The lights in the student showroom are turned off, creating a cascade of shadows enveloping the mannequins, which so elegantly model bright fabrics and original fashion designs. The bronze doorknob that allows entrance is locked, but the creativity of fashion is still viewable through the floor-length windows.

The hallway is narrow with a new coat of white paint, which makes the nine drawings of a home’s interior stand out against the dull surface.

Christine Orza, an interior merchandising major, is clutching her cell phone in her hand after another attempted phone call went unanswered. She paces back and forth, critiquing the drawings along the wall, before sitting down facing the showroom. Her T-shirt reveals Greek letters, marking her to a sorority. She lets out an exasperated sigh.

**NUT GRAF:** Orza suffers from the stress of her course workload, extracurricular activities and the expectations placed on her by the university and her sorority house. She is continually trying to manage her stress level, while often suffering the side effects stress can bring.

“Two weeks before spring break, I had two tests and a project due,” Orza said. “I was also trying to find an internship. That’s the most stressful- trying to find an internship and balancing school.”

The design, housing and merchandising department requires students of all majors to complete an internship the summer after their junior year. If they fail to do so, they are not allowed to graduate.

Orza said she was attempting to contact a person for a possible internship earlier, explaining her previous frustration.

“I’ve had one interview and spoken with four companies,” Orza said. “I’m sure an internship will come out of one of those, it just hasn’t happened.”

She is in the sorority Kappa Delta, which takes about five hours of her time each week. Various events are required of the members to attend throughout each semester.

“I try not to procrastinate when I have events and projects due around the same time,” Orza said. “I’ve pulled all-nighters and it was not good. Anytime I’ve pulled all-nighters to study, it was not beneficial.”

She said at times it seems that professors expect too much from her, but she is able to see the payoff in hind-sight.

“Looking back at classes that were the most stressful, they just helped me,” Orza said.

When asked how she balances both sorority and school, Orza said that time management is key.

“I’ve taken 16 to 18 hours each semester for the last three semesters,” she said. “I just have to give a little time for everything and try not to get stressed.”

She said working out, going home for the weekend or doing something outside of the sorority usually helps relieve stress if she becomes too overwhelmed.

“I play golf,” she said. “My family is really big on golf, but I just don’t have a lot time with the sorority.”

As a junior, Orza said that over the last two years her responsibilities have changed drastically; therefore, increasing her stress level.

“Oh my gosh, high school was not stressful at all,” she said. “College is one step from the real world and it’s preparing you for your life.”

Orza said that while she is mostly stressed, the activities she chooses to do are beneficial in the long run.

“It all pays off,” she said. “Being in a sorority will be a good networking tool for the future, and having the stress of school, in the long run, will bring more success to my life.”

Contact:

Christine Orza

Interior merchandising junior

405-326-9180