance about adjusting to college life. See if your school has a mentoring program you can join -- and if not, see about starting one yourself!

7. Get a fun job on campus. True, most students work in college for the money. But if you need to mix things up a little, this can be a great way to still get income while also enjoying yourself. Work in the campus coffee shop, at the theater, or in any other avenue that offers a fun, engaging environment.

8. Get a fun job off campus. Perhaps you do need a change of scene from your campus but don’t have the time to volunteer. Try to combine both your financial needs and your need for change into an off-campus job that is interesting and something new.

9. Get involved politically. What are local politics like near your school? Can you volunteer on someone’s campaign? Join a national campaign for a person or an issue you care about? Become involved in a movement for a cause that is near and dear to your heart?

10. Start planning a great trip. Sophomore year can be a little challenging because there often isn’t one big “thing” to look forward to. So why not create your own highlight of the year? See what your options are for planning a fun trip over Thanksgiving break, winter break, spring break, or even a long weekend coming up. It just might do the trick of getting you out of your sophomore slump and back into your normal groove.

Adapted from http://collegelife.about.com/od/healthwellness/a/10WaysToGetOutOfTheSophomoreSlump.htm by Kelci Lynn

Minors and Double Majors

It’s hard enough choosing a major yourself, and now people are talking to you about a minor or worse-a double major! As if one major isn’t hard enough work!

But do you need a double major-or even a minor-to be competitive? Is it going to affect your future, your career, or your chances?

Double Majors

Double majors are a good fit for a select few students, but you are definitely not expected to take on two majors. It will not look “bad” if you only have one major!

Clearly doubling up on majors means a lot of extra work. My personal feelings on this - knowing people who have both double-major and who have stuck with just one major - is that you should major in something you are passionate about, and focus your energy there.

You’re going to spend the majority of your college career focused on whatever field you choose to major in, so if you feel equally, deeply passionate about two things, then a double major might be a good fit for you. If not, don’t double major!

Minors

Minors are, again, not really a requirement. Here are my basic rules about when you might logically choose to minor in a field:

1. If your minor would strengthen your capability at your major. (i.e. if you’re a physics major, a math minor could really help you to do better in your physics studies)

2. If required classes for your minor overlaps solidly with those for your major. (If you already have to do the work, why not add on a few extra classes to get the minor?)

3. If you feel passionately interested in another field, but not enough to double-major! (If you’re studying art but really enjoy psychology classes, you may as well work that in as a minor!)

Bottom line? A minor is not required, and most employers won’t care if you do or don’t have one. I minored in psychology simply because (a) I found it interesting and (b) I had already taken some classes that filled part of the requirement-so it wasn’t hard to finish up the minor.

Hope that takes the pressure off: remember, study what you like!

For a list of Texas A&M University’s approved minors, visit http://admissions.tamu.edu/forms/registrarForms/UniversityApprovedMinors.pdf

Adapted from http://www.survivingcollege.com/2008/04/08/do-i-need-to-have-a-minor-or-double-major/
Approximately 1,136 days ago, I entered the grounds of this fine institution called Texas A&M University as a student. I filled out that blue evaluation form from my Orientation, attended my academic success program’s first class and paid my dues for the Regents’ Scholars Organization (RSO). Little did I know that one day I would grow up to own what I like to call “Orla”.

“Orla” was presented to me by Suzanne Sealey on September 16. Yes, the Regents’ Scholars Coordinator came to my Ring Day for me specifically. She said, “Why are you not on my calendar? Tell me what time you’re getting your ring so I can come.” Though I didn’t fully understand at that moment why she would want to come to a Ring Day in the summer heat, the realization hit me when I stood at the desk asking, “Did they spell my name right?” If they didn’t spell my name correctly and I’d lost it that day, I would never get it back. If someone forgot my name and asked to see my ring to remember it, they’d say, “Congratulations, Aslo!” But most importantly, no one would know that Asiya Bhura is a proud member of the Fightin’ Texas Aggie Class of 2012 (Whoop!) by just looking at my hand.

As the years passed, I worked harder to earn my Aggie Ring; the first year wasn’t so bad for me and I worked up my GPR in spring 2009. Sophomore year was more about getting used to my major classes while balancing extra-curricular commitments. My junior year was about figuring out and focusing on what I wanted to do with life; now my senior year is about being happy with what I have decided.

I am super happy that I have my ring. I forgot how exciting it was to see people wear their rings, representing the essence of Texas A&M on their right ring fingers unless, of course, they were part of that secret organization that wears it on their left ring finger. I also understand in retrospect that I wasn’t excited because I thought it wouldn’t happen. Seeing the ring in that red box, wearing it, Gig ‘Em Pounding it—that’s real. That’s what I had been working towards.

During my freshman year, I studied a lot for “Orla”. She was my goal because it seemed like the epitome of Aggie Spirit and that goal was easily attainable. When sophomore year came around, the work became harder as I worked harder. Though I knew it would be sensible to take as many hours as I could handle, I forgot what the point was. My goals changed from academic competence to extra-curricular busy bee. Looking back, I should have written down my goals and put them where I could see it every day so I wouldn’t lose track of what I wanted. In preparation for junior year, I looked at my hours, planned out the rest of my undergrad, estimated “Orla” into my budget and focused on the important stuff: my happiness. One of the things that made me happy was knowing that my Aggie Ring would be the second one in my family, alongside the noble “Excalibur”.

One of the best parts about getting “Orla” was waiting for her throughout the day. That day, I was working and Suzanne came to my desk, raising her shoulders, saying, “You excited?” To play it cool, I said, “What do you mean?” but of course I gave it away by smiling. Casey couldn’t come to my Ring Day but she and Leslie Facebooked me when the time came around for me to pick it up. Then I got more excited as Erin, Suzanne and I went to someone else’s Ring time and met Cathy, Manny and Ben (awesome Regents’ Scholars) on the way. I also got a call from Excalibur’s owner, my sister Salma, about how proud she was of me. The relationships I made throughout my undergrad came together in that one day and supported my moment of happiness. When I checked my computer at home, many of the other ring-getters congratulated me on my accomplishment through Facebook and liked my new profile picture with “Orla”.

Since a few days have passed, I am proud to say that I will take “Orla” to grad school with me; filling out those applications is a challenge but having her by my side will make it easier because she symbolizes my success. Now that “Orla” has joined my family and friends-circle, I believe she will make me more like the golden queen she is.

Asiya’s Nook

Asiya Bhura
Regents’ Scholars Intern
AggieServe 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. Currently there is a variety of service opportunities available, including the Alzheimer’s Memory Walk, the Mentoring Lunch Buddy Program, and reading & math tutoring for elementary school students. Please visit http://aggieserve.tamu.edu for additional details.

## October 2011

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<th>Sunday</th>
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<td>OPAS: Charlotte's Web</td>
<td>Navaratri/ Dassera- Hindu (10/3 – 10/12)</td>
<td>6:00 – 8:00 PM National Night Out</td>
<td>11:00 AM – 3:00 PM 19th Annual Law School Caravan</td>
<td>10:00 AM – 2:00 PM Graduate &amp; Professional School Day Farmers’ Market</td>
<td>AAO First Friday Lecture Series OPAS- National Acrobats of the People’s Republic of China RSO Campout</td>
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<td>OPAS- Masters of the Fiddle</td>
<td>Farmers’ Market</td>
<td>8:00PM – 12:00AM CAMAC Salsa Dance Night Midnight Yell</td>
<td>RSO Attends Football Game Aggie Football vs. Baylor</td>
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<td>Columbus Day</td>
<td>National Coming Out Day</td>
<td>Sukkot (Feast of Tabernacles)- Jewish</td>
<td>Rooted Histories: Blacks in Latin America</td>
<td>Farmers’ Market</td>
<td>8:30 – 10:30 PM Mr. &amp; Miss Hispanic Heritage Month Pageant</td>
<td>Midnight Yell</td>
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<td>Symphonic Band/Concert Band Concert</td>
<td>Mid Term Grades Due</td>
<td>Birth of the Bab- Bahai</td>
<td>Birth of the Bab- Bahai Semini Atzeret &amp; Simchat Torah- Jewish Farmers’ Market</td>
<td>Aggie Soccer vs. Oklahoma</td>
<td>RSO Replant 2011 Cultural Day Trip: Dallas, TX dms.tamu.edu</td>
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<td>Aggie Soccer vs Oklahoma State</td>
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<td>Aggie Football vs. Missouri</td>
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<td>Halloween</td>
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11:30 AM - 1:00 PM CommUnity Conversations: A Voice for Young Voters

6:00 - 8:00 PM National Night Out

7:00 – 9:00 PM Rooted Histories: Blacks in Latin America

6:30 – 7:15 PM Freaking Over Finals