



One LSUS student proves to be the cat's meow.
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“Grad guide” offers GRE discount

Malvya Chintakindi
STAFF WRITER

The GRE information and strategy session by *The Princeton Review* held in the Red River room at LSU Shreveport last Friday informed that students could get \$150 off of any course by using ‘Grad guide’ promotion.

The Grad guide consists for codes to coupons and students who sign up to receive those codes can get a discount on whatever courses they choose.

Chelsea Rich, tutor and administrator from *The Princeton Review*, provided information about the GRE, the paper structure, good test taking tips and how Princeton review can help students accomplish their goals.

“It’s probably been a while since they have taken standardized tests like ACT or SAT and may be probably out of practice or not similar it. *Princeton Review* knows their stuff and how to conquer tests. They are really knowledgeable about different test types and how to overcome difficulties,” Rich said on why many students get intimidated and how *The Princeton Review* is the best option.

Rich effectively explained how test taking can be less stressful if planned in advance with good organization to an audience of about fifteen students. After her lecture, students participated in asking questions and clarifying while having free lunch provided by Raising

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Photo by Emily Wright

LSUS students listened to a presentation by Christopher Marlin about the importance of diligence in preventing brain injuries.

ThinkFirst, ask questions later

Emily Wright
STAFF WRITER

The Student Activities Board hosted a ThinkFirst event on April 2 on the third floor of the Noel Memorial Library for students to learn about drinking and driving.

“Our mission is to prevent brain, spinal cord, and other traumatic injuries through education,” said the ThinkFirst speaker Chris Marlin.

Marlin explained to approximately 50 students that the ThinkFirst organization was

founded by a group of American neurosurgeons who saw patients with brain and spinal cord injuries, and wanted to create awareness about the prevention of these injuries.

In order for students to understand the damage that is caused by brain and spinal cord injuries, Marlin briefly discussed what happens to the rest of a person’s body when those particular areas are affected.

“An injury to the brain is called a traumatic brain injury, or TBI for short,” Marlin said. “Spinal cord injury, which can be shortened to SCI, and just like a brain injury, affects

your body based on where the injury occurs on the spinal cord.”

He said that every 21 seconds someone sustains a TBI in America. He continued by saying that there are five million Americans that are disabled from a brain injury. 64 percent of those injuries were from motor vehicle crashes and 53 percent of those were under the influence of alcohol. He also said other causes of TBI and SCI are falling down stairs and playing sports.

Marlin lightened the mood of the room by adding humor and actively involving the

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Spring Fling kicks off Cajun-style at LSUS



Today marks the first day of LSU Shreveport’s annual Spring Fling festivities. This year, the theme celebrates Louisiana’s Cajun heritage.

Student organizations rented tables lining the Mall to sell their wares and advertise their organizations to the students.

This Friday, during Common Hour, students will have the chance to dine on free crawfish. To receive the crawfish, students must present their student IDs.

The *Almagest* will have full coverage of all the Spring Fling festivities in Issue 13, so stay tuned!

Photo by Crystal Vandegriff



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Students still facing parking nightmare



Alexandra Meachum

From the Editor's Desk

It's 7:50 a.m. Class starts in ten minutes. Cars are racing up and down the parking lots desperately seeking out an open space to park. Many are unlucky in the morning quest for parking and end with a place to pull-in that is more than just a 'hop, skip, and jump away.'

One dreaded example could be having a morning class on the fourth floor of BH and parking by the University Center, which is something precedes into a fast-paced walk/run to class that can ultimately lead to a sweaty, late student.

This frantic drive throughout the parking lots without finding an open spot is a situation



The faculty parking lot for Bronson Hall during mid-afternoon class times.

many LSU Shreveport students are all too familiar with. Whether a morning or an afternoon class, the parking lots fill fast and the only free space can be quite a walk away. Most students can handle walking but, while treading over the concrete on a hot day carrying a backpack and bundle of books, cannot help but to gaze at the open, free spaces in



Photos by Alexandra Meachum

The student parking lot for Bronson Hall during mid-afternoon class times.

the faculty's parking lot and wish they could take parking refuge there.

A large amount of faculty parking goes unused. While making loops up and down the lot, it is easy to notice that the open spaces exist and could be utilized by student drivers.

For example, Bronson Hall is one of the busiest lots during the morning, but still for every one in-use parking spot in the faculty lot, two spaces sit empty. With such an arrangement, students naturally begin to wonder why they cannot fill these spaces.

Students are allowed to park in the faculty lot after 5 p.m. but since evening class times usually yield the least amount of travelers, the ability to park there goes unneeded. The high volume of traffic occurs during morning and mid-afternoon class times. It becomes a scenario that unnecessarily amplifies the distance between students and their classes.

If students are able to park in faculty parking after 5p.m., then they should be allowed to park there throughout the day when it would be actually beneficial.

Professors and faculty could still be accord-

ed the parking spaces nearest the buildings, while the unused end-of-row spaces could be repurposed for students, creating a workable parking situation for everyone.

No change would need to be made to the current parking sticker designations, but about half of the faculty parking spaces in high-traffic lots would need to be repainted.

This would cut down on students being a few minutes late to class because of not anticipating how far away they would be parking and how long it takes to walk to class. Less late arrivers benefits both the student and the professor.

Parking problems have plagued the campus and its students for decades now. Archived articles of the *Almagest* dating back to the 1970s reveal early dissatisfaction concerning the issue. Despite the persistent dilemma students face, a clear solution does exist.

Whether LSUS will ever see a change in its parking ordinances is uncertain. It would take an organized effort among student leaders and the administration. Until then, students may continue to gaze at the empty rows without ever accessing them.

Smoke-free campus will be a breath of fresh air

An Almagest at LSUS Guest Editorial

Iris MacLean
STAFF WRITER

The upcoming change to a 100 percent smoke-free campus at LSU Shreveport is a very important and positive one. This change will only benefit each and every person who steps foot on campus coming this fall. Non-smokers will sigh with relief knowing they can cross through walkways and all around campus without having to dodge cigarette smoke. Smokers will benefit from not being able to smoke for at least the time they're on campus, and some may even decide to stop smoking completely with the support of the university.

The American College Health Association urged colleges and universities nation-wide to implement tobacco-free policies in 2005, 2009, and again in 2011 in an effort to reduce the amount of smokers ages 18-24. Following the most recent appeal, LSUS has jumped on board proving that it's a progressive university that cares about its students, faculty, and visitor's health.

According to the American's for Nonsmokers' Rights, as of Jan. 2, 2014 at least 1,182 college

or university campuses in the U.S. have adopted 100 percent smoke-free campuses. The ANR reports that the majority of Americans do not smoke, and everyone deserves the right to live and work in a smoke-free environment. All people stepping foot on the LSUS campus deserve this right because the risks of using tobacco are well documented and there is absolutely no benefit.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), the health risks associated with smoking include asthma, cancer, buegger's disease, chronic obstructive pulmonary disease, diabetes, heart disease, and stroke. Second-hand smoke can cause these health complications as well as first-hand. No one should be forced to walk through a cloud of someone's cigarette smoke as they travel through the walkways to their next class adding to their risk.

By implementing this policy LSUS will be helping the fight to curb tobacco influence on campus. According to the Surgeon General's Report on Tobacco Use Among Youth and Young Adults, many risk factors, including tobacco use, peak from 18-25 years of age. The report also found that progression from occasional to daily

smoking almost always occurs by age 26. By eliminating tobacco on campus, LSUS students will be less tempted to smoke and hopefully challenge these statistics.

According to the Rationale and Implementation Plan For LSUS Tobacco-Free Policy document, LSUS is taking on the responsibility of setting the right example of providing a safe and healthy environment for students, faculty, staff, and visitors. This is a major public university in the area and turns out hundreds of health-professions graduates.

The strong presence of health education at LSUS practically demands the need for a smoke-free campus. It's difficult to not appear hypocritical when students are being taught about health, but they can walk outside and be surrounded by smoke or light up their own cigarette.

The LSUS Simple Tobacco Policy will be implemented Aug. 1, 2014. It will prohibit the use nicotine products anywhere on campus including smoking, oral tobacco, and vapor emitting cigarette substitute. The policy applies to faculty, staff, students, contractors, and visitors.



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Professor turns standard lecture into debate

Corey Drummond
STAFF WRITER

Three people arrived to the weekly College of Arts and Sciences lecture series in the sciences building on April 4. Dr. W. Chris Hale, associate professor of criminal justice, shuffled to the front of the room that could have held 100 people. His lecture on the scheduling of final exams quickly became a debate.

Each of the attendees were professors at LSUS. When five minutes ticked past the initial start of the lecture, it was apparent to them that no students were going to arrive. With a shrug, Hale decided to give the lecture anyway.

The lecture’s title, Turkey Coma, was a reference to the myth that eating turkey makes people sleepy. People would eat too much food on Thanksgiving and immediately feel the need to sleep. Many of these people attributed this feeling to turkey, but this theory has been since debunked by scientists.

Hale intended to raise questions about how the scheduling of final exams directly after Thanksgiving break last semester had a negative impact of exam scores.

“We all remember what happened in Fall 2013. Thanksgiving fell on Nov. 28, 2013 and the final exams fell on the following Monday. I remember going through my course schedule and thinking this can’t be right because I had never seen this before in all my years as a student and professor,” Hale said.

His research revealed in a course examination that average test scores from 2010 to 2012 were consistent, but a noticeable dip occurred in 2013, the year final exams were scheduled after Thanksgiving.

Hale attributed this occurrence to students waiting to study for a final, finish a report, or practice a speech over the break, but then got caught up in the Thanksgiving festivities and time passed too quickly for them to get anything done.

Hale also collected research information from prior experiments on final exams. He admitted that the dip in test scores in 2013 could have resulted from a number of other proven factors, like what classroom an exam is taken in, what part of the week exams are scheduled on, and even an exam’s paper color influences scores.

However, the lecture changed course when Hale said universities are considering, or have already started, disposing of final exams altogether. He mentioned that in an age of social media and search engines, students don’t need to memorize information if it is just a button press away.

Dr. Matyas Buzgo, assistant professor of biological sciences, was one of the professors in attendance. After the idea that final exams will not be relevant to education when



Photo courtesy of Brooke Rinaudo

Dr. Matyas Buzgo, assistant professor of biological sciences

students can use their phones for information was brought into the lecture, he asked a couple of simple questions.

“Isn’t that what an exam does? Isn’t the purpose of an exam to test their factual knowledge?” Buzgo began. “The key point is what is the purpose of a final exam?”

After a long silence, he asked if Hale had anything to elaborate on that note. When he didn’t, Buzgo offered his own interpretation.

”The purpose of an exam is to distinguish the capable students who can move on from the students who cannot move on, but should repeat, and from the students who are absolutely hopeless,” Buzgo said.

He did not agree with the points brought up by Hale in the lecture.

“It does not matter if you have a class in a certain group. It does not really matter so much of what your environment physically is, as long as it is the same for the same class,” Buzgo said. “It doesn’t matter if it is a Tuesday or a Thursday...as long as the entire class, the entire sample you evaluate, takes [the test] the same day.”

The discussion returned to the larger debate about the exams and their function.

“The purpose of an exam is not that all students do better on the exam, otherwise you end up in Lake Wobegon. What you want is a fair evaluation, where you have the good students and the bad students actually reflect the...” Buzgo said, then was interrupted by Hale.

Hale attempted to twist the discussion back to the Turkey Coma lecture. The two LSUS professors talked over each other briefly, each trying to control the direction of the debate. The lecture ended with a regurgitation of the material.

Not many conclusions were made regarding the lecture. More testing is needed to determine if scheduling exams affects scores. Once there was nothing more to say, Buzgo darted out of the room, followed by the rest of the audience soon after.

Hale intends to track the test scores of 2014 along with the scheduling dates for the exams in case the trend continues.

THINK cont.

students by asking them questions.

He then discussed the importance of wearing a seatbelt and showed a video of what happens in a vehicle when someone is not wearing a seatbelt.

In addition, he stressed that distracted driving, such as texting, is also dangerous, just like drinking and driving and the consumption of drugs.

After discussing the dangers of distracted driving, he showed another video that was about ten minutes long, which explored the various risks associated with texting and driving and the negative impacts involved.

Toward the end of the presentation, Marlin introduced a guest speaker, Kimberly Simmons, to talk to the students about her personal experiences with drinking and driving.

Simmons was in a car wreck on December 20, 2006 after drinking at a birthday party and driving herself and a friend home.

“My car literally went underneath a parked train and came out the other end,” Simmons said.

With numerous injuries sustained from the crash, the most serious injury was her broken spinal cord. Her friend had only a few scratches. Simmons needed therapy several

times a week for seven months and had to re-learn basic movements. She said she was able to go back to school and graduate, and has been a nurse at LSU Health Shreveport for six years.

The ThinkFirst presentation urged students to do just that and consider the consequences of the actions that they take. Tiffany Christaw, senior, education and political science, said that the guest speaker and video were intense. She added that she doesn’t drink and drive, but has texted, which is just as bad, so she is going to make a personal commitment to put away her phone while driving.

GRE cont.



Photo by Malvy Chintakindi

Chelsea Rich from The Princeton Review giving the lecture.

Canes.

A few students took practice tests a day before the session to get a better understanding of its material.

“We took the practice test yesterday and we came to get our scores and see where we stand and get some test strategies for next time. I feel like I have a starting point and this seminar helped me understand what better I need to work on,” said Kaitlyn Guillot, senior, community health and pre-physical therapy.

The session was a success due to the efforts of the Assistant Director of Student Development SaraMargaret Mladenka to increase the presence of *The Princeton Review* on campus.

“We have an on-going great relationship with *The Princeton Review* and we always want to come up with something new and different. This not only to help students but also to open their eyes that this is not something to take lightly; that are there these services for a reason because many students need help and its okay. So we decided to make everything available for them,” Mladenka said.

LSUS may partner with *The Princeton Review* to set up classes on campus for students interested in taking the GRE. However, it heavily relies on how many students actually sign up for those classes and how many are from the area.

“It depends on whenever students sign up and we can coordinate to get it going. It would be easier for students to perform their best,” Mladenka said.

For more information, students can go to the Student Development Center and *The Princeton Review* website.



Photos courtesy of Reed Ebarb

A cat in need of a home, at the time of publication, housed in the Shreveport-Bossier Animal Rescue.

LSUS student helps cats find the purr-fect home

Alexandra Meachum
MANAGING EDITOR-PRINT

Reed Ebarb just turned 20 but has no time to celebrate. At 19, he co-founded the Shreveport-Bossier Animal Rescue, a non-profit organization that works to provide shelter and adoption for stray cats. Volunteers find the furry felines trying to survive on the streets or in shelters facing euthanasia and provide a safe place for the cats to live, with added medical care, while vigorously seeking homes.

“I used to be a kennel worker at PetSavers of Shreveport and moved my way up to manager,” Ebarb said. “[I then] decided to leave and start my own because I thought I could do it better.”

While working an average of 70 hours a week as the chief executive officer of the nonprofit organization, he also attends LSU Shreveport as a junior finance major.



Reed Ebarb, a junior finance major at LSUS, and the chief executive officer of the Shreveport-Bossier Animal Rescue

Tucked away on the seventh floor of the Regions Tower building located in downtown Shreveport, Ebarb works out of a small office with two other volunteers. Their efforts can be seen hanging along the walls of their office—white-

boards display information about the different cats under their care and photos of people who have successfully made an adoption.

“There was no cat rescue in Northwest Louisiana so we have a complete niche in that market,” Ebarb explained. “In 2013, three cat rescues were started and mine is the only one that was able to survive.”

The organization, now 11 months old, raised close to \$25,000 in its first nine months of operation. The administrative office is where planning and operations are performed, and records of their intakes and outtakes of cats are kept. Volunteers also work as “field specialists” and go out to look for homeless cats in order to bring into the rescue shelter.

Ebarb said about half of where they get the cats are through “owner surrenders” and the other half comes from “high-kill shelters,” such as the Bossier City Animal Control. In 2012 about 2,600 cats were euthanized in Bossier City and 4,479 in Caddo Parish, mostly due to a lack of space.

The Shreveport-Bossier Animal Rescue stands proudly as a “no-kill rescue service.”

“When you go to the shelters every week and start seeing all the ones that are about to be put to sleep, it pushes you to work that much harder to try and save their lives,” Ebarb said.

The organization even offers a “foster a cat” program, which allows a person to temporarily house a cat until a permanent home is found.

“It’s definitely an emotionally-driven job and you have to walk a lot of fine lines between saving more lives and the business side of things,” Ebarb said.

Ebarb is not just a creator of a tenderhearted organization that works to help powerless animals, he also considers himself a savvy entrepreneur.

“There’s a lot of politics in rescue,” he said, explaining that he often must weigh between what he knows what needs to be done, compared to what the donors want to see done. “You have to be very skilled at walking these very tight ropes.”

Fundraising is pivotal part of the organization’s responsibilities and is vital in keeping them up and running. Donations can be given directly to their website or mailed to their location. Ebarb said items such as carriers, litter, food, blankets, and gift cards to PetCo or Walmart are always

greatly wanted and appreciated.

As a Greenwood native and Byrd High School graduate, Ebarb does not just stop at leading a nonprofit. He also sits on the Citizens Animal Service Committee, which is currently seeking to change outdated ordinance laws. For example, Ebarb points to one Caddo Parish law that allows for no legal repercussions for chaining-up dogs outside despite any conditions they may be suffering under.

“He just never stops working,” said Ray Smith, junior, political science. Smith was the Shreveport-Bossier Animal Rescue’s first adopter and took home a kitten to give to his mom for Mother’s Day.

With a sigh, Ebarb explained his future plans for himself and the organization.

“We just want to keep growing in capacity,” he said, referring to their growth from one “foster rep” to 18-20 supporting the facility. The rescue that began with five cats has increased to about 50-60 cats under care at any time.



Reed Ebarb with his fellow volunteer rescuers.

Any LSUS student can get involved to help volunteer. The organization is currently “in desperate need of a photographer” to take photos of the different kitty companions that still need a home. To adopt, donate, or find out more log on to <http://www.shreveportbossieranimalrescue.org/>.