

Courses With Slack Reputation Don't Always Lead to 'Easy A'

BY RUTH BORLAND
STAFF WRITER

Contrary to popular belief, there is not a disproportionately large number of athletes in Geology 11, also known as "Rocks for Jocks."

The class got this nickname because it is rumored, along with classes in other departments, to be an exceptionally easy class.

"I had an aunt who graduated in December," said Stacie Smith, a freshman from Durham who is taking Geology 11. "She had taken (Geology 11) correspondence. She had said it was pretty easy."

"It's an introductory course, so of course the material would be easier than an advanced geology course."

Timothy Bralower, a professor who teaches Geology 11, said the class got this reputation because it was the easiest of the physical sciences.

"Compared to the alternatives, geology concepts are much easier to visualize," Bralower said. "But most of the students who comment to me tell me it requires more work than most sciences."

Bralower's syllabus lists 20 to 30 pages of reading for every two to three lectures, with four tests and no papers or projects. He recommends at least 10 hours a week of studying outside of class to get an A.

But Smith said she probably would not study quite as much as Bralower suggested.

"I don't expect to have to spend 10 hours a week, but I guess I'll find out on the first exam," Smith said.

Freshman Danielle Horton from Statesville, who also is in Bralower's class, said, "(Bralower) said we couldn't get through it without reading the textbook."

However, she plans to spend no more than five hours a week on geology.

Josh Helms, a sophomore geology major from Charlotte, took Geology 11 from another professor and made an A. He advises current students to "do the reading."

"I spent less than 10 hours a week studying," he said. "I did find it very easy. It is a very easy class, but it's not a guaranteed A. The lab was more work than I thought it was going to be."

In Sociology 10, another class often rumored to be "easy," 40 percent of Professor Richard Simpson's students failed the first exam. Of the final grades, six out of 90 were F's, and eight were D's.

Simpson said it was less demanding than other sociology courses because the teaching was nonmathematical and because the texts were written at a low level.

"Depending on how the course is taught, it is sometimes a description of facts more than an analysis of complex relationships," Simpson said. "Some of it is easy. But not all of it is, and some of the students experience considerable shock when they don't understand it."

"However, I don't think it took anything away from the powers of the students," Wood said.

But Angela Bryant, one of the two BOT members who voted against rescinding the program, said students and Chancellor Paul Hardin should have had the opportunity to play a more active part in the revisions on the policy.

"It was a losing battle for the students because there were so many people against it," she said.

Bryant said she thought it was a little too heavy-handed for the trustees to rescind the whole 24-hour visitation policy. She said morality affected the decision.

"People want to put their head in the sand when it comes to sexuality."

"Some of the concepts, only a small percentage of the students are able to grasp."

Another reason that students sometimes have trouble in Sociology 10 is that they frequently skip class.

"There is an alarming rate of absenteeism," Simpson said. "Research shows that class attendance has a stronger relationship to grades than the amount of time spent studying."

Both Simpson and Bralower agreed that one reason the classes were rumored to be easy was because they were introductory courses. Bralower said that introductory geology courses were known as "Rocks for Jocks" in universities across the country.

Kara Sheppard, a sophomore from Wendell, said she took Drama 15 last semester because she had heard it was easy.

"My roommate from last year told me it was not a difficult class," she said. "It was a fair class. It wasn't extremely easy, and it wasn't extremely hard."

Sheppard made an A in Drama 15 and spent about 5 1/2 hours per week on drama, including class time.

The professor tried to keep the class at a level where nonmajors could understand it and learn something, Sheppard said.

"It's not that it's easy, it's that he doesn't expect you to memorize entire plays He expects you to learn something from every play you read, to keep up in class and to pay attention to what he says."

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classes was that they did not take difficult courses in high school.

"The question is whether (students) are taking those challenging courses, and the answer is 'no,'" Ivy said. "Our students also don't always think they need to put a lot of time into homework."

David Burleson, principal of Freedom High School in Burke County, said all reports such as the Freshman Performance Report were valuable because they were a reflection of how well the high school was performing.

"We shared the (freshman performance) report with the faculty," Burleson said. "We looked specifically at the number of students needing remediation."

The Freedom High School administration looked closely at the 11th- and 12th-grade literature classes, and made changes to spend more time focusing on the writing process. The school also examined the results of the end-of-course tests and made adjustments accordingly, he said.

Burleson said Freedom High School was slightly above average in comparison to other N.C. high schools. The school is working to add more advanced placement courses to its curriculum and to offer a humanities program aimed at gifted students.

"I think the report is one of the first avenues that's been taken to bridge the gap (between universities and high schools)," Burleson said.

Wayne Thrift, principal of Thomasville Senior High School in Davidson County,

said his school did not make any changes based on the report.

"We're hoping to raise expectations for all students, not just college preparatory students," he said. "We're trying to get the point across to all our students that to be prepared for the work force, they have to have some sort of post-secondary education."

Thrift said his school was remodeling science labs and working to offer more advanced placement courses to students.

Thomasville Senior High School also works closely with the University of North Carolina at Greensboro and local community colleges to offer classes for college credit and more AP courses.

Anthony Parker, principal of Lumberton Senior High School in Robeson County, said he thought his school was doing a good job of educating students for college-level work.

"As far as the upper end of our curriculum, our status compares favorably with any school in the state," Parker said.

Robeson County currently has a low-performance status.

The state considers a school system to be on low-performing status if it fails to pass 75 percent of state indicators of performance, falls in the bottom 23 percent in statewide performance and has a certain drop-out rate. The system has three years to improve, or the state will take over the system.

Robeson County schools went through a rough period five years ago when the county's five school systems merged into one. Parker said Robeson County would go off the low-performing status this year.

"I think the universities are raising expectations. We needed to make our courses more demanding. I think we've done a good job of that."

ANTHONY PARKER
Lumberton Senior High School principal

"I think we've got some outstanding programs and some outstanding high schools here," he said.

One key problem high schools now face is that high school students are expected to meet higher standards for college admission, Parker said.

"The big key is raising expectations," he said. "I think the universities are raising expectations. We needed to make our courses more demanding. I think we've done a good job of doing that."

The Robeson County school system is taking major steps to better prepare its teachers through staff-development programs.

Parker also said he thought that although many high schools offered college preparatory classes, many students did not take advantage of them.

"I think in many cases, it's the fact that the student has not taken the courses offered," he said. "We're not trying to dodge the responsibility, but I think the vast majority of the time, they haven't taken the most demanding courses at the high school."

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at tonight's meeting.

He said he hoped the voice of the students in the proposed referendum would be strong enough to grab the attention of trustees, who will discuss the visitation issue again at its Jan. 28 meeting.

"The BOT decision to rescind the pilot program was essentially a slap in the face of students. The issue is clear cut—at the very least, students ought to be able to decide what their living arrangements should be."

Trustee Annette Wood said she thought the sudden rescinding of the pilot program in November was poorly handled.

CONGRESS

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Last year, congress cut STV's budget, making the upgrading that it wanted to do impossible, Jackson said.

Also on tonight's congress agenda are:

- A consideration to allot \$1,000 to the elections board for the rental of new scanners to be used for UNC ONE Cards due to the elimination of registration cards.
- A consideration to allot \$1,820 to the Students for the Advancement of Race Relations.
- A resolution prohibiting members of Student Congress from receiving a stipend.
- A resolution prohibiting the student body president from receiving a stipend.

Campus Calendar

WEDNESDAY

NOON: Campus Y will present "A Show of Hands" in Polk Place.

7:30 p.m. Rape Action Project will meet in Union 209.

UNCC Pre-Vet Club will meet in 204 Peabody Hall.

8:30 p.m. The Carolina Review will meet in Union 208.

ITEMS OF INTEREST

Campus Y has applications available for 1994-95 officers and co-chairmen. Due Jan. 26.

Elections Board has petitions and election forms for students interested in running for any student government offices outside the Elections Board office in Union Suite C.

The International Center has applications for English conversation partners. Anyone who can meet one hour per week with an international student may apply at the International Center in the Union.

The Honors Office will accept applications from freshmen and sophomores for the honors program until Feb. 4. Applications are available outside 300 Steele Building.

Leadership Development will have applications available for the N.C. African-American Students Leadership Conference. The deadline is Friday.

University Career Services will be open for students who want to register to have UCS send their resumes to internship employers. Come to 211 Hanes Hall until Jan. 31 to register.

Student Health Services is starting a new diabetes support group. Call 966-6562 to enroll.

For the Record

Tuesday's editorial "No More Excuses" left out the bloodmobile that will be held Friday in the Student Union.

The Red Cross will sponsor bloodmobiles from noon to 4:30 p.m. Friday in the Union and from 11:30 a.m. to 4 p.m. in the law school.

The DTH regrets the error.

CIRCUS ROOM

Grand Re-Opening!

Visit the newly renovated Circus Room in Jackson Hall (next to Cobb Dorm).

These prices and specials good only at the Circus Room and while supplies last!

FREE POPCORN!

FREE CAREFREE GUM!

Register through this weekend to WIN fanny packs, back packs & sweatshirts!

No purchase necessary. Limit one registration per person. Drawing will be held Mon., Jan. 24. Winners will be contacted by phone.

GO HEELS!

SPECIAL SNACK IDEALS Under The Big Top!

Coke & Pepsi can drinks 43¢
 Snapple 79¢ Elliott Juices 79¢
 Ocean Spray Juices 79¢

Fountain Coke		Fountain Juice	
12 oz	39¢	12 oz.	69¢
16 oz	49¢	16 oz	79¢
32 oz	59¢	32 oz	99¢

Nuts, fruits & candies only \$3.49 per pound!

CIRCUS ROOM Snack Bar

Mon.-Thurs.	7:30 am-11 pm
Friday	7:30 am- 6 pm
Saturday	10 am-3 pm
Sunday	3 pm-11 pm