

Maymester offers short courses for credit, intense learning

SUSAN COOPER Staff Writer

Have you ever wanted to take a class about the Indians in North Carolina and South Carolina, or a class about stock car racing in the South? Well, that is exactly what several students did during Maymester.

Maymester was an experimental semester at USC during May.

According to Dr. David "Turbo" Thompson, who taught the stock car racing class, Maymester was presented to him as a chance to come up with "some interesting field-orientated courses that would appeal to students."

Students who took Maymester seemed to enjoy taking a class outside the normal classes they take to fill their course requirements.

"I don't think I would want to really take anything else like an accounting course or a computer course right in the middle of May; you know three weeks is short enough," Trevor Spencer, a journalism senior taking the stock car racing class, said.

Michelle Schoan, who was in the Carolina Indians class, is a Pee Dee Indian herself.

"I enjoyed the Maymester," Schoan said. "I like the structure of the course."

"If you're going to have a class for two hours and forty-five minutes, then you shouldn't sit there for the whole time. You should be more involved in the class than just sitting there listening to someone talking."

Neil Walton, who took the Carolina Indians class during Maymester

I like that they were willing to experiment with some courses."

Maymester's different type of classes made some students frustrated at the slim number of courses offered and some upset that regular courses offered during the other semesters were not a part of Maymester's schedule.

Senior Neil Walton said he took his Carolina Indians class as a behavioral science course in order to graduate; it was the only behavioral science class being offered.

"They should have a couple more classes within the categories so that you have a little more to choose from," Walton said.

Dr. Pearson, the Carolina Indians professor, said the Maymester topics had to be very focused so that a narrow topic could be discussed in a fair amount of detail.

"It would be hard to offer a regular course like English 101 in a three week class," Pearson said.

The length of the experimental Maymester class and the number of days that was expected to meet a week

was something some students liked and others felt was too long.

"If you're going to have a class for two hours and forty-five minutes, then you shouldn't sit there for the whole time," Walton said. "You should be more involved in the class than just sitting there listening to someone talking."

Spencer said he felt differently about the time element of the course.

"To be able to concentrate on one course for three weeks is great," Spencer said. "I have always had problems when it comes to the regular semester when you are taking five or six courses, and you are trying to shuffle and shift gears so often. Sometimes courses just don't work together and this allows you to do just one."

Maymester is a semester that has courses that are not usually offered during the regular semesters. Who would take a class on stock car racing or on the Internet?

According to Thompson, "they are coming from all over the campus." He said his class is made up of all sorts of majors ranging from nursing to business.

"I'm surprised by the cross-section of students that we have," Thompson said.

Thompson said students were taking his class for a variety of reasons that all stem back to having a better understanding of the sport.

Okay, now that there are people in a class, no matter how unusual the subject matter is, what can be learned? Pearson said his course offered an environment that allowed very animated discussions and probably opened many students eyes to things that they hadn't been aware of previously.

Raymond Deamer, who was a student in the Carolina Indians course, said he learned a lot more than he expected.

"It has opened my mind to the reality of what is going on with the Indians and put myths to the side," Deamer said. "Like most people, it has opened my mind to a new way of looking at things."

Thompson said his class learned more than racing, they learned those involved within the sport are really decent people. He said he was able to get across how the sport started.



SPECIAL TO THE GAMECOCK

Students who took the stock car racing class during Maymester got to visit Darrell Waltrip's shop near Charlotte Motor Speedway.

Racing started with "redneck moonshiners" modifying their cars to outrun revenuers, thereby learning different driving techniques to get away, according to Thompson.

Thompson's class not only learned about moonshiners, they also met some guests that actually ran moonshine. Thompson said that his class not only "heard about history, we met people who are history, so I think that has been fun."

In both classes, guest speakers and field trips were part of the hands-on experience Maymester classes are set up to provide.

Within the Carolina Indians class, students were able to visit the Catawba and Cherokee reservations while learning about Indian history, heritage and culture.

The NASCAR class was able to experience racing at Columbia Speedway

every Friday night and I-20 speedway every Saturday night. The NASCAR students also had the chance to go to The Charlotte Motor Speedway and see what NASCAR is like behind the scenes. The students had the opportunity to visit Darrell Waltrip's shop. At the shop, the students were shown what it takes to get out on the race track.

Buck Horne, a German senior, said he liked the aspect of going on field trips.

"I loved the field trips, we got to see a lot of fun and interesting things," Horne said.

Maymester seemed to be a success as both professors and students said they would be willing to take another Maymester class if the university would offer it.

"I think the response has been really good to this and I hope they ask me to teach it again," Thompson said.

Tommy Chong to perform at Comedy House Theatre

STAFF REPORTS

Tommy Chong will perform June 14 and 15 at the Comedy House Theatre.

Chong was one-half of the comedy team Cheech and Chong.

The duo recorded six gold comedy albums including the 1974 Grammy winner "Los Cochinos" and starred in seven features, most of which Chong co-wrote and directed. They also came up with the catch phrase "Dave's Not Here."

Cheech and Chong performed material once considered taboo. Chong, who was the tall, bearded one of the team, said he does not know the meaning of "politically correct."

Today, Chong is back performing in front of a live audience and making people laugh. In his shows, there is mention of marijuana.

"I just make jokes and let the people make up their own mind," Chong said. But Chong said he will have a

conversation with anyone who thinks they have all the answers when it comes to drugs.

Chong enjoys talking about comedy, music, politics and drugs. He said when he hears the word "drugs," he thinks of the real dangerous ones: alcohol and tobacco.

A native of Edmonton who was born to a Chinese father and an Irish/Scottish mother, Chong learned to play country and western guitar while growing up in

Calgary.

When he moved to the west coast, he formed the R&B band The Vancouverians with Bobby Taylor, where he wrote and recorded the 1967 Motown hit "Does Your Mama Know About Me?" which went to number one on the R&B charts. Chong even traded guitar licks with the legendary Jimmy Hendrix one night in England.

When he returned to Vancouver, he founded the improvisational comedy troupe City Works that worked out of

his brother's night club. This led to the eventual meeting with his partner-to-be, Richard "Cheech" Marin.

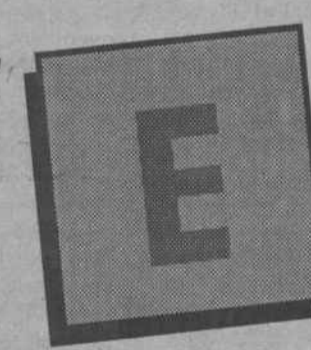
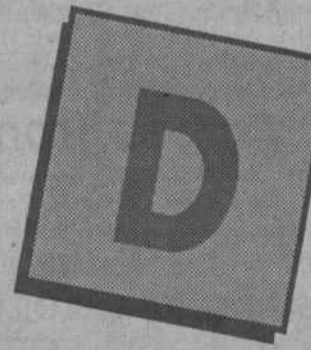
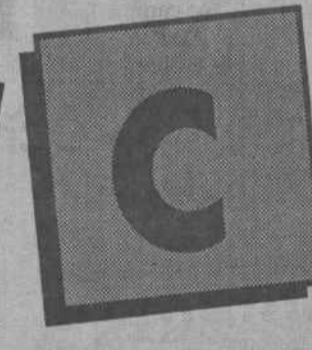
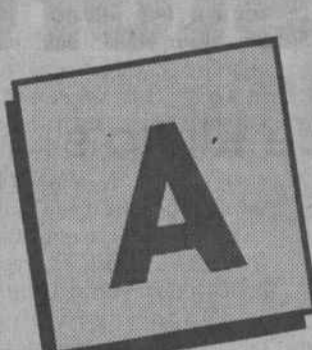
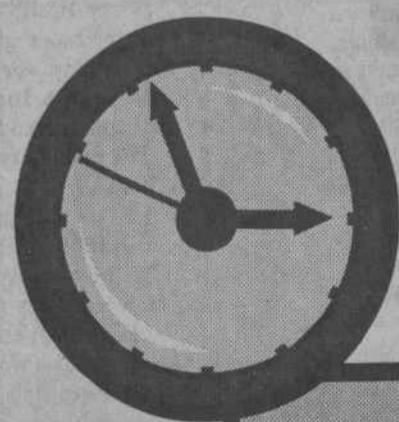
Chong penned and recorded with George Harrison on guitar "Basketball Jones," and he brought the following characters to life: Blind Melon Chitlin, Harry Palms, Laid Back Lenny and Butt Wrangler (Willie Nelson's accountant).

Currently, Chong can be heard on the new Spin Doctor's CD, seen as Red the bus driver in "National Lampoon's

Senior Trip" and will soon begin filming "McHale's Navy" with Tom Arnold.

When he is not on the road, Chong is busy with a number of projects. One of them is an exercise/workout book entitled "A Doper's Guide To Fitness." He is also busy being the husband to Shelby, who is his partner on stage, and he is the proud father of Rae Dawn, Robbi, Precious, Paris and Gilbran.

The Gamecock publishes June 19, July 9, July 23 and August 19 during the summer. Pick up the fall Gamecock on Monday, Wednesday and Friday starting August 22.



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