

Student finds certain personalities more prone to homesickness

COLLEGE PRESS EXCHANGE

Homesickness can put a damper on the first few months of freshman year.

While some first-year students are out meeting new friends, cheering at football games and whooping it up at dorm parties, others are doing nothing—except thinking about home.

Why do some students get homesick, and others not?

That's exactly what Nicole Scaramelli wanted to know. The 1997 Dartmouth College graduate spent her senior year researching a problem that experts say afflicts as many as 30 percent of first-year students.

"Homesickness is one of the leading causes of people coming into the health center to see a counselor or doctor," said Scaramelli, a psychology

major.

For the 12-month project, she studied about 100 Dartmouth students and dug up evidence to suggest that homesickness is mostly linked to a student's personality: people who are introverted or neurotic tend to be more likely to be homesick, according to her study.

Scaramelli said she delved into the topic even though she herself never experienced a bad bout of the homesick blues. But during her freshman year, "one of my roommates had a difficult time adjusting and ended up leaving school," she said. "That kind of sensitized me to the issue."

Working with Dartmouth Professor William Morris, Scaramelli asked first-year students to fill out a questionnaire in the summer before starting Dartmouth, and then six weeks after arriving on campus. The questionnaire tested

students' personality types.

Scaramelli said she thought the survey results would verify what she calls her "grieving" hypothesis, that "people who were happiest with their home life might have a greater sense of loss in a new situation, and would therefore be more likely to experience homesickness."

But that was not the case. "We were pretty surprised," she said. "The results were exactly opposite. People who were most unsatisfied with their homelife were most likely to be homesick."

Students were deemed to be homesick by the way they answered questions like "I feel lonely here," and "I think about home constantly."

The ones who battled homesickness also were most often introverted students who tended to be dependent on others. "It sort of seemed like a double-edged sword," Scaramelli said, explaining

that introverts find it hard to meet new people. "If you have trouble getting that support, you're kind of in a bind."

The research should help colleges devise practical strategies for fending off homesickness, such as social activities for first-year students, she said. Dartmouth, for example, offers pre-orientation camping trips, in which small groups of freshmen go hiking, horseback riding or biking.

Also, after hearing the results of Scaramelli's study, Dartmouth's Health Service decided to create a program to help identify and counsel homesick students.

The health service's 60 staff members, from secretaries to doctors to nurses to counselors, will be assigned to groups of freshmen. Staff members will send e-mail messages that say, "I'm your contact person; if you're feeling blue,

come talk to me."

That way, there's "more acquaintance with students other than when they're sick," said Jack Turco, director of the health service.

Scaramelli's study drew interest because it focused on "this whole introversion, isolation that causes problems," he said. "We certainly see a lot of that."

For some first-year students, "the separation anxiety is tremendous. Some of them are paralyzed by their parents, who can't separate and leave them alone," said Turco, adding that most students share some anxiety about leaving home.

Scaramelli, who will attend Harvard University's law school this fall, said she's pleased that Dartmouth is putting the study results to good use. She said, "It's important to try to make people's adjustment as easy as possible."

USCPD officer offers Five Points safety tips

BOB SIMMONDS Staff Writer

Many students returning to USC will want to venture into Five Points. But, to insure a good time, people need to know how to be safe.

According to Officer Calvin Gallman of the USC Police Department, there are several basic rules to follow to remain safe while out on the town.

- If you're being followed, go to the first lighted area you can find. Never go home or risk being followed.
- Don't hitchhike. That's a federal law as well.
- Avoid shortcuts and isolated areas. There are plenty of them in Five Points. Avoid walking on the railroad tracks to get home.
- Don't walk alone after dark, even in well-lighted areas.
- On the street, walk facing traffic. This will prevent you from being pulled into a passing car.

• If you're wearing a purse or book bag, be ready to release it in case of a mugging. It's not worth risking your life to save your bag.

Following these rules should help people stay safe while in Five Points, coupled with the help there already, like the police substation next to Food Lion.

"There are city police walking around the area during the night," Gallman said.

There are also pay phones available to dial 911 from. For people who try to use a fake form of identification to get into establishments, different places have different rules.

"Many will just turn you around and others will take the ID," Gallman said. All people under 30 years old can expect to have their identification checked.

"Above all, drink in moderation and report any suspicious activity to the police," Gallman said.

Department of Housing sets fall room changes for Aug. 27, students still on hall waiting lists

CARA PELLAT Asst. News Editor

Students wanting to change rooms this semester will have to compete with students still on the waiting list for housing, according to Gretchen Koehler-Shepley, Associate Director of Housing.

"It's a matter of whether we have spaces or not...Students who want to switch will have to work together," Koehler-Shepley said.

There are several students in temporary housing. When students don't show up on campus, their spaces are used to house students on the waiting lists.

For those wanting to change rooms, the Department of Housing will begin the process for changes within the same building in the area offices Aug. 27. There will be no changes on Aug. 28.

Room changes between residence halls will begin Aug. 29 and continue until Oct. 28. The Department of Housing will handle these changes.

In order to change rooms, students must pay a \$10 fee and sign a form indicating his or her roommate has been told about the room change.

Carolina Collegiate offers student banking

Credit union caters to students, faculty and alumni

BRANDINA CALLWOOD Staff Writer

Though Carolina Collegiate Federal Credit Union has served USC since 1967, very few people associated with the college say they know the services it offers.

Located behind Carolina Coliseum at 710 Pulaski St., anyone currently employed with USC or Coastal Carolina University and any USC alumni associate and immediate family members (including children, grandchildren, parents, siblings and in-laws) may seek membership.

Last summer, Carolina Collegiate enlisted USC students as possible applicants. This privilege includes not only full-time and part-time students, but also anyone enrolled in a single class at the university.

All members own and command this financial institute. The staff operates under the guidance of a board of directors, composed of approximately nine elected members.

Members may suggest changes in

fees and rates. Carolina Collegiate President Anne Shivers said the board takes every critique, criticism and compliment into consideration to reassure fulfillment of all members' standards.

Apart from a regular checking account, the credit union also offers a "No Minimum Checking" account. This account does away with minimum balance requirements, per check charges and monthly service charge fees.

Both have free benefits such as first-order checks, travelers' checks, money orders, notary services, direct deposit and a debit card with approval. Members 55 and older receive all checks for free.

The ATM cards function at any Honors or Cirrus ATM network. The credit union furnishes 10 free withdrawals per month, with a 50 cents charge for additional withdrawals. Several credit unions have also come together to provide surcharge free ATM access.

Locally, they consist of Columbia (S.C.) Teachers Federal Credit Union, Fort Jackson Federal Credit Union, South Carolina Federal Credit Union, S.C. Members First Federal Credit Union, and Safe Federal Credit Union.

To guarantee absolute convenience, the credit union provides Private Teller

and Night Watch services. Private Teller administers many on-line financial services through which members can perform transactions ranging from changing personal ID codes to gaining access to account balances and history. It has also made copying records to personal pecuniary software possible.

In addition, this courtesy enables attainment of tax information, a delineated analysis of payroll deduction allotment, and transfers to varying accounts.

Night Watch offers similar options through touch-tone telephones. Both courtesies simply require a member account number and personal identification number. Both have 24 hours a day, seven days a week availability.

The credit union also offers discount movie and seasonal theme park tickets. Members can purchase discount tickets to the Biltmore Estate, Six Flags, Carowinds, Regal Cinemas and General Cinemas.

Carolina Collegiate anticipates having an ATM located on campus at Russell House by mid-August.

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Campus ATM located next to Business Administration School
2 Branch Locations: Columbia Main—1225 Lady Street • Five Points—1940 Blossom Street

* One unit represents one minute of a domestic U.S. call. For international calling, one unit will not equal one minute; the value will vary, depending on the country called. Calling card to be issued 4-6 weeks after opening your account with Carolina First.

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Department of Student Life, Division of Student and Alumni Services