

Eye on Campus

Maybe a mentor is what you need

By CARRIE GOLDSTEIN
Lion's Eye staff writer

Stepping onto a college campus for the first time can be a daunting and intimidating experience. Whether a student takes the jump from the safe confines of high school or decides to continue his education after a hiatus, entering college means facing the challenges of meeting new people, adjusting to a more independent type of learning and becoming acclimated with unfamiliar surroundings.

This fall, Penn State Delco has instituted a program geared to combat the challenges: A mentor program.

The Mentoring Program "was established to provide a better experience for students on campus and a connection to help them with any issues they might face as new students," said Luanne Fox-Sims, admissions counselor.

The entire freshman class, consisting of around 500 students, was divided into groups of 10; 50 faculty and staff members volunteered to be "pride mentors" and each volunteer was paired with a group of students.

Each group had a unique way of getting to know one another. Two of the groups, led by Jeff Wirth, director of finance and Renee Lutz, manager of the bookstore, met

with their groups and watched the Penn State football game and talked over pizza in the Lion's Den. Some groups have met for coffee; others decided to contact each other on a more informal basis and communicate through email.

Whatever way they go about forming a cohesive group, pride mentors offer a referral service, allowing students to connect with both faculty members and fellow students beyond academics. It is a group of people that students can feel comfortable going to with all types of questions.

"[The program] was a good idea," first-year Delco student, Jerry Aunet, said, "it made things more comfortable because it was my first time here. I didn't know anyone before and being part of this group helped me to make friends."

The necessity of this addition becomes apparent due to the fact that Penn State Delco is a commuter campus, which limits the amount of networking a new student can achieve.

"There is no automatic connection," Sims said, "things are confusing. If students don't know where to go [to solve a problem], they don't do anything at all."

As a result, students may not drop a class they should have or they may miss out on a trip abroad — all because they lacked direction and didn't know where to turn for answers.

Pride mentors act as a complement to academic advisors. And, as Aunet said regarding his pride mentor, "He didn't just point out buildings or talk just about academics, he also gave us pointers on fun things to do around here."

The experience has been helpful; as the flyer illustrating the program's mission statement indicates: Research shows that students who make a positive connection on campus earn higher grades, graduate in greater numbers and get more out of their college experience.

This program can have a "significant impact on a student's success and on their confidence," Sims said, "What might seem like small things can have a huge impact on someone."

If you are a faculty or staff member who is not involved in the mentor program and would like to participate, contact Doreen Hettich-Atkins, director of student life, at: (610) 892-1331 or you can sign up via the web at: www.de.psu.edu/programs/mentoring2002/.

Contact Carrie Goldstein at CZG103@psu.edu.

'One Step' takes care of business

By AMANDA TROMBETTI
Lion's Eye staff writer

Are you considering a major in business? If so, the business major program, also called the "One Step at a Time" program, is just what you need.

The program is designed to help students prepare for upcoming classes by improving writing and math skills, and to gain an understanding of what the business major is about.

"Our main goal is to reach out to students the summer before they select their courses, so they have what they need to be ready," said Norma Notzold, learning center coordinator.

Students will participate in a 30-hour program enabling them to interact with faculty, advisors, and alumni. It also helps students to meet other students in the business major.

Last summer's program, "Taking Education to the Board Room," was said to "Help develop a community in the business major," Notzold said.

For more information contact Norma Notzold at (610) 892-1460 or stop by the Learning Center, 2nd Floor, Main Building.

Contact Amanda Trombetti at AUT114@psu.edu.

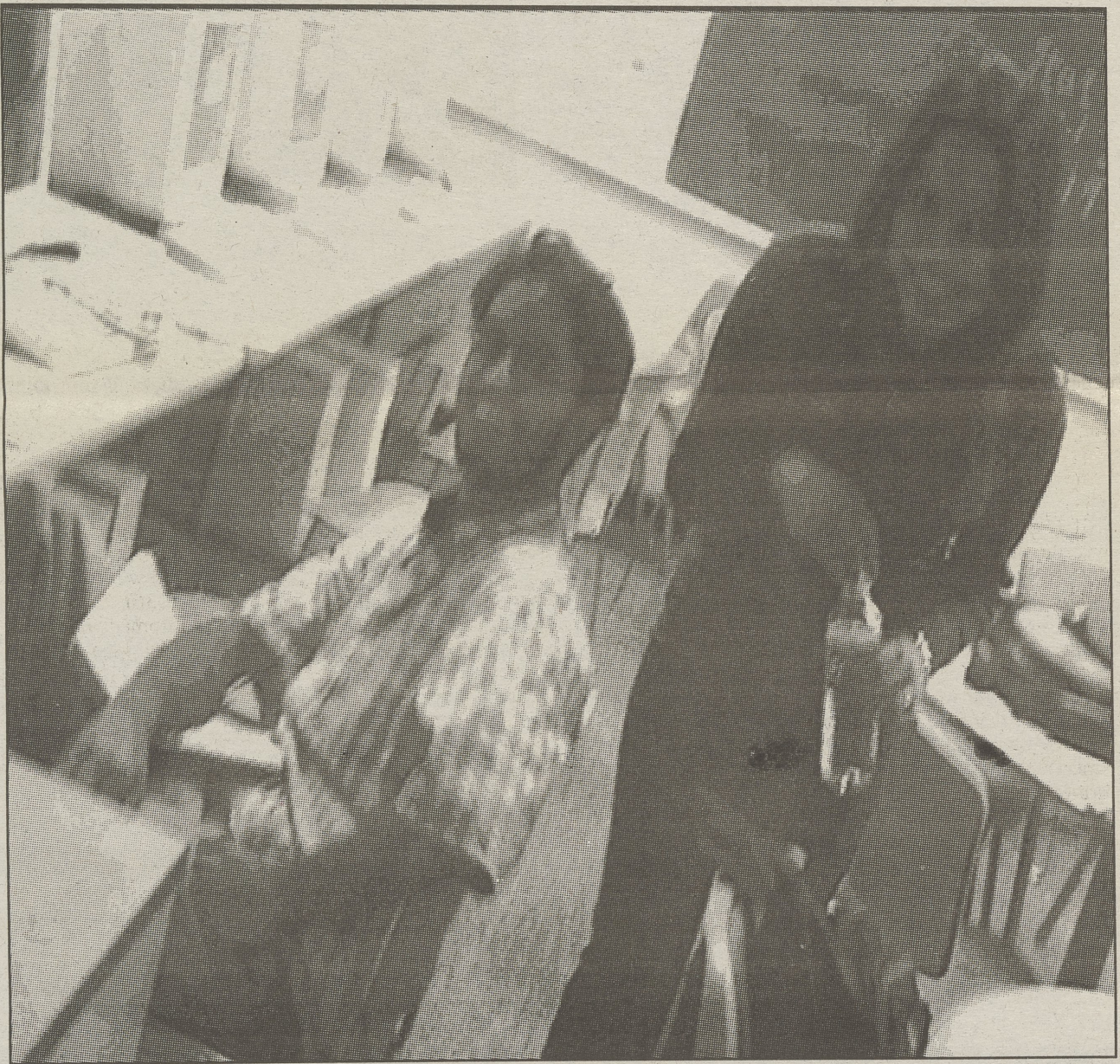


Photo by GERRY DUNGAN

Students in the Learning Center work on bettering their study habits with faculty members specially trained to help. The Learning Center is now offering special help to business majors.

To a degree, many can finish up right here

By PAM PRZYBYLSKI
Lion's Eye staff writer

For many Penn State Delco students, this campus is a temporary one. Which is easy to figure out with the lack of dorms and rather spacious parking lots.

Within two years of the start of a student's college career, many move on to University Park, the campus that (let's face it) puts the Penn State in Penn State.

Many move up to University Park to complete their majors because the Delco campus simply doesn't provide the courses needed to finish here.

That is beginning to change.

"We find that students don't know they can complete their major here," said Luanne Fox-Sims, admissions counselor, while helping out at the Academics Major Fair.

Organized by the Council of Academic Directors (CAD) the purpose of the "Do a Delco Degree" program was to give out information on majors that can be completed right here in Delaware County.

Tables were set out for each of the eight majors that are available for completion at the Delco campus. These majors include: English; Urban Education; American Studies; Business; Letters, Arts and Sciences; Information Sciences and Technology; Speech Communications; and Human Development and Family Studies.

Students who attended the fair seemed very interested in knowing more about the program.

"I think it has been an informative and fun experience," said Sonali Patel, freshman majoring in IST.

Besides enjoying free pizza and soda, students were also amused by the "Should I Stay or Should I Go Now"

poster which listed the top 10 reasons to complete a major here, No. 10 being "Have a mocha latte every day of your junior and senior year and still save \$11,100 on room and board." and No. 1 being "The Rio Delco."

Although Penn State Delco will never be University Park, it may be comforting to many to know that Delco students have some of the same benefits as the students at main campus.

Compared to the vast list of possible majors available to all Penn Staters, eight is not a very large number, but it is a start. Students who will soon be completing their second year in one of the eight available majors have just one question to ask themselves:

Should I stay or should I go now?

Contact Pam Przybylski at PKP@psu.edu.