

Study: Academics trump college students' social lives

BY RICHARD BARNES
THE GAMECOCK

American students are putting more emphasis on academics rather than social lives and feel colleges and universities are sluggish to respond, according to a recently released survey.

The survey, conducted by consulting firm Zogby International, polled two separate samples of about 1,000 students. Participants were selected at random from the student population of roughly 50 American colleges and universities, including Michigan State, the University of North Carolina and the University of California systems.

The survey was sponsored by the Foundation for Academic Standards & Tradition, or FAST, a New York-based education think tank.

The survey concluded that 63.4 percent of students surveyed put a greater emphasis on their academics than on social opportunities. It said students were much more inclined to pursue learning opportunities than those in previous studies had been, even if that meant having to make some sacrifices on the social front.

The survey also indicated 68.7 percent of students surveyed felt their professors were not challenging them as much as they could, and a considerably smaller 34.7 percent felt their education suffered from "dumbing down."

Donald Greiner, USC's associate provost and dean for undergraduate affairs, said USC has several methods to communicate with students regarding the difficulty of classes.

First, every faculty member is re-

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USC's associate provost

quired to have a syllabus. This allows students to gauge the difficulty of a class very early in the semester.

Greiner said another method USC uses to ensure students are continually challenged is to consistently admit better students.

"USC has raised entrance requirements three times in the last six years, causing the average SAT for the entering baccalaureate student to soar to 1130," Greiner said.

"We believed that we wouldn't suffer [by raising admission requirements], because good students want to go where good students go. The more difficult it became to get in, the more good students try to get in."

The final method USC uses to preserve a challenging academic environment directly involves the student's themselves, Greiner said. At the end of each semester, in each class with five or more students, the students are given an opportunity to evaluate the class.

If students feel their class was too easy or difficult, they have the opportunity to say that in the evaluations. These evaluations are then reviewed by the department chair and the departmental teaching committee, Greiner said.

The evaluations become a part of the faculty member's tenure and promotion file, which is examined by the Provost's Office when the professor is under consideration for tenure or promotion.

Another major concern brought up by the survey, although not backed by statistical data, is that students fail to gain both a theoretical and a practical perspective of their topic field.

USC is already combating problems its graduates might have in their fields through a series of University 401 classes, Greiner said.

The University 401 class in a discipline is designed to emphasize the practical elements of the field and assist the student in seeking graduate and professional opportunities.

Greiner said he's finding students are becoming more ready and eager to learn, a trend he hopes will continue.

"The past eight years have been the best of my career because the students are better prepared," Greiner said. "They're much more curious about what there is to learn and know."

The university desk can be reached at gamecockudesk@hotmail.com.

UNIVERSITY CRIME REPORT

Compiled by
CHARLES PRASHAW

Tuesday September 19

• **Driving under suspension, no headlights and open container**, 700 block of Sumter Street. Two officers were standing at Sumter and Devine streets when officers saw a vehicle traveling toward them with no headlights at about 1 a.m. The reporting officer flagged down the vehicle, and when the officer approached the car, he noticed the subject had an open beer between his legs. After arresting the subject, police later found out that his drivers license was under suspension.

Monday September 18

• **Assistance rendered**, Thomson Student Health Center. The victim stated to police that while playing racquetball he was hit in the left eye, breaking his goggles, which cut his eye. The EMS was notified and the victim was transported to Palmetto Baptist Medical Center.

Sunday September 17

• **Larceny of internal Zip drive**, Thomas Cooper Library computer lab. USC employee Michael Sharp said someone removed an internal Zip drive from a Dell Optiplex Computer. Estimated value of the Zip drive is \$100.

• **Larceny of barricade**, the National Advocacy Center parking lot. Employee Cynthia Roach reported to police that someone removed the reflective board from a three-piece bar-

ricade. Estimated value of the reflective piece is \$50.

• **Disorderly conduct**, East Quadrangle. A resident was detained in her room when she didn't leave during a fire drill. When police arrived, they discovered the subject on the floor of the bathroom vomiting. Her roommate told police she had taken sleeping pills. When EMS arrived in the room, she allegedly refused to go to the hospital. After disobeying several verbal requests by the police and using strong profanity toward the reporting officer, the officer arrested the subject.

COLUMBIA CRIME REPORT

Compiled by
JOHN HUEFT

Tuesday, September 19

• **Armed Robbery**, Burger King on Devine Street. Four males with black stocking caps carrying small handguns approached the victim, Latora Wallare. The suspects demanded she lead them to the rear of the restaurant, where the suspects allegedly stole money from the safe. The suspects allegedly proceeded to force Wallare to take the remainder of the restaurant money from the cash drawers of the drive-through windows. The four men continued to order the victim by telling her to get on the floor. They then fled the scene. The complainant did not see the suspects.

Monday, September 18

• **Disorderly conduct**, Millwood Avenue Children's Home. 23-year-old Antoinette Pinckney said that, during a verbal altercation with the sus-

pect, the suspect attempted to strike her with a chair. The complainant knows the suspect, and charges will be filed against him.

• **Shoplifting**, West Beltline Boulevard. A gas station employee reported that an unknown subject pumped \$25 of unleaded gas and drove off without paying. The model and make of the car are unknown.

Sunday, September 17

• **Malicious Injury to Private Property**, Century 21, Devine Street. Kendall Wiseman, 28, said someone removed a small portion of grass from the front lawn and threw it at the front door. The complainant was sitting at the front desk and did not see the person or people.

• **Drunkenness**, Five Points. Henry Grady Ward, 54, refused to pay his \$48 bill at the Village Idiot. The suspect was obviously drunk. Upon arrest, police found a corporate credit card in Ward's back pocket.

Saturday, September 16

• **Disorderly Conduct**. Complainant Gayle Goldsmith said she and the subject had an ongoing dispute over the subject moving the victim's trash cans. The victim said the subject came off his porch and ran up to the complainant, yelling and using profanity toward her. The subject also allegedly used racial epithets and threatened to do bodily harm. The victim wants to sign warrant, knows subject by name and sight because of previous disagreements.

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