

THE SPECTRUM

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Cottey enrollment tops expectations, Rogers optimistic for future increase

By Barbora Batokova
Editor

For the first time in three years, Cottey College can announce an increase in enrollment of 17.8% with 191 incoming first-year students. Added to the 115 returning students, Cottey College now boasts 306 full-time students, exceeding its goal of acquiring 300 new students to reach 300 total for this year.

Upon assuming the presidency, Judy R. Rogers, Ph.D., set a goal of achieving full enrollment of 350 students in three years. Seeing last academic year's success, she reset the goal to two years, meaning Cottey College should meet full capacity by the next academic year.

According to Rogers, the incoming class is a "wonderfully talented group of women" with an average GPA score of 3.42 on a 4.0 scale.

The current student body represents 39 states and 14 countries, with Missouri as the state with the highest enrollment of 33 students. Right after comes Texas with 23 students, Washington with 21 students and Kansas with 19 students. The international scene is dominated by Japan with 12 students and Bulgaria with 7 students.

"It wasn't easy," commented Marjorie Cooke, the Cottey College dean of enrollment management, and added that "everybody worked hard." Cooke and others from the Enrollment Management staff agree that Rogers was a big inspiration for everyone involved in recruitment.

The planning started during the summer of 2004, when the

Presidents' Council, along with Rogers, decided how much attention was needed on national, regional and local level. The college then hired the firm Noel-Levitz, the premiere consulting firm in the area of enrollment and student success, to help refine the techniques the college used. The firm also introduced new managing software and a web site for prospective students called "Admissions Genie."

According to Cooke, "relationships were key." The college focused on smaller groups of students and aimed at a greater contact between those groups and the college, which meant to incorporate various groups of people into the enrollment effort.

Apart from the work done by the enrollment management staff of seven people, Cottey started tele-recruiting and e-pals programs that both aimed at building relationships between current and prospective students.

Current students, including the Golden Keys and other volunteers, then ended up talking on the phone, e-mailing back and forth, chatting in the chat-rooms of the newly-created site; and sending postcards, letters, Valentine's cards, and notes to the prospective students to help the college pursue its goal.

Faculty also include their effort and made personalized phone calls to students and sent e-mails.

Furthermore, P.E.O.s and alumnae were asked to help contacting new students and providing information to them. The college visited 23 state P.E.O. conventions to create a greater presence among the P.E.O.s and to explain Rogers' vision.



The college, in an effort to keep in touch with the prospective students, sent 96,597 letters and e-mails during the last academic year.

Apart from being largely successful in their enrollment efforts, the college also managed to increase the retention rate of current students to 80%, compared to last year's 75%.

One of the goals set by Rogers for next year is to bring the retention rate up to 83%. To satisfy this goal, Cottey College will aim at improving student life and learning opportunities for students.

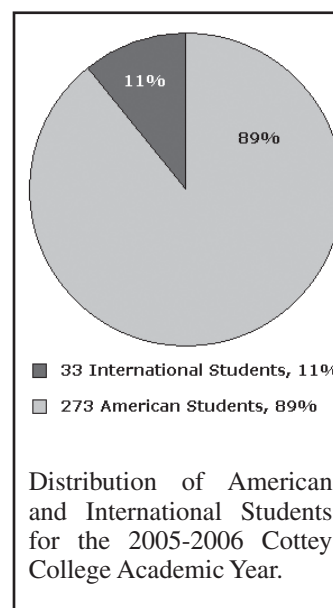
According to Cooke, Rogers and Mary Kitterman, the vice president of Academic Affairs,

are also looking into expanding Cottey's offering of summer courses.

Apart from improving specific areas, Rogers believes that Cottey College has the responsibility of giving general support to its students, if it has the ability to provide it. This, in her belief, will play a huge part in reaching the set retention rate.

The goal set by Rogers for future years is to demonstrate that the college can sustain enrollment of 350 students.

After that, Rogers doesn't deny that she would like Cottey to expand, but as she said, the question that needs to be asked is "What is the ideal size for Cottey?"



Controversial play stirs up emotions on campus

By Kathleen Miller
Staff Writer

On Thursday, Sept. 1, at 5:45 p.m. in Raney Dining Hall, a demonstration against censorship and infringement of the First Amendment was announced to the Cottey student body. The protest came about after rumors of a possible administration-imposed cancellation of the fall Cottey theater production, "Short Attention Span Theater."

The reason behind the controversy on campus was the play's use of sexual references and a four-letter word that begins with an f.

Once the actresses and enthusiasts of the Cottey theater community heard the rumors, the demonstration moved into full swing. Mary Oliff, president of Delta Psi Omega, the theater honor society, was one of many D.P.O. officers on stage that night.

"The demonstration was to raise awareness. It wasn't about names. It wasn't a personal issue. It was purely business," said Oliff.

Although D.P.O. didn't start the demonstration, it was decided in a meeting of the society that its members would fully support it. In Oliff's mind, the first issue was that Student Life administration was attempting to infringe on the students' right to artistic expression.

Secondly, a compromise was being worked out between administration officials and theater professors, without any say from the students it would affect.

The speech at the demonstration stressed the point that if students allowed administration to tell them they didn't have a say in this particular matter, it would be harder for students to stand up for themselves later. The speakers used extreme examples of possible administration impositions in the future, including taking away theater altogether, taking away music and art department, and imposing a silent dinner policy.

"I didn't really believe these things were a possibility," said Oliff. "They just helped get people's attention, to make a point that any infringement of student rights is wrong."

As the rumors and stories morphed and grew over the weekend, a proposed compromise was awaiting official approval. The approval was expected to come on Monday morning, due to Dean of Academic Affairs. Mary Kitterman's unavailability the previous week. The compromise was made between the play's director, Michael Denison, associate professor of theatre and speech, and Mari Anne Phillips, dean of Student Life.

An e-mail message on Monday morning from Kitterman made it official. The compromise hashed out the Thursday and Friday before was a "done deal."

"I don't think there was ever a chance that the play wouldn't be performed," commented Dr. Dyke Kiel, Fine



Photo by Kathleen Miller

Kari Beattie and Tiffany Paulie, both second-year students, rehearse a scene from the controversial play 'Short Attention Span' that is to be performed in the Haidee and Allen Wild Center for the Arts on Sept. 29 and 30.

Arts Division chair. Although Kiel had no direct action in the compromise, he acted as a facilitator throughout the discussion. "I'm just happy they worked it all out."

When the compromise was made official and announced to the students involved in the play Monday night, the protest ended.

"Short Attention Span Theater" is a collection of plays chosen by Denison and written by current American playwrights, Christopher Durang and David Ives. Denison read through five books of plays and chose the ones he thought were the funniest, fit well together and were most relevant to Cottey students. The short plays cover a variety of topics including interactions between men and women at parties, friends discussing the idea of lesbianism, and teenage pregnancy. According to Denison, "the plays are mostly funny. There is one serious one, but for the most part, it is humor covering important topics."

The show was originally scheduled to open on Friday, Sept. 30, and show twice on Saturday, Oct. 1, during

Family Weekend. Because the play was to be performed as the main entertainment during family weekend, the issue became whether or not the play was suitable to show to an audience that may contain young children. Two of the plays use the F-word at least once, and the show as a whole covers "mature content" such as sexual relationships, sexual orientation and murder. Thus, the administration decided that if it wasn't appropriate for all ages, it wasn't appropriate for Family Weekend.

As a compromise, the play will be performed twice, instead of three times. The play will open on Thursday, Sept. 29, and show again on Friday, Sept. 30. Because Friday is the first night of Family Weekend, a showing of Disney's "The Pacifier" will be available to guests at the same time in Lower Hinkhouse. The posters advertising the play to the public will be printed with a disclaimer saying, "NOTICE: Mature Language and Subject Matter." According to Denison, the posters were going to include a disclaimer even before the issue of Family Weekend ever came up.

"I'm upset about it, but I understand their point of view. In theory, administration agrees that the play should be performed in its original form. But, it is family weekend and there could be young children running around. If it were any other weekend, it would not have been an issue," said Denison.

According to Dean Mary Anne Phillips, the student life administration first caught wind of a possible problem when a portion of the play was performed at the Student Activities Expo. A few staff members, including Phillips, became concerned about the content of the play because it was scheduled to run during Family Weekend.

"The issue wasn't that the students were performing the play, it was that Family Weekend is promoted as an event for all ages. Some of the content in the production is definitely not suitable for young children; therefore, it was decided that it wasn't appropriate entertainment for Saturday night."

Phillips agreed that theater productions are an important part of Family Weekend because they give a chance for the guests of those involved with the play to see it, but she also feels that by cutting the performances to two shows, it will give the actresses time to spend with their visitors on Saturday. This is why the play is still being performed on Friday night.

According to Phillips, because Denison and Student Life worked together on the solution, the situation is resolved and the compromise meets everyone's needs in the best way possible. That is the standpoint of administration; there are, however, people who feel that their needs weren't met, and that the best interest of the theater program and its actors were not taken into consideration.

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Chellie Club: changing staff and style

By Sarah Petras
Staff Writer

At the conclusion of the 2004/2005 academic year, the Cottey College faculty and administration held a meeting to discuss the past year. According to Michael Richardson, director of food service, Mari Anne Phillips, dean of student life, read an e-mail concerning Chellie and its employees. Complaints had been made all year about the student staff regarding courtesy, punctuality, and sanitary conditions.

Richardson also said that throughout the year, Food Service had been receiving similar complaints.

A great deal of the complaints came from the hall staff regarding paperwork that hadn't been filled out in the financial aid office and about the poor leadership from the previous seniors.

As a result, Richardson said that the best solution to the problem was to start Chellie this year with a whole new staff and supervisor. He added that the problems were caused by poor and, at times, absent management. "It wasn't the student staff's fault. They were poorly trained," he said.

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