

Clubs recruit members at outdoor student festival

By **LISA O'MALLEY**
Capital Times News Reporter

Face it, for a lot of us, free time is hard to come by. Most students know how to type a paper while folding their clothes and how to study while they shower. They know that if "The Real World" comes on at 10 p.m., they can probably squeeze in some reading afterwards. The little time they have is precious and dear and they do not dare give it away. As a result, club memberships are suffering.

Many students at Penn State Harrisburg are commuters. They have families and hold full-time jobs. They are trying desperately to hold on to their sanity and graduate on time. Students have so much on their plates right now that adding just one more tiny commitment makes some students feel like they might explode.

Becki McAllister, a communications student, does not belong to any clubs right now. "I think people try to do the bare minimum to graduate. They just take the credits," she said.

There was a time when McAllister attempted to join a club that focused on her field of study. The club made promises of a trip to Boston, but McAllister quickly became frustrated. She was excited until she attended a meeting where the issue of fund raising was brought up. "They handed out fund-raising material that included selling pizza. It came with strict instructions that if you didn't sell any pizza, you didn't go on a trip to Boston," McAllister said.

"The pizzas were twenty-five dollars each and you had to make it yourself. I'm a college student. I spend 13 cents on a cup of soup. I wasn't about to make anyone empty their wallet for a gourmet pizza."

Mike Chorba, president of the PSH chapter of the American Society of Heating, Refrigeration and Air Conditioning Engineers is feeling the effects of a member drought. "Our lack of members really hurts us. We just don't have the support to do fundraisers. The same ten kids are working overtime day in and day out. That gets old fast," Chorba said.

Despite most students' lack of time, joining a club may actually be well worth the effort. It is much more than fund raising, making deadlines and attending meetings. Not only do they offer you a chance to meet people with similar interests, but, it looks good on a resume.

"It's all about networking and getting your name out there. A club like

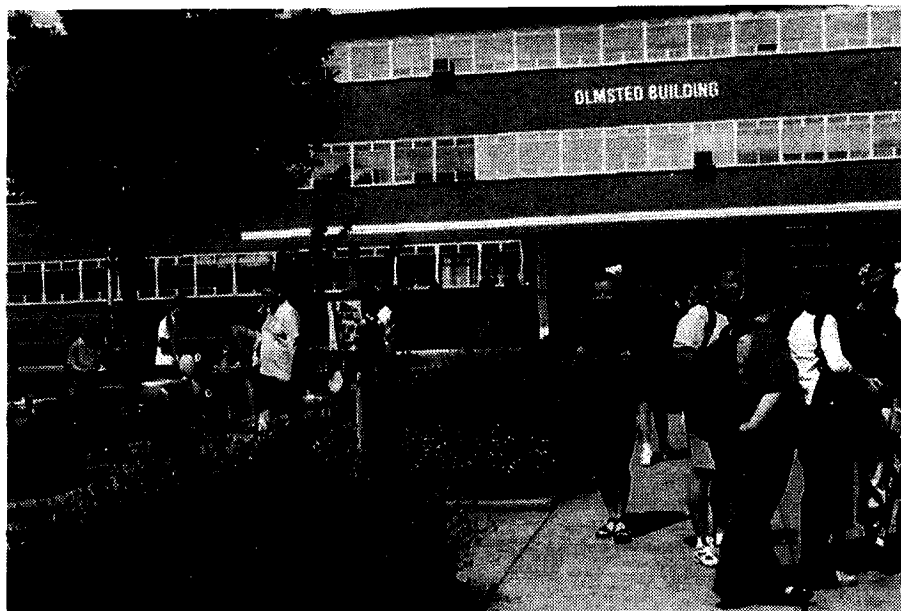


Photo by Steve Standridge

Students speak to club representatives

ours that has a lot of contacts with its parent club gives us a chance to meet and socialize with prospective employers," Chorba said. For many club members, this is of paramount importance.

Students sacrifice money, time, sleep and friends, and perhaps some get lost in the very reason they are here: their futures. "Everyone wants a job when they graduate, but not many are so quick to go out and find it," said Chorba.

For students that do have some time to spare joining a club is a great way to make friends and learn more about their major. College can go by so fast, and now is a crucial time in a student's life.

PSH encourages students and faculty to use ANGEL

By **RACHEL SHEPHERD**
Features Editor

Ok, so your dog ate your syllabus, you nodded off in philosophy class, and you do not remember what day it is — relax! There is still hope and you can find it at your fingertips by logging onto ANGEL.

ANGEL stands for A New Global Environment for Learning, and its uses — including an online syllabus, lecture notes and an updated calendar — are endless.

Penn State chose ANGEL as its Course Management System (CMS) in May 2001. Beginning in the fall of 2001, ANGEL was introduced on a trial basis. The following semester it was made available to more faculty through an application process.

"During this time, it was monitored to determine scalability and enhancement requests made by faculty," said Carol McQuiggan, ANGEL e-learning support specialist. It went into full production fall of 2002.

There are now 49,218 Penn State students with at least one course requiring them to use ANGEL.

McQuiggan said some reasons for the adoption of CMS were to supply an online component to support resident education, to fulfill requests from new instructors who had used CMS in their previous teaching positions, and to keep in step with other top universities. She mentioned that Coursetalk,

Courseweb, and Quizwizard were already being used, however, now those tools could be combined on ANGEL's integrated system.

"With one software package and from one location, course materials can be made available on the Web, administrative aspects of the course can be managed, and communication between faculty and students, and students and students can be increased," said McQuiggan. ANGEL is also integrated with the registrar's database so class rosters are automatically updated and stay current.

Students who use ANGEL said that it can be handy for downloading the course calendars and online course notes, however, some find Coursetalk to be a hassle. "I like getting the calendars and updating my work from there; it can be a time saver," said Amy Brown, a public policy student.

Kathy Ondisco, an undergraduate in communications did not like Coursetalk. "Forget about it," she said. "I would rather do it if my classes were in the computer lab so I could do it right there."

Some instructors require a minimum number of postings on ANGEL per semester as part of the course grade. Samuel Winch, communications professor, said he does not like the minimum number of postings as a rule. He would rather students use ANGEL to discuss course materials outside of class. "I want people motivated to speak because they have something to say, not because they have to."

Winch, however, said Coursetalk could be of value for those students who may be shy, but warns that in some cases, it may harbor shyness, and should

be used as an integrated tool to blend the classroom experience with the online forum. Mainly, he said he uses it to distribute lecture notes to students. "It is easier than e-mail and you have the convenience of accessing it any time of day."

McQuiggan said that instructors have been pleased with how quickly and easily they can learn to use ANGEL. She said they find the system a great tool to extend student learning beyond the classroom, as well as, enhance and increase communication through the use of message boards for threaded discussions, chat rooms, and e-mail. "By having students interact with the course content between classes, they come to class better prepared."

McQuiggan encountered some difficulties due to hardware issues with the ANGEL servers during the first week of classes this semester. Since then, she said they installed a server hardware upgrade and adjusted a real-time virus checker, which seems to have eliminated the problems.

McQuiggan said that ANGEL is easy to learn and fairly intuitive and students also like the convenience of ANGEL. "Some students have said that they are on the Internet so much anyway that it makes sense to have their course material there too."

You can access ANGEL by logging onto <https://cms.psu.edu> and entering your login name and password.