

SPARTAN DAILY

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Photo illustration by Brian Connelly and Lorry Thomas

Greeks try to curb hazing

By Christine Glarrow
Daily Staff Writer

Although hazing is against the law in California, the problem continues to resurface among fraternities and sororities.

Hazing is "anything that makes a potential member uncomfortable, degraded, not part of the group," said Kary Crumm, a Greek graduate intern.

"It can range from inappropriate to dangerous," said Greek Life coordinator Angela Harper.

According to San Jose State University's student code of conduct, if a student partakes in "abusive behavior directed toward, or hazing of, a member of the campus community," he or she can be "expelled, suspended, or placed on probation."

Harper also said a federal law puts students' federal financial aid in jeopardy if they are involved in a hazing incident.

Greek organizations only know

what people tell the members, Crumm said. Also, people have to report a hazing incident for judicial action to be taken, as the department can't rely on rumors, she said.

To assist the reporting process, the Interfraternity Council and Panhellenic Council have put together an online form that allows students to report anything that might be construed as hazing, said Robert Umstadter, Interfraternity Council president.

"It's a proactive approach," he said.

Without reports, with which reporters can choose to remain anonymous, it is difficult to take judicial actions, Harper said.

In addition, criminal action can also be taken if necessary, Harper said.

However, if Greek groups perform hazing rituals, they do it secretly, by creating their chapter from the inside, Harper said.

see HAZING, page 4

School Web site features new messaging system

By Christine Glarrow
Daily Staff Writer

MySJSU is offering a new messaging service for faculty members to communicate with students.

Common Management Systems project manager, Carrie Medders, said this service started in December 2004 and was intended to be an administrative tool for sending information to students.

Because a lot of students use personal e-mail accounts, problems can arise when students and faculty members try to communicate with those accounts, Medders said.

Messages can bounce back to the sender or may not get through because of filters or full in-boxes, Medders said.

Instead of collecting individual e-mail addresses, MySJSU will let faculty members send messages using students' user identification numbers.

Students can log into their MySJSU accounts to see their messages, similar to a regular e-mail account.

The person who sends the message has the capability to monitor whom has checked their message, Medders said.

Dennis Jaehne, chair of communication studies, said the "campus needs a legal, electronic way to communicate with students," in order to keep records of messages sent notifying students of needing to drop classes,

pay fees and other issues involving their status as students at San Jose State University.

The system creates a legal receipt when students click on their messages, so all messages are documented, Jaehne said.

Also, every message has an expiration date, selected by the sender, at which time the message will delete — a feature you don't get with standard e-mail, Medders said. Receivers can delete messages, as well, she said.

Medders said another difference from regular e-mail accounts is that the communication is only one-way — students cannot respond to messages using this service.

In addition, attachments cannot be sent with the messages, as with regular e-mails, but links can, Jaehne said.

With MySJSU messaging, instructors have the ability to send information to targeted audiences, such as specific classes, sections and students, rather than posting the information on a general page, which provides security for both faculty members and students, Medders said.

This system limits a professor's messaging ability to his or her students only, while administrators have agreed to a policy that limits their use to targeted messages. This policy prohibits the use of advertisements, in hopes of keeping viruses and spam out of the messaging system, Medders said.

see MYSJSU, page 4

Professors use Web tool to combat cheating

Students can take plagiarism test

By Ashley Little
Daily Staff Writer

More than 150 Academic Integrity Policy violations are reported every year to San Jose State University's Office of Judicial Affairs.

This semester, more professors are choosing to use the interactive plagiarism tutorial created by the library.

"One of the SJSU librarians created a plagiarism quiz to help students get a better idea of what it is and how to avoid it," said Annette Nellen, Academic Senate chair.

The online tutorial describes the test as students having to register, reading through the materials, taking a pre-test and finally taking the actual test to receive a score. Students are prompted to take paragraphs and rewrite them to show their understanding.

The tutorial goes through an introduction of what plagiarism is, what paraphrasing is and how to stop plagiarism. Examples are given to make students gain a clear understanding of plagiarism.

"There are some students who I feel are truly confused as to what constitutes

plagiarism, what is the difference between plagiarism, paraphrasing and how to incorporate the works and ideas of others into their papers," said Phil Carr, a justice studies lecturer.

"When reviewing papers with students, I sometimes found that they didn't have a clear understanding of the policy or the need for accurate documentation of their sources," Carr said.

A student of Carr's said this is true. "I understood what plagiarism was, but I did not know the in-depth details," said Jacinta Hernandez, a junior majoring in justice studies. "There is a lot more to it than most people think."

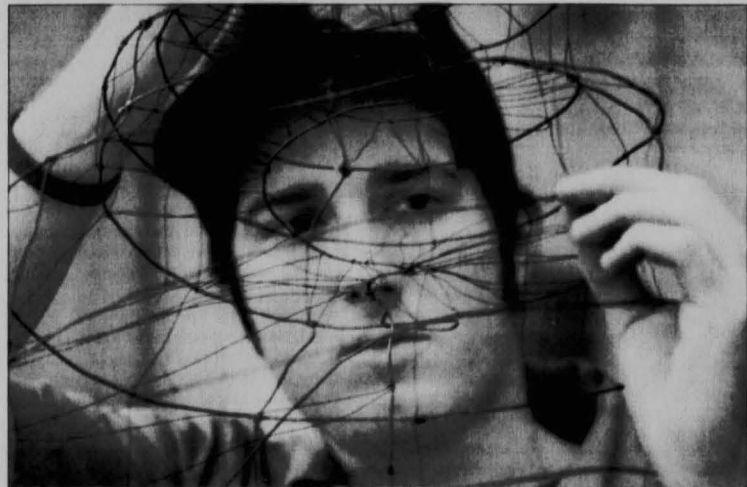
During Fall 2004, 116 cases were reported to the Office of Judicial Affairs. There were 56 cases of cheating and 60 of plagiarism, with the College of Applied Sciences and Arts leading in reported cases.

"I believe some students do not know how San Jose State University defines it because they have never read the policy," said Debra Griffith, chief judicial affairs officer.

With the tutorial, students are given a chance to read through the policy that was updated in May 2004 by the

see CHEATING, page 4

Through the wire ...



Brian Connelly / Daily Staff

Tim Seward, a junior majoring in industrial design, works on a wire frame of a seashell. The project is for a 3-D concepts class, and Seward has been working on the seashell for the past two weeks.

SJSU flunks in six-year graduation rates, Education Trust survey says

By Ashley Johnson
Daily Staff Writer

San Jose State University ranks comparatively low against similar universities in terms of six-year graduation rates, according to a study released by The Education Trust on Jan. 19.

Yet, with a rate of 39.4 percent, SJSU ranks slightly higher than Cal State Sacramento and San Francisco State University.

Using an interactive tool on The Education Trust's Web site, students can compare SJSU graduation rates to those of 1,400 other universities.

However, one thing the Web tool does not take into account is

transfer students.

The study only includes first-time, full-time and degree-seeking freshmen who received a bachelor's degree from the institution they were originally enrolled at, according to the Web site.

"Most of our students at San Jose State University enter as transfer students and they have a much higher graduation rate than first-year freshmen," said Robert Cooper, associate vice president of undergraduate studies.

The CSU system is set up so students can easily transfer from one institution to another, Cooper said.

Therefore, students transferring between universities are seen in The Education Trust data as not graduating, he said.

However, some people feel the

rate is not low at all.

"I don't think they're low for an institution of this kind," said Lee Dorosz, former biology professor and associated vice president of undergraduate affairs. "When we put CSU in the context of other comparable CSU campuses — we're right there with them."

Nevertheless, because SJSU is an access institution, there is a higher risk of students dropping out than Stanford University, UC Berkeley or UCLA, Cooper said.

The idea of access institutions is to train students who are less prepared, to get them a bachelor's degree and to give them a chance to succeed, Cooper said.

Additionally, the goal of access institutions is to accept students

see EDUCATION, page 4

VIEW FROM THE EAST

Having space better than being crowded

Monday was another lonely Valentine's Day. To date, it's been four years since I've spent the day with a significant other.

Don't get me wrong, it's not that I haven't dated in the last four years.

It's just the relationships never blossomed into something more lasting. Either they started after fateful Feb. 14 or ended long before the day rolled around.

More than one person told me they've dubbed Valentine's Day "Single Awareness Day."

I felt painfully aware of being single on Monday.

There are lots of other perfectly good days to have someone to snuggle up to. Other holidays celebrate different forms of love, beside romantic love, such as Christmas to enjoy familial love. There are even ethnic pride days, to show love for an individual's culture.

It's odd how Valentine's Day makes people feel especially lonely.

I have my hands full, between classes, friends and extracurricular activities. Being single doesn't usually bother me.

And unwelcome advances are, well, unwelcome. Just because I'm single doesn't mean I'm desperate.

I wasn't exactly drowning my woes in tears or in drinks on Valentine's Day, but I admit to feeling depressed. Along with several other single friends I had.

So why do normally secure people suddenly get gripped with anxiety about being single?

The culprit is Hallmark, I say.

With all the cards and relentless hype, no wonder sane people go to pieces.

If you're not with someone, you're a loser. That's essentially the message sent by less-than-subtle marketing.

While I'm usually not that gullible, the message

becomes more believable when I'm bombarded with it.

I may be used to being alone, but I don't have to like it.

But it does have its advantages.

I don't like losing my independence and I don't like a guy getting in my way. It's not that I don't appreciate a supportive man in my life, but I don't like being told what to do.

The one day of the year, when I long to be with someone, is an anomaly.

Too many men have been too insecure to let me be myself and have my ambitions. I'm not sure how it threatens them that I want to pursue a career, but somehow, they all want "happily ever after."

That translates into wanting to settle down and for me to be a subservient little Asian wife.

Which reminds me — what does "happily ever

after" mean?

Does it mean that marriage is the end-all-and-be-all goal of life? That once you're married off to Prince Charming, life is over?

I don't want to be a trophy, to fit in someone else's niche in life. Well, not for a good while yet.

Perhaps I'm setting my sights too high. Maybe I'm asking to be alone, with all my unreasonable demands.

But is it really too much to ask for respect? And, gasp, a little space to be myself?

So for now, I see myself mostly alone.

Definitely a loser.

But if I need a boy toy for my security, I'm a loser anyway.



LING-MEI WONG

Ling-Mei Wong is the Spartan Daily opinion editor. "View from the East" appears every Friday.

ADAM THE BEAVER | NICK SCOTT



SPARTA GUIDE

Sparta Guide is provided free of charge to students, faculty and staff members. The deadline for entries is noon three working days before the desired publication date. Entry forms are available in the Spartan Daily office in Dwight Bentel Hall, room 209. Entries can also be e-mailed to spartandaily@cas.sjsu.edu titled "Sparta Guide." Space restrictions may require editing of submissions. Entries are printed in the order in which they are received.

TODAY

School of Art and Design

An art exhibition featuring student galleries will take place from 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the Art building. For more information, call the gallery office at 924-4330.

Urban Planning Coalition

"Building Consensus for Sustainable Development" will take place from noon to 1 p.m. at the A.S. House.

Catholic Campus Ministry

Daily Mass will take place at 12:10 p.m. in the Catholic Campus Ministry chapel. For more information, call Father Mike Carson at 938-1610.

A.S. Election Board

A.S. candidate applications are available at the second floor of the A.S. House. For more information, call 924-5656.

SUNDAY

Catholic Campus Ministry

Mass will take place at noon and 5 p.m. in the Catholic Campus Ministry chapel. For more information, call Father Mike Carson at 938-1610.

Phi Alpha Theta

A group trip to an Oakland museum will take place

at 10 a.m. in front of Dudley Moorhead Hall. For more information, call Paul at 247-8973.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Joint Library

A "Silicon Valley Reads Event" will take place from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. in room 225 of the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Joint Library. It will feature David Mas Masumoto, author of the 2005 Silicon Valley Reads book "Epitaph for a Peach — Four Seasons on My Family Farm." Admission is free and books will be available for sale and signing.

MONDAY

Counseling Services

Eating attitude screenings will take place from 11 a.m. to noon and from 1 p.m. to 2 p.m. in the Montalvo room of the Student Union. "Do Athletes Really Have Eating Disorders?" will take place from noon to 1 p.m. in the Almaden room of the Student Union. For more information, call Carina Esteban at 924-5910.

Catholic Campus Ministry

Daily Mass will take place at 12:10 p.m. in the Catholic Campus Ministry chapel. For more information, call Father Mike Carson at 938-1610.

African Awareness Month Planning Committee

"Remember the Titans" will be shown at 7 p.m. at the Mosaic Cross Cultural Center.

OFF THE PAGE

Overprotected woman should be able to spread her own wings

Locked away in her tower, the princess let down her long hair and escaped from the evil clutches of her mother. Jewels, designer threads, luxurious cars, and an expense account kept the princess under the Evil Queen's thumb. But when the children are away the mice will play.

A trip was planned a year in advance to go to Las Vegas for New Year's.

Seven girls. Two old maids, three alcoholics, two party animals and a princess.

Everyone had made their arrangements, bought cute new outfits, and told their parents except for the princess.

Months had passed and still the princess could not tell her parents she would be leaving the nest to party into the next year away from them, yet alone be in another state.



RAYCHELLE GARCIA

On Christmas Eve, the Evil Queen decided to let the princess out into the beautiful world and take her Christmas shopping. The two of them in the car, alone. It was the perfect time for the princess to finally tell her mother she was going on a trip.

"Mom, I'm going to Las Vegas for New Year's with my girlfriends," she said. "I already bought my ticket and I can't get a refund. So I have to go or I'll be wasting my money."

The Evil Queen was hurt.

"Why must you tell me a week before you go? Why couldn't you have told me when you bought your ticket?" the Evil Queen asked.

And there it was, the guilt trip. The princess began to feel bad.

Woo-hoo. Vegas here we come.

No one wanted the responsibility of watching the princess. Though they all knew that no matter what happened, the Evil Queen would blame the princess' friends for anything that would happen to her.

But the princess didn't even bother think about any consequences. She was out and she wasn't going to let anything ruin her vacation.

Well, whatever happened in Vegas will stay in Vegas. This is about my friend and her relationship with her mother.

Now I understand what it is to live under the laws of a Filipino house, but there is an extent to how far traditions can go.

Yes, you may have to lie to get out of the house from time to time.

Yes, you might have to hide the fact that you have a boyfriend.

And yes, you'll use your friends as a way to spend time with that boyfriend.

But that was in junior high and in high school.

At 24 years old, she has graduated from college and still controlled by her parents.

I know that from time to time everyone can be controlled by his or her parents, but you can still lead your own life.

I know that from time to time everyone can be controlled by his or her parents, but you can still lead your own life.

I am grateful to my parents for helping me out from time to time and especially while I'm in school. But I won't be bought off with expensive things and in return have my own life to be controlled by them. I've spoken with my parents and made them understand even though it did take a while.

My friend has no pride to stand up for herself. No will to open her mom's eyes and tell her that she's twenty-four years old, she can't be bought off anymore and to trust in herself that she brought her up to do good.

I think my friend's scared, scared of her mom getting mad and taking it all away. Now that's control.

Raychelle Garcia is a production editor for the Spartan Daily. "Off the Page" appears every other Friday.

Letter: Media freedom requires responsibility

Dear editor,

In regards to regulation of the freedom of the press of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution — where there is a right, there is also responsibility.

Every newspaper has a center, the editor-in-chief.

If you go against the dictates of your editor-in-chief, then your resignation will be accepted, even if you did not accept it.

The lame newspaper that led the

reporting of the Watergate scandal, the Washington Post, also had to return a Pulitzer for a false story.

Lawrence Miller
Alumnus

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THE SPARTAN DAILY | ONE WASHINGTON SQUARE | SAN JOSE, CA 95192
(408) 924-3281 | SPARTANDAILY@CAS.SJSU.EDU | SPARTANDAILYADS@CAS.SJSU.EDU

NEWS ROOM: 408.924.3281

FAX: 408.924.3282

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A letter to the editor is a response to an issue or a point of view that has appeared in the Spartan Daily.

Only letters between 200 to 400 words will be considered for publication.

Submissions become property of the Spartan Daily and may be edited for clarity, grammar, libel and length. Submissions must contain the author's name, address, phone number, signature and major.

Submissions may be placed in the Letters to the Editor box at the Spartan Daily office in Dwight Bentel Hall, Room 209, sent by fax to (408) 924-3237, e-mail at spartandaily@cas.sjsu.edu or mailed to the Spartan Daily Opinion Editor, School of Journalism and Mass Communications, San Jose State University, One Washington Square, San Jose, CA 95192-0149.

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Published opinions and advertisements do not necessarily reflect the views of the Spartan Daily, the School of Journalism and Mass Communications or SJSU.

SJSU figure skating club fights for varsity status



Zach Beecher / Daily Staff

The San Jose State University Figure Skating Club practiced Tuesday night at Logitech's ice rink. Andrea Moody watches Crystal Arnold practice a "layback spin." The team will compete at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday in Vacaville against other club teams, such as UC Davis and Cal Berkeley.

By Marsea Nelson
Daily Staff Writer

Of the more than 173,000 registered figure skaters in the United States, only a quarter of 1 percent will go to the Olympics.

Sandra Schaad, a graduate student in kinesiology, said many skaters whose skills are not advanced enough for the track to U.S. Nationals hang up their skates in their teens because there are no other competitions that allow them to compete until they are eligible for adult competitions at age 25.

"There was no avenue for skaters to keep skating," Schaad said. "Anyone who's over the age of 13 that doesn't have a double axel — there's really no route for you to compete."

So Schaad started a San Jose State University figure skating club in 2001. The team has since hosted an annual competition and traveled to national competitions, she said.

Brandi McIntyre, a graduate student majoring in geology, joined the team two years ago after skating for a year.

"I had just discovered skating and I fell in love with the sport," McIntyre said. "This might be the only chance I have to be a pseudo-collegiate athlete."

Schaad said she hopes that figure skating will become a varsity sport for SJSU.

As of now, the figure skating club has five skaters with three others on the injured reserved list, she said. Schaad added that skat-

ers peer-coach each other and each skater practices a different amount of time.

If figure skating becomes a varsity sport for SJSU, the team would have a coach and its training and travel would be paid, Schaad said.

Skaters who participate in intercollegiate competitions are required to be full-time students, Schaad said.

"The only reason they're doing that is so that people don't skate six to eight hours a day and can go out and just blow the competition out of the water," Schaad said.

In addition to competing for SJSU, McIntyre also skates for a synchronized skating team. A synchronized skating team has 20 skaters on the ice at a time but an introductory team requires only eight, she said. Last year the SJSU club received a \$1,000 grant to start a synchronized team but turned it down because a couple of the skaters backed out.

"We need skaters who are willing to dedicate the time to get to the rink at the same time that the other skaters can make it," Schaad said.

Mary Panyan, the club's adviser, said there is a good chance that a varsity figure skating club will be established at SJSU, but that it will probably take a couple years. Panyan herself is a figure skating judge and also still competes.

"Skating is always there for you," Panyan said. "It's something to take with you all your life."

Schaad hopes to recruit more skaters and encourages beginner to advanced level male and female

skaters to join.

The team wears its SJSU figure skating jackets around campus to help spread the word.

"We'll wear them and people will be like, 'Oh my gosh, I didn't know we had a figure skating team,'" Schaad said.

Schaad also said having a large team is important for the team to be competitive.

"The bigger teams typically are going to win," Schaad said.

"Berkeley has 30 skaters. There's no way we're going to beat them. Even if everyone took first place in their event we can't beat them. It's impossible."

Though most of the members on the team take the competitions seriously, Schaad said winning is not their main focus.

The team will be competing at 3:30 p.m. on Saturday at the Golden Bear Skate Competition in Vacaville.

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ACROSS

- Mumble
- Tolkien hero
- Ceiling fixtures
- Salsa ingredient
- More abrupt
- Feast with poi
- Tavern brews
- Maestro — Previn
- Bone-dry
- Wild horses
- Where Asia begins
- Rainbow shapes
- Iditarod terminus
- Wear jauntily
- Mail amenity (2 wds.)
- Washes down
- Landscape shrubs
- Sorority letter
- Director — Kazan
- Likewise
- Big quarrel
- Make ends meet
- Caravan halts
- Mixture
- Like railroad tracks
- Out of practice
- Bank holding
- Tiny insect
- Big Dipper neighbor
- Hammerlock pro
- Where Keokuk is
- Economical
- Relaxation
- Grind to a halt
- 60 — "luego"
- Gam or Rudner
- Iodine source
- Pentium producer
- Celebrity

PREVIOUS PUZZLE SOLVED

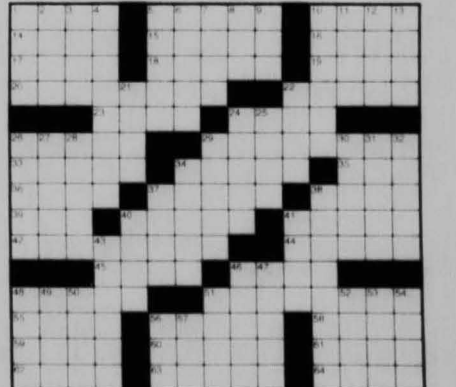
MAXIM CENT JUST
ALETA ASEA ASTO
SONAR LAWN PION
HEALTHFUL DANKE
YEAS YOUNGER
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SLATINIB BELSA
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PALINOS DILLINK
AMINO PREMIERED
TENNHOOKEVADE
INGEERLE SEVEN
ODOR PEER TEENS

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pull-off (2 wds.)
31 Switch a freight car
32 Tot
33 Above
34 The horizon
37 Wide valley
38 Waves
40 Hedgepodge
41 Lingerie items
43 Yokums
46 Log holder
47 Hindu kingdom
48 Data storage device
49 By heart
50 Troop trumpet
51 Into the sunset
52 Gate au
53 This serora
54 Tail end
56 Tai — chuan
57 Leia's rescuer

DOWN

- Tellmarketing danger
- Corker
- Biano cousins
- Turnpike
- Tools for duels



Certain advertisements in these columns may refer the reader to specific telephone numbers or addresses for additional information. Classified readers should be reminded that, when making these further contacts, they should require complete information before sending money for goods or services. In addition, readers should carefully investigate all firms offering employment listings or coupons for discount vacations or merchandise.

CHEATING - Students face suspension, expulsion

continued from page 1

Academic Senate and is a combination of the old policy and three amendments. The new policy focuses on ethics, student roles and responsibilities.

Students can face up to expulsion if they are caught plagiarizing, according to the new policy.

In Carr's class, it is his option to give the online tutorial.

"I decided this semester to require students in my class to review the policy and take the quiz as a learning tool," Carr said.

Carr said that it is a personal decision that each professor should make alone. He said he does not believe it should be mandatory for the college.

He said some might think it is waste of time, but others are testing the waters by having the students take the quiz.

"I may decide not to use it in the future, or if the quiz seems useful after this initial use in my class, I may include it in all my courses," Carr said.

The tutorial will soon prove whether it had an affect.

"After taking the quiz, there should be less people making mistakes," Hernandez said. "The statistics should drop."

Griffith agrees with Hernandez. She said that because of the dif-

ferences in the new policy, there should be a decline.

"I think the quiz will help to reduce the number of plagiarized papers by reminding students that the college as a whole - and that I personally - take the problem very seriously," Carr said.

For people who plagiarize for reasons of stress or pressure from family members and other person-

"After taking the quiz, there should be less people making mistakes."

Jacinta Hernandez, student

al reasons, the tutorial might not change anything, Carr said.

"The very few cases where I have had students plagiarize an entire paper, each student admitted to the violation of policy and indicated they knew it was

wrong," Carr said.

Students will always come up with a reason for what they did, Hernandez said.

"But for a variety of reasons - time problems, need for a higher grade, family pressures and expectations, too many writing assignments, etc. - they decided to turn in a plagiarized paper," Carr said.

With the tutorial, students are able to see all the consequences they will face.

"These students made a personal ethical decision, fully knowing their actions were wrong and the risk they were taking if discovered," Carr said.

Unlike these students, some students go to the Internet looking for a way out of an assignment.

"The variety of inaccurate information, information that is plagiarized by the Internet author, lack of references for the Web site information and the inability of Web site information to meet the scholarly test creates a variety of problems," Carr said.

Carr is not the only one on campus having his students participate in the online tutorial. From psychology and communication to nursing and English, many different academic departments are taking advantage of the online tutorial and looking for results.

MYSJSU - System receives mixed reviews

continued from page 1

Enhancements will continue to be made with the messaging system but there have been no problems with it thus far, Medders said.

Jaime Fonseca, a junior majoring in accounting, said while he does receive messages from the Bursar's Office that remind him of tuition due dates, this sys-

tem won't work well for receiving messages from professors.

Students would have to check the site on a regular basis, or else it won't be beneficial, Fonseca said.

But, if students want to know what's going on, they need to check their portal, Jaehne said.

Alexandra Belick, an undeclared freshman, said she has received messages using MySJSU from two professors - one re-

garding adding a class and another with class syllabus information.

Belick said the service is fairly self-explanatory.

"It's pretty much like e-mail," Belick said.

Thus far, this e-mail-like service has been running smoothly, Medders said.

"Students are reading them," Medders said. "Faculty members have been using it and they're very excited."

HAZING - Campus police report five cases since 2000

continued from page 1

They remember having to participate in hazing when they joined and think the newcomers should have to do it also, Crumm said.

"I feel, as a Greek community, we are in a better place than we were years ago," Harper said. "There are some groups, I'm convinced, that completely eliminated hazing."

Yet, since Jan. 1, 2000, five cases of hazing have been reported to the University Police Department, said Sgt. Robert Noriega, public affairs officer.

The reason the statistics are so low is not necessarily because hazing doesn't happen, but because people rarely report it, Noriega said.

Crumm said certain student groups are often caught performing hazing rituals.

"Where I see this a lot on campus is on SJSU's athletic teams," Crumm said.

But reports typically deal with fraternities and sororities, Noriega said, and they tend to involve drinking alcohol or some sort of physical activity.

The most recent hazing incident, reported by the National Park Service last weekend, took place at Pinnacles National Park, located in San Benito County.

Several chapters of a fraternity, including one from SJSU, had to run uphill several miles in 19-degree weather, Noriega said.

Harper said the Greek system does its best to build community and educate its members, especially new members and rush candidates.

The Interfraternity Council and Panhellenic Council hold a workshop - mandatory for all Greek members - each semester to inform students about a variety

of topics including hazing and the different types of hazing, Crumm said.

"Greek organizations were originally about friendships, not about making people feel inferior," Crumm said.

Debra Griffith, chief judicial affairs officer, was not available for comment.

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For more information, call 924-3260

Correction

In the Feb. 16 article, "Museum to move to new home," Susan Oliver was identified as a councilwoman. This is incorrect. Oliver is a member of Vice Mayor Cindy Chavez's staff. The Daily regrets the error.

EDUCATION - Money, commuting cited as key factors

continued from page 1

who have the promise of being able to succeed even if they didn't do well in high school, he said.

Another possible factor in low graduation rates is money, said Annette Nellen, chair of the academic senate.

"With the cost of living, some students might just be unable to finish," Nellen said. "I think over half our students work."

Although graduation rates are comparatively low, there are ways to improve them.

"There is data going back decades that show the first six weeks of a college student's time on campus are absolutely critical," Dorosz said.

Students tend to lose interest in college during that time and a lot of them disappear he said.

"If we are not putting enough emphasis on that first semester, that could be where we're losing a few," Nellen said.

The first thing to be done in improving graduation rates is to improve retention Cooper said.

Programs such as the Metropolitan University Scholar's Experience have been shown to increase retention rates, he said.

Although the program hasn't been in place long enough to see whether it increases graduation rates, data from other universities with similar programs show an increase, Cooper said.

The university has shown interest in starting a similar program for transfer students since they comprise such a large portion of the student body.

Muse is a seminar for entering freshmen, Cooper said.

The core of the idea came from former Provost Marshall Goodman and Annette Nellen, Cooper said.

The seminars are designed to give students an understanding of how the university works and what its expectations, as well as provide academic content, Cooper said.

Advising can also aid students in graduating sooner, Cooper said.

Regular advising is important, so if students have difficulty, they know the full range of options to recover, he said.

Developing relationships with other students going through the same degree program serves as a social support system, Cooper said.

Despite these programs, there are other reasons students graduate later than sooner.

"So many students have to work to support themselves," Nellen said.

Taking a semester off because they are out of funds is another reason for delay, Cooper said.

Other students have to work while going to school and can't take as many units.

"If you look at schools either where the students come from

wealthy families or they have full-time financial aid packages, you find many more students graduating in four years," Cooper said.

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 Sideways
 Camera 12 201 S. Second St. - 998-3300
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