

How are Transfer Students Adjusting to Harrisburg ?

By Rachel Sheperd, Features Editor

Since this campus was set up primarily as a senior institution, the majority of students are transfers. Now that we are a month into classes, how are new students adjusting to another campus?

Nearly every student says their credits transferred smoothly, however there are mixed emotions from students concerning their adjustment to the campus. Most students from other universities and Penn State campuses had little to no difficulty adjusting to their new surroundings. The students that seem to have the most problems are Harrisburg Area Community College transfers.

"It hasn't been hard adjusting," says Kathy Ondisco, Communications, who transferred from Millersville University. "PSU is a lot smaller than Millersville, so finding the one building I have all my classes in was not hard and I really enjoy the free newspapers." Ondisco says she enjoys her classes here, however she thinks the parking fees are too high and she does not like paying the printing fees.

Becki McAllister, communications, a transfer student from Penn State Berks says she has adjusted well even though she has never lived away from home before. "There are many distractions here," she says, "Way better things to do than study." The only difference she found at the Harrisburg campus that she did not find at the Berks campus was that the professors have more expertise. "I found that my Profs have worked in the area they teach, have traveled and are published," she says.

Jason Hildreth, a secondary education major, who also transferred from Berks, says the workload is more than expected but he has more free time because he has Fridays off. The only noticeable difference to Hildreth was that there are more adult students here whereas, he says, the students at Berks were the same age.

Most of these students had minor adaptations to make. However, some HACC transfers say they were not prepared. One anonymous student says that while she did well at HACC, she felt isolated at this campus. "The campus is set up similar to HACC because it is a small campus and it has devoted instructors," she says. "However, I was not ready for the punch of the higher academic setting. The instructors can sometimes be overbearing, requiring intense hours of studying and busy work." She says that she is now adjusting to the new environment, but every

once in a while she gets frustrated with the high expectations of the instructors.

Briana Harner also transferred from HACC where she completed its graphic design program. She says Penn State would not accept a lot of her graphic design classes for her new major: communications. Harner likes the classes and she thinks the instructors are more involved but says she is adjusting slowly. "Each day gets easier," she says. "I'd say in another two weeks I'll be comfortable."

Ryan Nagy, communications transfer from West Virginia University and HACC says there is more of an academic vibe at Penn State than other schools he has attended. He said he would change the lack of social environments because there is really no place to hang out. He believes that being a branch campus, Penn State Harrisburg lacks a comfortable and social learning environment. He also thinks the campus is poorly laid out for the amount of students that attend. Nagy

says, "I feel that HACC's campus was much more inviting."

There is minor anxiety with transferring but there are things students who have difficulty adjusting can do. Penn State offers free counseling to students with problems of any nature, not just adjusting

to the campus. Students can also turn to their advisers for guidance and help with selecting courses.

Louise Hoffman, associate professor of humanities and history is an adviser for humanities and communications majors. She says, "The most labor-intensive transfer issue that I see all the time is considering how courses beyond those used for requirements apply to our majors." She says the biggest adjustments seem to be required of students who have been out of college for a long time. That is where an adviser plays a key role with students. Hoffman says, "The right attitude is crucial for an adviser—the offer of help, referral or whatever is needed, with encouragement."

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MEMBERS NEEDED FOR INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS ASSOCIATION

- Build your resume

- Make contacts

- Be involved in your campus

Philadelphia Trip: November 7th thru 10th Penn State Harrisburg will be competing in the University of Pennsylvania's Model United Nations Conference (UPMUNC).

We will be representing the nation of PAKISTAN this year.

Anyone who would like to attend or is interested in more information should contact Chris Patterson at cxp399@psu.edu or call 717-413-4061.

All interested parties are welcome to attend an IAA meeting.

Meetings are 4:45 p.m.
Wednesdays in room w137