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University sees record enrollment in spring

From Staff Reports

This semester, Harding set a new record with the largest spring enrollment in the history of the university. While exact figures were not available at press time, Registrar Ron Finley says enrollment will be "well above 4,100." Currently, there are 3,914 students enrolled at Harding University. This number does not include all graduate students on the Searcy campus or at the graduate school in Memphis, Tenn.

Last spring's final enrollment figure was 3,994, according to Finley. However, that number included graduate students. In addition to the increased enrollment, the university has received substantially more applications for admission this fall. "Even though we're up 20 percent, that does not mean we're going to have 200 more freshmen," said Mike Williams, assistant vice president for admissions and student financial services. "What it will allow us to do is be more selective.

The university's current policy is to continue growing without an enrollment cap, according to President David Burks. The university plans to expand its undergraduate program at a rate of about two percent annually. In response to a steady growth rate, the university has added several new majors, including a computer engineering program in the College of Sciences. "We had 25 freshmen in [computer engineering] last fall," said Tim Baird, chairman of the computer science department. "It looks like there could easily be twice as many next fall.

Other majors under consideration include electrical engineering and interactive media in the Department of Communication. Besides new academic programs, the university is also accommodating the growth through building and renovation. With the addition of the two apartment-style dorms this year, Patty Burks, director of residence life, said there is enough space in on-campus housing to handle several more years of growth. The university is planning the construction of a new technology and education building near the Reynolds Center on the south end of campus.

Harding has recently approved a plan to renovate the Mabee Business Building and Pryor Science Building. Plans to renovate the Ganus Athletic Center and the Brackett Library are also under review.

The renovated athletic center would include an expanded weight room with more equipment available. The plan for the library increases the number of computers available to faculty and students for research purposes.

Musician, ASI speakers headline semester calendar

Michael Chaffin
Staff Writer

Each semester, the Student Activities Committee and the American Studies Institute work to provide the Harding community with quality speakers and entertaining events to maintain an exciting campus life. This semester is no exception.

The American Studies Institute kicks off this semester's lecture series Feb. 13 with Houston Nutt, head football coach for the University of Arkansas Razorbacks.

Nutt, an Arkansas native, has revitalized the Razorback football program, leading the team to its first Top 20 finish in a decade in 1999, along with handling the fans victories over rivals Tennessee and Mississippi State. In his three-year tenure with the Razorbacks, Nutt has compiled a 23-13 record, leading the Razorbacks to a bowl game each season.

The second ASI speaker will be Angela "Bay" Buchanan on March 6.

In 1981, Buchanan was appointed by President Ronald Reagan to hold the office of United States Treasurer, becoming the youngest person to ever hold that office. She served as national treasurer of Reagan's presidential campaign both in 1980 and 1984. Since then, she has served as presidential campaign chairperson for her brother, Pat Buchanan. She is now president of the American Cause, a foundation started by her brother.

The ASI lecture series will conclude April 19, with the presentation of Harding alumnus Kenneth Starr.

He is best known for serving as independent counsel investigating former President Bill Clinton from August 1994 to October 1999.

He is currently an adjunct professor at New York University School of Law and is a distinguished visiting professor at George Mason University School of Law, while on leave of absence from the firm of Kirkland and Ellis, P.C. He has received numerous awards, including the Jefferson Cup Award from the FBI and the Attorney General's Award for Distinguished Service.

The SAC also has a full schedule of events this semester, featuring several movies and performances.

The varied live acts lined up for the semester include gospel act Chapter 2, musician/comedian Rick Kelley and country music star and Arkansas native Collin Raye. For related stories, see page three.

A hurried Harding student navigates through the crowds in the Benson Auditorium lobby after chapel last Friday. With 14 years of consecutive growth, the university faces the benefits and challenges of increased enrollment. For related stories, see page three.

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Putting a cap on it

Writer’s Block
Sarah Terry
Editor

After setting enrollment records for the past five decades, the time has come for Harding officials to put a lid on it. Or, rather, a cap.

Using an enrollment cap to limit the number of students admitted is what the university needs in order to preserve what it is known for.

Much of what attracts record numbers of students to Harding each year is the familial atmosphere on campus.

Continued growth would have repercussions that would change that atmosphere.

Already, the shared experience of one chapel service is being threatened by increased numbers of students. Harding officials have decided to keep one chapel service for the 2001-2002 school year, a split in the calendar for the first time.

The campus we have now is small enough for students to walk to class, but already the original campus that encompassed the buildings on the front lawn has extended to the Mabee Business Building, Campus Athletic Center and Reynolds Music and Communication Center. What would happen after another decade of this kind of growth? Students shuttling around campus rather than walking?

A substantial increase in students could also affect campus housing regulations. The administration has often said that the housing rules have been implemented — among other reasons — to help forge bonds of friendship and togetherness, which serve the close-knit atmosphere. If the student population expands faster than officials can keep pace with new dorms, the student body will be robbed of that experience.

For Harding to continue to offer this kind of life to future students, capping enrollment is a necessity.

Those who oppose a cap say Harding should offer itself — and its mission — to anyone interested. Also, Harding needs to be prepared to grow in order to survive.

But the bottom line is that Harding is more than just a university; it’s a way of life that we often take for granted and that students at many larger — and more impersonal — schools can’t begin to imagine.

Harding would be missing the mark to try to compete against the biggest schools. We have something much better than that.

What other schools have in size, Harding offers in close relationships, a familial feeling and unique atmosphere. This school should celebrate its differences. Continued growth would threaten that. Putting a cap on enrollment today would preserve our school for tomorrow.

Viewpoints

Tuning out: Reality programming craze brings television to new lows

In latest example, audiences watch as singles attempt to break up four couples

Temptation Island, Million Dollar Matchmaker, Survivor. What’s next? In reality television, it appears anything is possible.

There is a new drug on the market, and this time it’s legal. Not cocaine or LSD, but a drug nonetheless: Sensationalism.

Sensationalism.

The drug was first introduced with the ever-popular daytime talk shows. A genre with great potential that has, in some cases, evolved from interviews with celebrities to shows filled with immorality, perversion and sensationalism.

Since then, the drug has progressed to reality-based television, a genre closely related to today’s talk show premise — give bored viewers something different from musical and high-action programs. Sensationalism and shocking, if possible, offer money and lots of it.

With roots in shows like “Cops” and MTV’s “The Real World,” reality television has hit a burst of momentum with the introduction of the successful shows “Who Wants To Be a Millionaire?” and “Survivor.”

Now I have to admit that “Survivor” was a creative twist to the standard game show question: what would you do for a million dollars? And I found myself hooked after only two episodes.

“Who Wants To Be a Millionaire?” managed to be the first game show on prime time television in quite a while. Both shows seemed to have the number one quality of a successful, moneymaking show: get people interested, get them hooked and get them to tune in every week.

When those two shows spawned “Who Wants To Marry A Multi-Millionaire?” and “Big Brother,” people predicted that there were just a passing fad, and it seemed true. After all, neither of those shows were as successful as the first (despite the publicity after viewers discovered the unsavory past of a certain eligible multi-millionaire). But the predictions proved false as new reality-based shows seem to emerge almost every week.

The premise is this: four unmarried couples travel to a tropical getaway off the coast of Belize. Here they are separated from each other in order to test their faithfulness. To add a little spice, 26 tantalizing singles were brought to the island for the sole purpose of seducing the contestants.

How did television degenerate to the point where we watch real people set themselves up for humiliation, infidelity and ridicule — all for entertainment? Why do we watch? Is it for the beautiful people, the excitement, the sensation? Do we watch to see just how bad people can be?

In an article on Time.com, one writer speculated that shows such as “Temptation Island” may be appealing because most of us wouldn’t want to be on them. Does it make us feel better about ourselves to see real people behaving in a way that we never would?

To be fair, most of the reality-based shows are harmless and entertaining rather than purely sensational or trashy, and many are just projects of creativity.

However, as this trend continues, the line between reality and fiction continues to blur, and decency disappears more every day.

As the trend continues, the line between reality and fiction continues to blur, and decency disappears more every day.

Letters to the Editor

This space is reserved for letters to the editor. The Bison welcomes signed letters to the editor. Please send letters or ideas for editorial content to The Bison, Box 11192.

Speak out: What is your New Year’s resolution?

To be able to run in a marathon.
Robert Meyer, freshman

To do better in school and in life in general.
Anthony Cuarema, sophomore

To be a better friend and Christian example.
Jen Wescarver, freshman

To free climb Mount Everest and have a mountain-top experience.
Cherie Thompson, junior

The Bison is a campus newspaper written, edited and largely financed by students, seeking to provide high-quality journalistic discussion of issues of concern to the Harding community. The Bison also serves as an educational tool for students providing practical experience to enhance skills learned in the classroom. The Bison recognizes its responsibility to be accurate, fair and objective in its reporting while upholding Christian ideals for which Harding University stands. It assumes the obligation, as a member of the community, to provide an environment in which the editor who adheres to ethical and professional standards. Editorials appearing in The Bison are the views of the writer and may not reflect the official policy of the Harding University administration. Signed columns represent the personal views of the authors. The Bison is published weekly (except during breaks, test weeks and summer sessions) by Harding University, Searcy, AR 72149. Subscriptions cost, $10 per year. Second class postage (10079577076) paid at Searcy, AR 72143. Postmaster: Send address changes to Harding University Box 11192, Searcy, AR 72143-6001. Contact The Bison office at 501-279-4319 or 501-279-4471 or send faxes to 501-279-4137.

The Bison is online at www.harding.edu/isubison.
Burks: Enrollment cap not planned

Jalaina Tyree
Staff Writer

With a 14th consecutive year of growth, some Harding classes are feeling the strain of increased enrollment. This has started some students and faculty talking about an enrollment cap—limiting the school’s enrollment to a set number rather than allowing slight growth each year, as has been recent custom.

Burks said Harding has no plan in the near future to implement an enrollment cap. The current plan is to grow about two to three percent annually which translates to about 40 or 50 more students than the previous year.

Mike Williams, assistant vice president for admissions and student financial services, said applications for the fall 2001 semester are up 20 percent from applications at this time last year.

“We can only have so many spots available in the residence halls,” he said. “We can’t go above that just because we have students who are wanting to come. We still have to live within our capacity.”

Williams said that his staff is being more selective this year by necessity.

“We’ll have to be more selective in the process and take, probably, the best prepared freshman class in the history of the university,” he said.

Students are divided when it comes to the question of an enrollment cap.

“I like the small school atmosphere and being able to know a lot of the people I see everyday,” freshman Molly Davis said.

However, senior Jamiisha Harris believes that large numbers of people have little to do with the atmosphere.

“It’s the people that determine whether Harding has a friendly atmosphere,” she said.

One form of an enrollment cap would involve raising the standards for admission to the university. Some people argue that limiting enrollment may keep those who most need Harding from attending.

“Increasing standards would stop students that want or need to be here from coming,” Davis said.

Burks agreed.

“We think it is very important for us to accept some students who are underprepared for college,” he said. He said this gives these students the opportunity to succeed in college if they choose to do so.

Many students also said they are concerned about the student-faculty ratio. As long as the numbers stay down in the classroom, there is more room for one-on-one involvement.

“IT’s good to know that when I need help I can find one of my teachers and get that one-on-one attention,” junior Tanya Grasham said.

Burks said additional faculty added in recent years have actually improved the student-faculty ratio.

And while housing concerns might arise with continued growth, Burks said there is still room in the dorms.

At the beginning of the fall semester, 14 upperclass women were allowed to reside at Harding Place to make room for new students and transfers on campus.

This was necessary because married students were allowed to take up more of the West Married Student Apartments.

Because the new men’s dorm, Cone, was built earlier than originally planned, the Office of Residence Life has not had a problem finding housing for the men.

Numbers to force chapel split

Different options being explored to deal with growth

Jeremy Beauchamp
Staff Writer

With continuing growth affecting many aspects of Harding campus life, students can expect to see a major change in chapel sometime within the next two years, according to President David Burks.

Since the George S. Benson Auditorium is filled to capacity with students and faculty during chapel, plans have recently been discussed among a strategic planning committee to split chapel into two services.

The Benson’s seating capacity is estimated at 3,350. According to estimated enrollment numbers for next year, the auditorium will be more than completely full next fall.

Burks said Wednesday that the majority of the student body will remain together for chapel during the 2001-2002 school year.

This will be made possible by a small second chapel for nontraditional students.

Burks discussed the possible split while answering questions about the school’s steady growth. While not wanting to commit to any final decisions just yet, Burks said a split is likely in two years.

“My gut feeling is that we will probably stay together one more year,” he said. “There’s a real sense that, even though we’re crowded, it’s really nice for everybody to be together.”

A split chapel is nothing new to Harding, but it is new to most current students.

Before the Benson was built in 1980, Harding faced a similar challenge. At that time, chapel was held in the Administration Auditorium, which seats approximately 1,200 people.

“The whole time I was in college, there was a split chapel,” said Tim Baird, computer science department chairman who attended Harding in the 1970s.

The problem was solved when the Benson Auditorium was built. With plenty of room, everyone fit on the floor level.

After a number of years, the problem arose again in the fall of 1997. The administration decided to try and get a separate freshman chapel in the Administration Auditorium.

“We did not have great success with [freshman chapel],” Burks said.

However, some freshmen from the 1997-1998 school year liked the split chapel.

“Actually enjoyed the freshman chapel,” senior Justin McCready said. “I was a bit intimidated by all the upperclassmen, but it was nice to be with other people who were in the same boat as me.”

However, the majority of freshmen “that we were not a part of the student body,” according to Burks.

Senior Jeff Bennett was one such student.

“I felt completely isolated from the rest of the students,” he said.

Chapel was reunited the next year, when several hundred extra seats were added to the Benson balcony. The new sections solved the problem for a time.

Now, with the upper balcony filling up along with the rest of the Benson, students are faced with the probability of a split again.

According to Burks, one option among many is offering an alternate time for chapel. As was done years ago, students would be given the option of taking chapel at the standard time or at a later time, somewhere around noon.

As for changing the chapel attendance policy for undergraduates, Burks said that will not happen. He said regular chapel attendance is “at the heart of the university.” The only possible setback is losing the option of having one time when everyone is together.

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2001-2002

Burks discussed the possible
A renewed focus on academics among freshmen and their resident assistants paid off in at least one women’s freshmen dorm during the fall semester.

Out of 297 residents in Sears Hall, 35 made a 4.0 grade point average their first semester at Harding. With only seven percent of the girls earning less than 2.00, the average GPA in the dorm was 3.12.

At the beginning of the fall semester, Dr. Deore Carson, assistant vice president for student services, met with resident assistants to discuss plans for the upcoming year.

The RA’s were trained as specialists in one of five areas: spiritual, physical wellness, counseling, social and academics. Within the academics area, Carson’s goal was to raise the overall GPA of the student body.

April Butler, Sears residence life coordinator, says she has been pleased with the grades her girls made this semester.

“It is tough to come to college and go through all of the changes,” she said. “Your freshman year you are away from home, living with strangers, trying to make new friends and stay involved in school activities, and it is very difficult to concentrate on your studies throughout all of this.”

Butler attributes much of the academic success the girls have had to resident assistants. The RA’s were instructed to encourage the girls in the dorm and ask if they needed any help with their studies.

After an in-dorm tutoring program failed to get off the ground, the RA’s spread word to the girls about the Academic Services Center.

Dr. Dee Boat, ASC director, spoke to the academic RA’s about the tutoring services available on campus in hopes that they would be able to push the girls in their direction if help was needed.

“I let all of the girls on my hall know about the tutoring in the Academic Services and instructed them to come to me or Mrs. Butler if they were struggling with any of their classes or school work,” sophomore Laini Mayberry, an academic RA, said. “I didn’t want any of them to wait until it was too late.”

Freshmen Natalie Faught and Laurie Kirkland, roommates, were among the straight-A students in Sears. They were extremely pleased with the outcome of their grades but both agreed that it came with a lot of work.

“High school was easy compared to this,” Faught said. “I spent a lot more time studying this semester than I ever had.”

At the beginning of this semester, Butler called Carson to tell her the news.

“We are all so proud of the girls in that dorm,” Carson said. “This has been such an encouragement.”

Butler, a former teacher, said she found her dorm’s academic success particularly exciting.

“I couldn’t have been more pleased,” she said. “It is something that, being a teacher, has always been very important to me and they all worked really hard and encouraged each other.”
Faces in the Crowd
Female student finds niche in male-dominated major

Editor’s Note: This is the ninth in a continuing series featuring unique members of the Harding community.
Hannah Rhodes
Staff Writer

While females constitute more than half of Harding’s student body, only a handful of women have declared a full-time major in the College of Bible and Religion.

Junior missions major Catherine Christopher declares a major after interning with missionaries in Uganda. She spends the summer between many years in Africa, serving as an intern to missionaries in Uganda.

Christopher said, “I wanted to commit my life to full-time ministry.”

Christopher spent the following fall semester enrolled at Harding University in Greece. She credits a great amount of spiritual growth to her experiences in Greece, Israel and Turkey.

She spent last summer in Fort Worth, Texas, as part of an inner-city ministry supported by the Fortress Church of Christ.

“Working in the inner-city was an incredible experience,” Christopher said.

“It was like Africa in many ways. I could definitely see myself working in the inner-city following graduation. But I have no idea where I’m going to end up.”

Christopher has a heart for foreign missions, especially in China and East Africa. Upon graduation in May 2002, she is considering moving to China to evangelize while teaching English through a program established by the Chinese government. She is also considering joining the Mbarara (Uganda) team.

“My future is so unclear, but so exciting,” she said. “Who knows? I could end up with the Eskimos. I am waiting to see where God leads me.”

Female students like Christopher are pioneering what she hopes will become a trend in future years.

“I wish that there were more girls declaring Bible majors,” she said. “I wish Harding would encourage it more. There’s a huge role for women in ministry. We just don’t talk about it a lot.”

Especially in foreign missions, Christopher recognizes the importance of fully-trained women missionaries.

“In many cultures, it is not appropriate for men to develop close friendships with women,” she said. “Women missionaries play a vital role in reaching whole communities of people.”

Christopher’s vision for Harding includes more course offerings geared toward women in the College of Bible and Religion.

“I would love to see more female Bible teachers at Harding,” she said. “It would be great to have Bible classes for women that demonstrate a woman’s role in ministry.”

Despite being in the minority, Christopher has become a leader within the Bible department. She is currently a supplemental instructor leader for first semester Greek students. She is also co-leading a Spring Break campaign to St. Louis.

While many women believe it is necessary to marry a minister or a missionary in order to get involved in ministry, Christopher said being single is a blessing.

“I don’t want to have to ride on someone else’s ministry,” she said. “This is my ministry. My goal for Harding is that it help women as we continue to develop our own ministries.”

There’s a huge role for women in ministry. We just don’t talk about it a lot.

Catherine Christopher, junior missions major

This continuing series featuring unique members of the Harding community is produced by Hannah Rhodes, staff writer, and Ashlee Johnson, writer.

Missions major Catherine Christopher, who is the only female in many of her Bible courses, currently works as a supplemental instruction leader for first semester Greek students.

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Beatles disc proves to be number ‘One’

Rachel McGuiston
Staff Writer

Many students may think Seany has little to offer for entertainment, but that is not completely true. Open for nearly two years, 111 Arch Street Theater is a dinner theater that provides a business casual, dimly lit atmosphere for those who want light comedy or drama.

“When people come to the theater, they’re ready to be entertained,” senior Joe Yale said.

Playing now through Valentine’s weekend is “Barefoot in the Park,” with Harding graduate Justin Lawson as the lead actor.

The play is a Neil Simon comedy about a newlywed couple and the ups and downs they go through during their first couple weeks of marriage.”

Many students prefer the show-only ticket because it’s pretty easy. It’s worth it. That was 1992. Things seemed different.

Student’s music isn’t very easy for me to find, proves to be a greatest hits package covering most of the Fab Four; the closest thing of the Vietnam War and the prime. The soundtrack of these albums as if it were 1964 will not long stand as a testament to artistic truth.

Artistic truth.

They haven’t left for a reason. Parents must face in their youth, times really don’t change, only house.

Music is timeless, and the new crop of teenagers who are snatching up copies of the album as if it were 1964 will not likely detect any audible-wrinkles on the faces of songs like “Yesterday,” “Penny Lane” and “Come Together” transcending the definition of youth, “One” provides the starter package that didn’t exist when I was in elementary school.

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Bisons battle mediocrity as Morgan battles back

Mac Bell
Staff Writer

The men’s basketball team has seen a lot of action in the past month. The Bisons (7-7, 2-4 in the Gulf South Conference before Thursday’s game at Ouachita Baptist) were hard at work during the Christmas break posting a win against St. Edwards at Reunion Arena in Dallas Jan. 3. The Bisons played before a Dallas Mavericks game and stayed afterward for the NBA game. They also lost a road game in overtime to conference rival UAM over the break.

Since students returned, the Bisons have played four games, winning two and losing two.

“We make improvement every day in practice,” coach Jeff Morgan said. Regardless of the outcome of the game Harding fans know that the Bisons are an exciting team to watch, he said.

The Bisons suffered a tough conference defeat against the University of Central Arkansas at home Jan. 8. Another loss before the game was Morgan, who was suffering from bulging discs in his lower back. Morgan was unable to coach the next several games. Assistant coach Tim Kirby filled in for those games.

The Bisons’ struggles continued in Arkadelphia, as they were outscored in both halves by Henderson State in a 67-58 conference loss.

On Jan. 13, the Bisons gained their first GSC win against Southern Arkansas in front of an announced crowd of 2,755 Rhodes Rowdies. The fifth largest crowd in GSC history. The enormous crowd saw Harding come back with 11 minutes left in the game to defeat the Muleriders 76-68.

The fact that they are not able to hold their own the first half and scores the second half is what is plaguing the men from hitting threes in the second half. As a team, they have only made 11 three pointers this season.

Junior Kendra Bell looks for a hole to pass through during the Lady Bisons’ game against Southern Arkansas. The Lady Bisons have an overall record of 10-5, but two straight losses have allowed them down to a 3-3 conference record.

Lady Bisons’ conference run comes to abrupt halt

Natasha Jaworski
Staff Writer

The Lady Bisons were cruising through the Gulf South Conference when they ran into a few problems.

“We were playing well, we had won our three games. We were holding our own the first half and scored 19. Morgan returned to the helm for the loss.”

“We played well, if we had made our free throws and come up with some defensive stops at the end it would have been a different game,” Morgan said.

Morgan said the Bisons fans are to be commended for their attendance at the last three home games. Two of the three were in the top ten attendance figures in GSC history.

“If we continue to have crowds like this I could see us having every spot from three to 10 in attendance in the history of the GSC,” Morgan said.

The Bisons played last night at Ouachita Baptist. They return to action Monday, hosting Arkansas Tech in the Rhodes.

Senior center Armand Etame says his team didn’t know what to expect as Morgan battled back against the Delta State Statesmen Monday night. The game, plagued by lackluster officiating, was one of Harding’s most heartbreaking losses this season.

Senior Kendra Bell looks for a hole to pass through during the Lady Bisons’ game against Southern Arkansas. The Lady Bisons have an overall record of 10-5, but two straight losses have allowed them down to a 3-3 conference record.
Super Bowl XXXV: super game or super spectacle?

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Tie-Breaker:
Super Bowl XXXV
Guess the exact score of Sunday's matchup.

Baltimore vs. New York

* Editor's picks are in bold.