March 2008 • Campus Activities  Campus activities help students develop a sense of community and build positive relationships with their peers, which studies have shown to enhance students’ persistence, academic success and satisfaction with their educational experiences. This month we look at students’ involvement on campus and the effects of their participation. We’ll also share information on resources offered by Student Affairs and Academic Support professionals.

Most students are involved on campus  Seventy-one percent of students who responded to a 2007 survey said that they participate in campus events or activities. Some students reported active participation and further involvement at the leadership level.

Students agree that campus activities allow them to make connections  Of students who responded to a 2006 PACS survey, almost 53 percent said that they strongly agreed that participating in campus activities allowed them to connect with other students. Thirty-nine percent of students strongly agreed that campus activities allowed them to connect with faculty and staff.

Campus involvement leads to healthier habits for students  Of students who responded to a 2007 survey, almost 35 percent said that their overall health, including fitness and eating habits, had improved because of their involvement in campus activities. Students also agreed that other areas of wellness had improved.

Students participate in a variety of activities  Whether it’s community service, Greek organizations or performing arts, students are participating in a variety of campus activities.

Many students involved in athletics and other physical activities  In a recent survey, almost 80 percent of students reported attending, participating or having leadership positions in athletics, including varsity, club or intramural teams.

In another recent survey, almost 64 percent of students reported exercising or participating in physical fitness activities.
Resources to help make our students better students

Russell House University Union  
www.sa.sc.edu/rhuu
The Russell House is the student center at the University of South Carolina. In addition to the University Bookstore and Grand Market Place dining area, it houses offices for student activities and organizations. A few of these offices include:

Student Involvement and Leadership: Through this office, students can get involved in community service programs, leadership programs and Carolina Productions, the campus activities organization.

Student Government: This organization serves to enhance all aspects of student life at the University. Students involved with student government can participate in campus-wide service projects and work to improve campus safety initiatives, among other activities.

Student Media: This office provides students the opportunity to gain media experience through several outlets, including “The Daily Gamecock” newspaper, “Garnet & Black” magazine, SGTV and WUSC-FM.

Campus Recreation  
http://campusrec.sc.edu
Campus Recreation offers recreational programs and services such as intramural sports, sport clubs and outdoor recreation opportunities to the University’s students, faculty and staff. Among the office’s programs are group exercise classes, which have become increasingly popular. Last fall, more than 1,300 people purchased group exercise passes.

Office of Multicultural Student Affairs  
www.sa.sc.edu/omsa
The Office of Multicultural Student Affairs offers a variety of support services, diversity education initiatives and multicultural programs. The programs coordinated through the office focus on the development of all South Carolina students, and they seek to promote an accepting environment and foster an appreciation for all students’ differences.

Each year, the office sponsors a diversity retreat for students interested in examining the meaning and value of diversity and ways to incorporate it into student organizations. The office also advises student organizations, including SAVVY, a multicultural female student organization, and the Association of African-American Students (AAAS), one of the largest student organizations at the University.

Greek Life  
www.sa.sc.edu/greeklife
The Office of Greek Life advises Greek-letter organizations and serves as a liaison among the collegiate chapters, parents, alumni, national and international organizations and the University.

Greek life offers students opportunities to get involved with social, leadership and service activities, including Greek Week, Sorority and Fraternity Councils and Dance Marathon.

Students involved in Greek life consistently achieve higher GPAs than non-Greeks. Last fall, the average GPA for sorority members was 3.36, compared with non-Greek females’ GPA of 3.15.

Comments
Your comments and suggestions for future issues of “Causerie” are welcome. Please e-mail studentaffairs@mailbox.sc.edu.