

Wisconsin Club Links Traditional, Nontraditional Students

Devastated by the news that her roommate had died in a car accident over spring break, a 20-year-old Viterbo College (Wis.) student sought solace from Mary Jo Rathman, a fellow student - and 45-year-old mother of six who had recently lost a son to muscular dystrophy.

The two didn't realize it then, but they had just laid the groundwork for a unique support group at Viterbo. The group, "Traditional/Non-traditional" (TNT), pairs younger and older students much like the Big Brother/Big Sister model pairs youngsters with volunteer adults.

The idea behind TNT is to help students, especially the younger ones, overcome loneliness and homesickness - or simply to meet someone in a different age group.

"When they go off to college, traditional-students often miss the comforts of home: baking cookies, family gatherings, small kids running around, etc," said Deb Anderson, Viterbo Director of Continuing Education. "At the same time, the older students need to feel a part of the environment" - and that environment includes meaningful friendships with younger students.

By forging these friendships, TNT

effectively serves the needs of both groups - "but especially among the older students," noted Anderson. "They generally have a lot of fears about whether they'll 'fit in' again at school. Yet they bring with them personal development skills that the younger students can benefit from."

Rathman pairs students interested in making friends with an older or younger student. She tries to match people according to their interests, and she will pair only women and men with men.

So far, most of the students' activities have centered on "one-on-one kinds of things," says Rathman. "A few of the guys played basketball together; I've invited a few people to my house for a home-cooked meal - nothing fancy; others sit around and play cards."

When students check into residence halls this fall, they'll find in their orientation packets a letter from Rathman inviting them to participate in the program. She has also spread the word among Viterbo residence hall and counseling staff members.

"I want to emphasize that this isn't a cheap way to find a good baby-sitter," Rathman said. "The whole thing is set up more for companionship than anything else."

Ohio: Intergenerational living

When students congregate in the lounge area of Austin Manor, an Ohio Wesleyan University residence hall, people old enough to be their grandparents join in. But these people aren't visitors - they're residents. The two generations live peacefully together under one campus roof.

Six of the 62 remodeled apartments in the stately, 70-year-old Georgian-style building have been set aside for students. Older adults - including widows, retired professors, even a few students' grandparents - rent the remaining units. A unique experiment in continuing education, Austin Manor promotes the idea of campus community while building an awareness of lifelong living and learning, says Ron Stepheny, director of development.

The two generations can benefit a lot from each other, he says. "Students

learn things that they'll never get from a textbook - I've seen them sit mesmerized when an older resident tells of personal experiences during World War II." And the older residents, he says, take an active interest in what the students are studying.

"Students started posting notes on the bulletin board announcing some academic topic they were studying and rounding up people for discussion," says Stepheny. "Then, the older residents would announce that they had areas of expertise and wanted to arrange for similar round-table discussions."

Older residents enjoy full use of all school facilities and classrooms. They can audit classes or take them for credit (free of charge) with the permission of the professor. Stepheny's 83-year-old mother, a resident of Austin Manor, is studying piano.

Strolling Survival for Students A walking guide to stay alive

Derrick Stokes
Capital Times Staff (Reprinted from August 24, 1988 issue of the Capital Times.)

Dorm students, beware! Walking to the Olmsted Building may be hazardous to your health.

The signs posted around campus state, "Caution: Pedestrians on this campus have the right of way." But anybody who has ever walked across campus knows that the crosswalks are a shooting gallery and pedestrians are the ducks.

These automobile assassins blatantly ignore the signs. These maniac motorists would have a hard time reading the signs traveling at the speed of light. Where's a good cop when you need one? At Hardees?

To be honest, there are few campus cops; too few to be everywhere all the time. If they would concentrate on enforcing the crosswalk ordinance, who would be left to place parking tickets on the windshields of cars parked 16 minutes in a 15-minute space?

There are no easy answers but something has to be done. If not, some students may be injured. So until the Keystone, ahem, campus cops get their act together, I have devised some classes on *Strolling-Survival* - to help Penn State Harrisburg pedestrians.

Running 101: This course will place students in the hypothetical situation of being in the middle of a crosswalk while a speeding Saab approaches. Students are instructed to dash to the closest sidewalk. (Credit: another day to live.)

Fibbing 200: Students learn how to tell lies to professors to explain their tardiness. Who would believe the truth: The Fruehauf employees don't obey the crosswalk statute, so you had to wait until they were gone to cross the street. (Credit: a Humanities degree.)

Obscene Gestures 310: Students learn an international array of obscene gestures to demonstrate to passing motorists who narrowly missed them. (Credit: personal satisfaction.)

Faking 426: This course teaches students how to fake being hit, grovel in pain, and select the proper attorney. Students will select the lawyer who will not sue the driver but the university. The school can be sued because its campus police are supposed to enforce the crosswalk ordinance. Besides, Penn State is loaded. (Credit: free tickets to a current Pia Zadora film.)

If police services won't provide transportation for the students who failed these courses, the roads may become littered with mangled bodies. So, move over Mr. Bashed Bunny and Mr. Squashed Squirrel; make room for the newest road-kill -- the smashed student.



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The Drop/Add and Late Drop deadlines have been revised for the Fall 1989 semester. The effective dates, which are not listed in the Fall Semester schedule, are as follows:

CHANGE	DATE	IMPLICATION
COURSE DROP	Sept 1	Courses dropped from Aug 23-Sept 1 will NOT be recorded on transcript.
LATE DROP	Sept 2-Nov 15	LATE DROP begins Sept 2 (11th day of the semester). Courses dropped on the 11th day through the last day of the twelfth week (Nov 15) will be noted on transcript with WP, WF or WN symbol.
LATE DROP CREDITS	Nov 15	Degree, Provisional and Nondegree students may Late Drop a maximum of TEN CREDITS at Capital.