

Money Management

Be careful with credit cards, checking accounts

by Richard Hartogs
Clarion Staff Writer

Many Brevard College students have credit cards and checking accounts. Are they handling their responsibilities well, or are they carelessly spending their money?

Nearly 75% of the students have their own checking accounts. Over 25% of the students have their checking accounts located in Brevard. There are three banks in Brevard that the students bank at: Nations Bank, First Union, and First Citizens Bank.

Sharon W. Brogden, bank representative for Nations Bank,

estimates that between 100 and 200 Brevard College students bank at Nations Bank. Nations Bank has an annual fee of \$36, which includes unlimited check writing privileges and free ATM withdrawals at any Nations Bank. "Interstate guidelines for any commercial bank prevent customers to make deposits from a different state of which ones' account is located." Brogden said.

Many students said that they do not balance their check books. Brevard College Professor of Business Ray Fisher, has previously stated,

"Everybody should have a checking account, and do monthly balances so you know how much money you have."

Jamie Sadler, a freshman from Charleston, S.C., has bounced thirteen checks over the school year. For each bad check Jamie wrote, he had to pay a fine of \$21. This is a good example of why it is important to balance a check book.

Nearly 45% of BC students own credit cards. Ray Fisher said, "It is better to stay on a cash basis, rather than a credit basis." For those students who do own credit cards, the interest rates are usually high. Sometimes

parents co-sign a credit card with their kids. The co-signed credit cards are the cards that have higher spending limits per month and less interest. Most students have a Mastercard or Visa.

Some students have said, "I'll just put it on my credit card, and pay for it when my bills come in." The appealing feature that credit cards offer is that one doesn't pay for anything until the bill comes in. Credit cards will always affect ones' checking account. Most people pay their credit card bills by using checks.

If one is careful about their spending and balances their checkbook, then they should be okay.

Letters To The Editor

Students can help decide campus activities

Dear Editor:

I appreciate your commitment to providing a forum for diverse views. I believe that a vigorously active, unbiased press is necessary in a free society, and this requires editors willing to print views whether or not they personally agree with them. *The Clarion* has done an outstanding job this year, and I want to thank you for providing a voice for the students at Brevard College.

I would also like to respond to the Guest Editorial by Richard Hartogs (*The Clarion*, April 13). Richard raises valid concerns, and I hope that he and others will participate in designing solutions.

Richard points out that many students leave on weekends. This is a fact. The Social Board of the SGA works hard to provide activities to interest students on the weekends (as well as during the week), and yet many students leave each weekend. This is not a surprise. We are fortunate to live in one of the most beautiful areas in the country with an abundance of opportunities for outdoor activity.

Additionally, we are within an easy drive of several major cities and dozens of other colleges and universities. The choices and opportunities are many and as diverse as our student body. Any student who would like the Social Board to sponsor different types of activities only needs to get involved. The Social Board is open to all students. Students who are unable to participate directly are free to discuss their ideas with any

member of the SGA or Andrea Piner, whose office is in the Coffee House.

The Semester in Austria program is another wonderful opportunity, and I hope that more students will apply to participate. Many colleges offer programs overseas, but these programs are rarely available to first year students. B.C.'s program is different, because it is open to second-semester students. Also, even though there are only ten spaces available in this program, it has been very difficult to find ten students who are interested and who qualify for the program. Anyone interested in going to Austria should contact Ren Decatur for details.

Finally, on the issue of live entertainment in Coltrane during the day--this entertainment is not booked by the college, it just happens! My office is upstairs at Coltrane, and I am very aware that the lobby is busy from early in the morning. If something different needs to be happening, contact the Social Board.

I hope that Richard's commentary will inspire more students to get involved. Getting people excited and involved is a worthy goal for any journalist.

Sincerely,
Steve Martin
Dean for Campus Life

McDowell defends Semester in Austria program

Dear Editor:

It's income tax day and I'm in a bad mood. I am writing in response to Richard Hartog's article, "Brevard sends

wrong message in college brochure," and specifically about his remarks about the Semester in Austria Program. He wrote that the trip "is for second-semester students and that there are only ten positions available." He went on to say, "Sure it's a program, but it's not worth boasting about it as a good one."

I'm incensed that this journalist made such negative comments, when his only knowledge of the program appears to be those statements he gleaned from the college brochure. Beside which, the statements in the brochure are in no way misleading.

The Brevard College Semester in Austria Program is a truly unique study abroad program. Yes, the size of the program is limited to 10 students, intentionally kept small. We have never had problems accommodating those qualified students who wished to go in any given semester anyway. In fact, the largest semester group we've ever had was 9 students.

With a smaller group, students are afforded a wider range of study and learning opportunities than most programs we've studied, travel around Austria can be done more easily and efficiently in the college VW van, and, most importantly, students can learn to live in close community with one another. In a small, cohesive community, students find the emotional as well as intellectual support which sustains them through homesickness, frustration with the language and culture barriers, and other adjustments problems.

A small program is a better one! Ask the 50+ students who have successfully completed a semester of study in Altmunster! Many of them report having had conversations with other Americans studying abroad (students from Dartmouth College, for example), and when those students find

out what our students are able to do, they say our program is better.

Professor Margaret Zednik is not only an excellent teacher, but has developed an invaluable network of connections of Austrians interested in helping and teaching our students. For example, the mountaineering portion of the course is taught in part by one of Austria's foremost Alpine experts. Ms. Zednik's skill with the language (and diplomacy) has netted us "unobtainable" tickets to hear the best music (for example, Jose Carreras singing the lead in *La Boheme*).

In addition to the Semester in Austria Program, there is an Austria Summer Arts Program, designed to offer study abroad opportunities for fine arts students in the month between graduation and summer school. The first of these programs (1992) was led by Bill Byers and Jo Pumphrey and involved 9 students; they traveled to Austria and Italy. The next summer (1993), I took a group of 6 students on a music tour of Austria and will do so again this May and June, this time with the assistance of David Kirby, Director of Bands.

No, the college brochure does not tell the whole story--it's not supposed to. Its purpose is to awaken interest and stimulate discussion with knowledgeable faculty and staff.

If you are learning about journalism and aspire to be a writer, you need to learn the first lesson of responsible journalism--to research thoroughly your story before committing yourself in print.

Sincerely,
Dr. Laurie McDowell
Associate Professor of Music
and
Coordinator, Austria
Summer Arts Program