

FAMU's Honor Students Caught in Registration Chaos

Contributed by Jordan Culver -- Black College Wire
Friday, 22 January 2010

Scholarship money not received on time

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Honor students at Florida A&M University currently suffer behind red tape, loopholes and four-hour long lines in the Grand Ballroom.

Students under varying scholarships, the ones the school works the hardest to maintain, are also the ones wading through the most problems during the first few weeks of school.

The main problem stems from students not receiving their scholarship money on time. The lack of promised funds from the university leaves students with "cashier's holds" on their accounts. The holds are what can prevent a student from registering until the university can rectify the mistake or until the student pays a substantial amount on their own.

Many students were afraid to speak out for fear of the university "messing with [their] money too."

"What's basically happened was something messed up with my FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). However, when I went to my scholarship advisor to look at it, she told me just to sit back and wait," said Ulyssa Hester, 19, from Stone Mountain, Ga. "When we finally looked at it in October we realized something was wrong. But I went to go see her in August to get her to look at it first."

The oversight left Hester struggling to register throughout the first week of school. She was not alone, as lines stretched out the door for days in the financial aid office, the cashier's office and in the Grand Ballroom where students were trying to register late for class.

The situation in the Grand Ballroom was nothing short of chaos.

The people at the start of the line had no idea where the end of the line was. Students cut in front of others with threats of violence.

"This is totally insane," said Leah Parker, 18, a freshman from Tallahassee. "I thought FAMU wanted me here. I have a scholarship and I'm waiting in line for three hours so I can have one more class. And this is after I waited in line an hour to remind FAMU I was on scholarship in the first place."

Other honor students in the line shared similar sentiments. Last Friday, violence broke out in the line itself, leaving students frustrated.

The feeling of rejection left many students scratching their heads as to why these problems could not be rectified sooner. Student accounts advised students to be on the lookout for anything on their "iRattler" account that seemed strange.

Students can check the "To-do" list, to view holds and make sure scholarships are posted to accounts.

"There were about two months and some change where something could have been done," Hester said. "My time was wasted. It would have taken about five minutes if she would have just checked in August."

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Jordan Culver writes for The Famuan, the Florida A&M University student newspaper, which originally published this article.