



# New curriculum instates weight loss

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**By: DIVA RESCIA, staff writer**

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No longer are students going to school solely for academics, but to focus on healthy living as well.

The Academy of the Sierras, a residential treatment school for people ages 11 to 24, enacted a health program at its Reedley, Calif. location that focuses on overweight college students losing weight.

"I think it would be nice to involve a weight loss [program], and I think the program would be of great interest to the faculty and staff as well," said Dr. Thomas Spalding, interim department chair of kinesiology and health promotion.

The AOS program is the first college program designed for overweight students. Students are still engaged in regular courses such as business and statistics but also concentrate on increasing healthy habits.

"I do not think it's a bad idea to have this program offered at Cal Poly, but it seems quite expensive and the school is already hurting for money," said Garrett Petry, a peer health educator at the Wellness Center and sixth-year sports medicine student.

Students enrolled in the program live on facility grounds, making it easier for them to commit to reaching their goals.

"If there was a private residential weight loss facility near a college and the people in treatment were college-aged, then I think it would be wonderful for those people to be able to take college courses while they are getting treatment," said Carla Jackson, a Master of Public Health educator.

The program focuses on helping students to get into a more active lifestyle. Individuals are expected to attend the program for at least one semester.

"I think that having the weight loss class is a good idea," said Lisa Luna, a fourth-year communication student. "So many incoming freshmen are not used to living on their

own, and I think these classes are a great way to inform them to make healthier choices."

College students, although young, face the dangers of genetic problems such as cholesterol or diabetes.

"I do not have statistics, but I suspect students have weight control problems within the state and nation and it is reflected among the student body, and it should serve as a goal to losing weight," said Spalding.

Students' risks become higher if they do not exercise. However, busy schedules make it difficult for students to fit in the additional time to hit the gym.

"I know that lots of students gain weight during their first year at college, and I was one of those students," said Karen Jonas, a fourth-year communication student. "I have not been able to get the weight off, which is mainly due to stress and bad time management."

Many students develop poor nutritional habits because they are so busy with school and work and they do not have the time to cook on a daily basis. Their alternative is to consume fast food a couple days of the week with their busy lifestyles.

"Obesity is a big issue in our country because there are many fast food restaurants that grab most students' attention and directs them to buy unhealthy food," said Anabel Artiaga, a fourth-year communication student.