

Students rarely take advantage of experience gained from extracurricular activities

By **ARLO HALL**
Guest Columnist

Throughout my Vol State experience, I have made every effort possible to not be involved in extracurricular activities. I've denied several invitations to write for both student publications, stopped going to writing groups (which I thoroughly enjoyed, by the way) after only one meeting, and even actively avoided people (both students and faculty) for the express purpose of not doing work for them. And to them, I apologize.

Why is it that I don't involve myself? That I actively uninvolve myself from any sort of extra-curricular work? Honestly, I couldn't really tell you, outside of the jittery and intensely awkward feeling I experience as soon as I sit at my computer to do the work. And for those of you who wonder why I don't push this computer over and run from the room right now, I can only answer that lack of sleep has slowed my reaction time. So now we wait. And we acknowledge this race against the

clock, this race against my own natural defensive mechanisms which are slowly catching up to me. I suspect that I am not the only student here who experiences this problem. If I weren't, then anyone who got an A in English 1010 should be in the Student Pub right now, writing alongside me. Anyone who got an A in math should be in the math lab right now, making money and helping educate their fellow students. But they aren't.

The only logical step to take from this realization—that the majority of students aren't living up to their full potential on this campus—is to ask why? What can the college do to make extracurricular activities more appealing? Is the advertising lacking? Are the possible monetary—both in the form of payment (with the math lab) or in the form of scholarships—rewards not sufficient? While it is true that many students don't realize this school has a publication (two, in fact), I suspect that it is not lack of advertising or incentive that causes this student apathy.

Perhaps it is pure laziness.

Some may say today's generation doesn't realize the value of education or of the opportunities afforded them. And that may, to some extent, be true.

To defend the students, though, some say that the world is faster paced now. The majority of our students work (some full time) and between that, family, and school work, people's energy can be spread relatively thin. But I don't really buy that. Other people make the time to do this. So the question is, why don't more people do it?

My ultimate opinion on the subject is that the overall perception of these extracurricular activities is that they are unimportant, stuck in students' proverbial peripheral perception. And that isn't the fault of the students, or of the math or writing lab, or of the student publications.

It's ultimately no-one's fault.

Students don't make enough genuine effort to be involved, but why should they? The college might not put enough emphasis on

these programs but until there is significant student support, but why should they?

No matter how much funding the programs get, no matter how much attention is put upon them, it won't be enough until there is genuine competition to be on the writing staff or to be a math tutor. So I challenge the students of this college to make extracurricular activities a priority for the existing hierarchy. I challenge members of faculty to push students into appropriate programs for their natural talents.

These spots will be competitive at four year universities, and as Vol-State's overall objective is to prepare our students for their respective university environments, then let's not neglect those activities which do not necessarily count as class credit or towards anything outside of an elective but do serve to expand the preparedness for students looking beyond this campus.

Arlo Hall is an honors student at Vol State.

Advising Center gives tips on time management

By **WHITNEY UPTON**
& **TERRY BUBB**
Guest Columnist

With the onset of a new college semester, time management seems to be an appropriate topic of conversation. For some of you, this is your first semester in college.

For others, you have done this all before, and yet you still may struggle with accomplishing all the tasks you want or need to finish. So, what do you do with only 24 hours in a day?

One of the best lessons a person can learn early in college or work is how to prioritize what has to be done and what can wait.

For many students, there is not just a balancing act of homework and a social life, there is the trade-off of dealing with work hours, children and a significant other. Not everyone is the same. There are many different demands on each student here at Vol State.

One way to help determine what can wait until later and what has to be done now is to buy or create your own calendar.

If you can write out all of your tests and assignments, your children's soccer matches, and when you have to take your spouse to the airport, you can get a better picture of what is truly pressing on your time. By looking at what needs to happen today, tomorrow, next week and two months from now, you can begin to relieve some of the stress in your life due to a lack of time management.

So, what about all that stuff that just manages to fill a day? A great deal of our time is taken up with little tasks and activities that either come from out of nowhere or are just tedious. Sitting in traffic is a big problem.

But how about if you quiz yourself on the terms you need to know for your biology class while you are stuck in traffic? While you wait on your date to

finish getting ready or to pick you up, you could re-read your history notes.

Every little bit of time adds up. Think of it this way: we blame so much of our lost time on all of these little problems like traffic, cleaning the house or waiting on our friends to call us back – take charge of that time and make it work for you, not against you.

Use the vacuuming of the house as a study break. Use that walk across campus to review what your professor just discussed in class. Consolidate many of your mundane activities into manageable tasks. If you are able to scatter them throughout your week, you may not notice them as much.

Finally, for more time management tips or other help and advice, try this website: <http://www.lib.umn.edu/help/calculator/> which will link you to a great resource at the University of Minnesota. This site will help you gauge work on various papers and projects throughout the semester by

providing an "assignment calculator".

You can also take a look at <http://www.studygs.net/> to get a large number of studying ideas and tips provided by the University of Saint Thomas.

Or, simply stop by and see one of the Advisor/Counselors in Ramer 174 from 8:00 a.m. until 4:30 p.m. Monday through Friday or in Wood 210 from 4:30 p.m. until 7:30 p.m. Monday through Thursday. We are here to help.

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