

Helping Minority Students Get Adjusted to College Life

By James Doolittle

The fall semester of 1991 saw the introduction of the Minority Mentoring Program at Penn State Delaware County Campus. Organized through the Office of Student Programs and Services, the program was set up late last year to assist minority students here on campus to adjust to campus life.

"We had some ideas within our Student Programs and Services unit last year on things that we as a department could do, and we thought of the idea of a mentoring program," explains Pete Coleman, Director of Student Programs and Services here on campus. "The objective of the program is to help the minority students get adjusted to college life early in the semester so hopefully they would be successful in their academic and out of class experiences that they have here at this Penn State Campus."

"In the Freshman or New Student Minority Retention Program, the student is matched up with a faculty or staff person. We currently have 10 students who are involved in this program. The students meet occasionally with their mentor to just talk about life in general and what's going on around campus."

"Other Minority mentoring Programs throughout the United States are set up a little different than ours. They go into a more structured atmosphere whereby they have the mentor tracking the students academic process. We talked about that also but we feel that on this campus we have an excellent academic assistance so that would've caused a conflict. We didn't want to duplicate something we feel is successful on campus now. So the role of the mentor on this campus is more of a personal relationship. We are trying to help the person get adjusted and lend an ear."

Before the beginning of the semester, a list of incoming minority students was organized and letters were sent out to them to invite them to join the program.

"We sent them a letter and a brochure indicating the purpose of our program. It was all on a volunteer basis; we left it up to them if they wanted to join. 10 people responded to our invitations who wanted to be part of this system. Same thing for the staff and faculty. We sent something out to them explaining the program and asking them if they would like to be a mentor. We did get over 30 people from the staff who expressed interest in being a mentor, so we currently have more mentors available than mentees. Just not enough students took advantage of the program we have."

A second phase of the program is

currently being planned and will be activated early next semester. This part of the program will center on minority students with at least a 2nd semester standing, and will help minority students assimilate into the working world with the help of a mentor in his or her field of study.

"The second phase of the program is open to any minority student of at least 2nd semester standing," adds Mary Bell Phillipone, Assistant Director of Student Programs and Services. "During the second phase, the student will be matched with a professional in the community. It may be a Penn State Alumni or just someone in the students field of study. The goal is for that student to experience what the workplace is like."

"Our hope is that the program will help minority students get adjusted to campus life and assist them in being a success in their academic performance," adds Coleman, "For we feel that your out of class experiences has a lot to do with your academic performance."

"Some minority students, because they do not have that person they can identify with, drop out of college. Most of the time it's not for academic reasons, but because they felt alone, which is one of the reasons we started this program. We felt that this played a major role for a minority student, so that when a minority student comes into a majority atmosphere, he or she doesn't get lost in the shuffle."

Four Easy Ways to Pass Finals

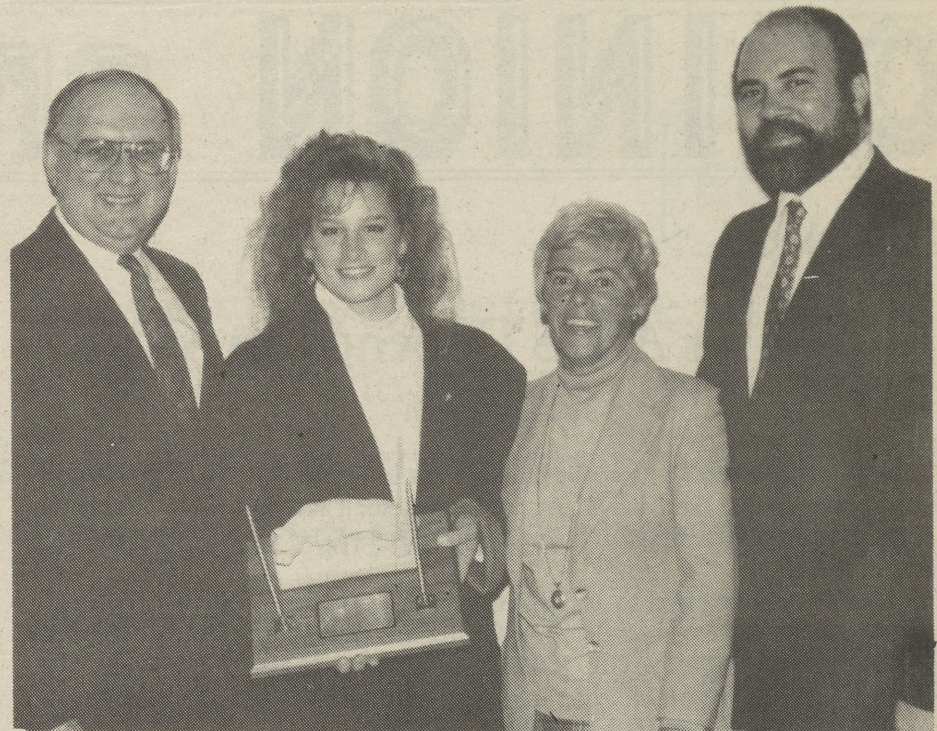
Continued from Page 3

Sometimes, however, this study tactic proves to be less than spectacular.

Never fear, troubled students, because now there is hope! According to a handout supplied by Norma Notzold, Learning Center Coordinator, it is important to keep a positive attitude about the subject matter being studied. Students should "view tests as cooperative productions rather than competitive destruction."

There are certain guidelines to keep in mind when studying for an exam. First, make choices about the material which you are about to tackle. For example, if you wait until the day before an exam to review your notes, it will be virtually impossible to retain every bit of information. Instead of reviewing everything lightly, decide which points are the most important and focus on those. The chances of retaining what you study will increase tremendously.

Second, don't just read the information, RECITE IT! By going over the material again and again, it becomes more familiar to you. If



Mary Varano, former Delco student, displays her award for Outstanding Scholar/Athlete along with Delco CEO Dr. Ed Tomezsko, Athletic Director Tiz Griffith, and Coordinator of Commonwealth Campus Athletics, Carlyle Carter.

Student Honored

Mary Varano of PSU Delco Named Scholar-Athlete of '91

Mary T. Varano of Penn State Delaware County Campus was recently awarded the John S. Egli Outstanding Female Scholar-Athlete Award by The Office of CES Athletics and Recreational Sports in conjunction with the CES Council of Athletic Directors.

Ms. Varano (5th, Nursing) earned the award for her academic and athletic success while attending the Delaware County Campus. Ms.

Varano completed her academic career at the Delaware County Campus with a G.P.A of 3.60 and was on the Dean's List throughout her tenure at Delco.

Ms. Varano was an Eric A. and Josephine S. Walker Award recipient in 1991; received a Ralph D'lorio Scholarship in 1991 and was a member of the National Dean's List Association Among College Students in 1991. Mary also entered the University Scholars Program in 1991.

Athletically, Ms. Varano was a member of the Women's Varsity Basketball squad in 1990 and 1991, serving as a Co-Captain in 1991. In addition, Ms. Varano participated on the Women's Varsity Volleyball and Tennis squads for one year.

Mary was part of the All Eastern Pennsylvania Collegiate Conference in basketball in 1991; 1990, 1991 Delaware County Campus award for Scholarship and Athletics and Outstanding Achievement in Intercollegiate Athletics.

Mary was a Student Government Representative in 1991; was the Secretary of the Student Athletic Association in 1991; served as a private tutor in 1990 and 1991 and has worked with the Catholic Charities Appeal Drive for five years.

The John S. Egli Outstanding Male and Female Scholar-Athlete Award is named in honor of the former Penn State University Men's Basketball Coach. Mr. Egli also served as the first Coordinator of Commonwealth Campus Athletics.

The awards are presented annually by the Commonwealth Educational System's Council of Athletic Directors in conjunction with the Central Office of CES Athletics and Recreational Sports.

necessary, repeat the information aloud until you are confident that you will be able to recall it.

Third, study in groups. As Norma Notzold put it, "If you study with like-minded students, you learn with all of your senses and get a better perspective on the material." Students that study in groups are more likely to stay focused on the information, instead of thinking about other things.

Finally, remember to RELAX! Although this statement sounds somewhat unrealistic when you are faced with a haunting economics exam that hangs like a shadow over your head, it is possible! Try not to panic under the pressure, or you will undoubtedly forget a lot of the information that is important. Instead, give yourself permission to do the best you can.

There you have it, the complete guide to success on your final exams! By following these recommended techniques, you will be prepared for your finals. Just remember, after that dreaded week in December is over, you will actually be able to enjoy the holiday festivities. Season's Greetings!