

THE LIBERATOR

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE LIBERAL ARTS COUNCIL
UNIVERSITY OF TEXAS AT AUSTIN | **MARCH 4, 2013** | ISSUE 7

ARE WE
READY?

LIFE BEYOND
THE 40 ACRES

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MARCH 2013

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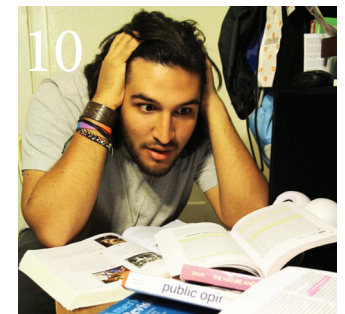
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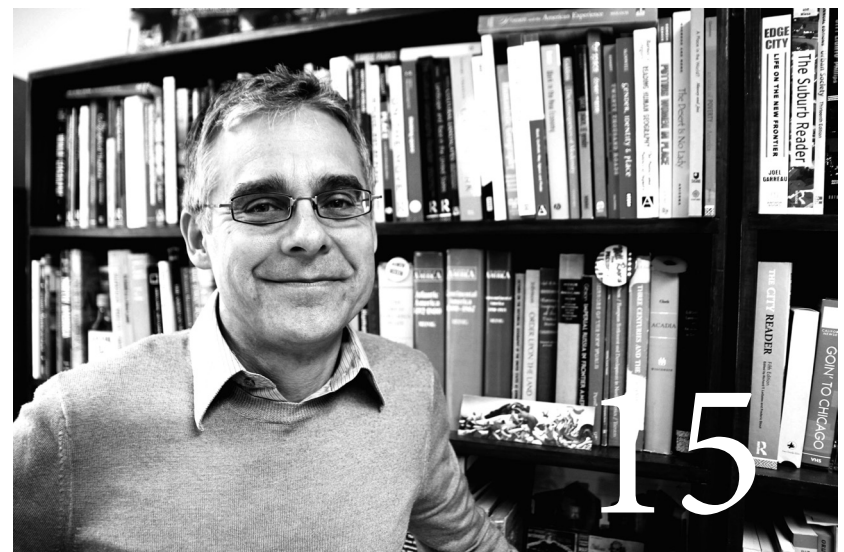
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WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU

Love it? Hate it? Let us know! Letters to the editor reviewing articles from this issue will be printed in the next edition of *THE LIBERATOR*.

THE LIBERATOR is the official publication of The Liberal Arts Council. As a liberal arts-focused news magazine, we aim to keep students connected to the university through updates on legislation, campus affairs and student life. All questions, comments and concerns can be directed to THE LIBERATOR at:

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LEGISLATIVE STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

DEBUNKING If all the signs and flyers across campus, especially on the west mall haven't made it obvious enough, it's student election season. The declining trend in turnout for student elections seems to suggest student apathy. In the spring 2011 elections, voter turnout was about 22% and that figure has since declined. After all the chaos surrounding these events just a year ago, it is understandable that some people may be put off by all things student elections. However, this shouldn't detract students like you from caring about or becoming involved with Student Government or any of the other Legislative Student Organizations (LSOs).

There are three LSOs at UT. Two of these, Student Government and the Senate of College Councils, represent the whole student body, and one of them represents graduate students, the Graduate Student Assembly. Each has made substantial contributions to your life as a Longhorn.

Student Government, Senate, and the Graduate Student Assembly (GSA) also combine forces to lead the Invest in Texas campaign, also a student initiative. As a public university, a lot of what gets decided down at the capitol directly impacts the operations of our university. Invest in Texas provides an avenue for us, as students, to make sure our opinions are taken into account when decisions about our university are made. The best part is that it is open to all students.

Together, all these organizations provide a lot of the things we appreciate at UT and none of these things

would exist if it weren't for us students. These were projects we initiated because they were things we saw a need for, and the LSOs helped make it possible. Students are empowered by Student Government, Senate, and GSA. These organizations provide access to administrators, resources, and advice needed to accomplish these things.

While election season may be off-putting, that is not all there is to Student Government, Senate, or GSA. All of the aforementioned "amenities," for lack of a better word, are the result of the combined efforts of dedicated students. Students passionate about making their university the best it can be. These students are the only way to ensure that the future of these organizations is as bright as their past. They also depend on you. You voting. You going to a meeting and sharing your opinion. You running for a position. You applying for a non-elected position. You getting your friends to do the same.

Things like preventing those pesky parking meters West Campus from sprouting up are only possible with student involvement. If students stop caring, the same passion and dedication that gave us an SAC and CTBACs is lost and the organizations risk becoming obsolete. A government is only as strong as its people. If we as students don't care about student issues, who will? No one better understands our needs, our wants, and our experiences better than we do. So the next time you're debating whether or not to vote in student elections, just do it. ■ DANA HENNING

MISSIONS OF THE LEGISLATIVE STUDENT ORGANIZATIONS

Student Government:

Our mission is to earnestly represent the interests of students, to preserve and protect the traditions and legends of the University, and to support students and student organizations in their academic and community endeavors.

Senate of College Councils:

Since 1973, the Senate has served as the official voice for students in academic affairs at The University of Texas at Austin. Senate works to represent the needs, concerns and opinions of students through the 20 College Councils.

Graduate Student Assembly:

GSA is the principal body for the representation of graduate student interests on campus. Members serve on a variety of important committees across campus to ensure that graduate issues are being communicated and addressed.

THANKS TO STUDENT GOVERNMENT YOU HAVE:

E-Bus Service Provides fare-free transportation to Sixth Street Thursday through Saturday nights from 8:30 pm to 3:00 am. Put together in 2002, this was a joint venture between Student Government, Capital Metro, Parking and Transportation Services, and the Austin Police Department.

Hook the Vote Student-led agency aimed at increasing voter registration and providing voter education at UT.

University Budget Council Student Government worked to get a student seat on this Council responsible for institutional-level budget planning at the university.

Student Activity Center The SAC serves as the student home on campus, offering an array of meeting spaces, study areas, and food options.

Longhorn Run The proceeds from the only 10K on the Forty Acres go to the Excellence Fund, an endowment for student projects and programming.

THANKS TO SENATE OF COLLEGE COUNCILS YOU HAVE:

College Tuition and Budget Advisory Committees (CTBACs) Created in April 2010, these are student committees "designed to bridge the gap between students and administrators" in each college with regard to budgetary issues affecting the university.

SenaTea Open discussions, over tea and refreshments, on various student issues where students can interact with university leadership to voice their opinions.

Faculty Appreciation Week A week designed to honor our world class faculty and foster a culture of interaction between students and faculty members. The week includes the presentation of a Professor of the Year award and a thank you letter campaign, so we can show those who inspire us some love.

Research Week A week that celebrates undergraduate research at UT, it showcases student research across campus as well as highlighting the opportunities and resources available to students for research purposes.

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT: LORNA EBNER

In the midst of friends, papers and exams, extracurricular activities, and random meetings it is surprising that the average student even has time to eat a decent meal. However, Junior History and Allied Health Professions major Lorna Ebner juggles all this as well as an inspiring dedication to the service of others.

Growing up on a small farm with an old horse and llama, Ebner graduated from a class of just 127 students. The transition to UT was “a culture shock,” said Ebner. She was lucky that she met

her best friend at orientation which made the transition from rural to urban easier, while joining student organizations focused on service also helped to settle Lorna in.

“Although a big school is initially scary, student organizations bring people together” Ebner remarked. By choosing to join two co-ed fraternities, Alpha Phi Omega (APO) and Phi Sigma Pi (PSP), Lorna found her place.

Her commitment to helping others is nothing new. Her dog, Bailey, was just a puppy when she was rescued after being abandoned from the side of the road. As a part of Phi Sigma Pi, she has helped coordinate the largest blood drive in Texas and helps with Inside Books, which sends free books and educational materials to people in Texas prisons.

Just recently UT welcomed around 1300 Boy Scouts for a day filled with the chance to be awarded badges where Lorna taught a “Family Life” class. She said, “it was difficult to ask young boys questions such as ‘what is a family?’ and ‘what is a father?’ but the goal was to point them in the right direction.” She

laughed and remarked on one family issues activity, “there was this one family that said they were on the moon and one of the boys didn’t have a spacesuit so their

solution was to go to Space Suits R-Us. They got points for creativity.”

So, why doesn’t Lorna save the time, and just donate money to these charities? She simply said that there is real enjoyment in seeing the appreciation people feel when you donate a few hours to spend with them.

“You can see the difference hands-on volunteering does verses giving money and not being completely sure what happens to it. People are just so appreciative!”

With regard to the plethora of clubs and organizations on campus dedicated to the same goal she said, “I admire these clubs. Anyone or anything that tries to give back is a big achievement.”

When asked about her hypothetical philanthropy if she were to start her own organization, Ebner elected the

I’VE BEEN RAISED
TO GIVE BACK,
IT’S A
RESPONSIBILITY



Photo by: Madhu Singh

Austin State Hospital, which serves the needs of adults that live with mental disabilities. She believes living in a hospital for the rest of one’s life is no way to live, saying “[Its] bad luck to end up with something like an extra chromosome. The best you can do is visit them, play games and listen to what they have to say.”

Aside from her tireless dedication to others, Ebner is also currently enrolled in the History Honors Program led by Dr. Judith Coffin, has traveled abroad to Sicily, and is learning Italian.

Her liberal arts studies of historically troubled people has clearly colored her commitment to volunteering. When discussing people in history exposed tragic circumstances like the atomic bomb, or polio, it was difficult for her to even finish her sentence. She internalizes the struggles of those less fortunate, and it is this sensitivity along with her dedication that makes Lorna Ebner a model student in service of her community. “I have been raised to give back, it’s a responsibility.”

■ AISHA ALI



FALL BREAK

Rumors of a fall break being implemented at the University of Texas at Austin have been buzzing around for a while, but it seems likely that by late 2014 the rumors will be laid to rest. The efforts of Student Government in supporting a fall break have paid off, and students may possibly enjoy their long-demanded downtime during the fall semester.

STUDENT GOVERNMENT

“It’s really nice, especially for those freshmen that are new to college, to re-evaluate how they’re spending their time,” said Wills Brown, the vice-president of Student Government, when asked about the advantages of fall break. “For some students it would be nice to just have a breather, to not have to worry about classes.” Officers like Brown from Student Government have been lobbying for fall break for years. Proponents believe that a week without classes is both mentally and emotionally beneficial for newer students. After all, they would have more time to de-stress before or after their midterms and catch up on classwork.

Student Government’s Liberal Arts representative Kornel Rady has been a firm proponent of fall break, something which he believes is necessary for the wellbeing of students at the University of Texas at Austin. “Nearly ten thousand appointments were made, relating to mental health,” he said.

“That’s essentially a crisis.” Fall break will allot much needed time to an overworked student body as they try to balance classes, exams and jobs. To most proponents like Kornel Rady, the function of fall break as a mental pressure valve is more than enough reason to support the proposal.

A STUDENT’S PERSPECTIVE

Students like Journalism and Anthropology major Olivia Starich beam at the idea of fall break. “Having a fall break would be fantastic,” she said. “It gives us a good break from academics that other school get and we currently don’t have.” These other schools include Texas Christian University, Duke University, Cornell University, and many more.

Student Government has appealed to professors and faculty on behalf of fall break, and is currently waiting for the online vote. “Once [the proposal] gets to the special meeting of general faculty, that’s when we’ll start lobbying,” Brown said. Endeavors to instigate fall break have been fairly successful, but, as with any proposal that affects the status quo, Student Government has faced its own share of criticism.

One of the more typical concerns regarding fall break is the possibility of students mishandling their newly bestowed free time. Rady claimed, “Of course some students will end up abusing [fall break],

but I believe that most students will use it for the right reasons—to recuperate after mid-terms.”

If exploitation of fall break is not a concern for most people, then the alteration of the fall lab schedule in both the College of Natural Sciences and the School of Engineering certainly serves as one of the biggest reason to oppose fall break. Rady and his fellow SG members plan to meet with faculty members to garner their vote, an uneasy process attracting much disapproval from professors cringing at the thought of changing their traditional teaching schedules.

FROM THE PROFESSORS

To professors like Dr. Hans Hofmann from the School of Biological Sciences, shortening the lab schedule due to fall break is not the biggest disadvantage. Rather, the most worrisome consequence is compromising the student experience. “I can live with a week less [from fall break],” Hofmann premised before expressing his main concern. “I just think that it’s a compromise that would hurt the students.” According to Professor Hofmann, because the span of fall break is proposed to be around one week long, reducing the length of time in the fall could consequentially reduce the length of time in the spring in order to lessen the imbalance of what is offered to students.

With regards to the other universities who have fall break, Dr. Hofmann asserts, “If it’s true that some of our peer institutions spend less time on the introductory lab courses than we do, they may do so for all kinds of different reasons, but that does not necessarily mean that we should aspire to cut a week of instruction.”

Whether or not the trade-off is beneficial will be left to the students to decide. As of now fall break has a good chance of implementation, and members of Student Government are optimistic. To them, the advantages and overall student support outweigh the disadvantages. “It is possible to overcome the problems of the labs,” Rady said, a statement with which Brown is in accordance. “[Fall break] would go into effect, at the earliest, in Fall 2014. So, there’s going to be at least a year and a half to plan exactly how we would fix those schedules of the labs.”

Even if such Student Government and the administration overcome such an obstacle, would the students be hurt as a result of fall break, a weeklong period that would reduce learning time and the amount of material covered? “Students should simply be aware that there is a trade-off,” Dr. Hofmann said with caution. “The fall break does not come for free.”

■ ELIE WU

the STATE of the UNION on



Whether or not you support same-sex marriage, the topic has been debated for years and many states have changed their stance on the matter. Currently, same-sex marriage is available in nine different states; although it is being offered in these states, the Defense of Marriage Act (DOMA) does not recognize same-sex marriage at the federal level.

A CONSTITUTIONAL DISCREPANCY

The very fact that same-sex marriage recognition exists at the state, but not federal level, represents a constitutional discrepancy. In many cases, a same-sex couple may be considered legally married in one state, and that marriage is rendered invalid or completely nullified in the next state. The doctrine of equal protection of the laws surely poses problems with this occurrence.

The state of California, for example, has been through a great deal of law changes regarding gay marriage. Beginning in 2008, Proposition 8, a public referendum, banned same-sex marriage, but by 2010 this ban was overturned. However, the opposing views on the issue between California's state and the federal laws have caused a halt on their interpretation of the issue.

LEGAL ALTERNATIVES

As an alternative to traditional marriage, five states now offer civil unions as legally recognized unions with rights similar, albeit not identical, to those of marriage. A civil union allows for same-sex couples to have many different protections that they otherwise would not, such as protections with making medical decisions for your partner, or social security survivor's benefits.

On the other hand, domestic partnerships are defined as legal relationships between two individuals who live together and share a common domestic life, but aren't joined by marriage or a civil union. Statewide, these Domestic Partner Registries are available in seven states.

HISTORY REPEATING ITSELF

It seems that the discourse about same-sex marriage brings up discussion of history possibly repeating itself, in the way of long-lasting precedent. With regard to racial segregation, the hardships of altering standing federal law were illustrated by the uphill battle to overturn Plessy vs. Ferguson.

Plessy, an African American male who insisted on sitting in a railroad car for all whites was arrested for violating Louisiana's statute keeping the races segregated in many public places, and indoctrinated "separate but equal".

Brown vs. Board of Education ultimately overturned Plessy, declaring separate but equal unconstitutional and in violation of the fourteenth amendment—but 58 years later.

The issue of equality under the law resurfaces with the same-sex marriage debate, and many are fighting to repeal DOMA on this premise. Advocates see the possibility for a difficult Plessy vs. Ferguson type precedent should the Supreme

Court determine that DOMA is the law of the land. However, a small victory for same-sex marriage supporters has surfaced.

OBAMA STEPS IN

According to the Attorney General Holder's 2011 press release, "After careful consideration, including a review of my recommendation, the President has concluded that given a number of factors, including a documented history of discrimination, classifications based on sexual orientation should be subject to a more heightened standard of scrutiny. The President has also concluded that section 3 of DOMA, as applied to legally married same-sex couples, fails to meet that standard and is therefore unconstitutional. Given that conclusion, the President has instructed the Department not to defend the statute in such cases."

Clarity will hit the situation when the Supreme Court hears arguments about the constitutionality of Section 3 of DOMA towards the end of March 2013 and a final decision on its constitutionality is made by the end of June 2013. The decisions that will be made, regardless of the side that prevails, will affect our country in the long-run.

■ FARAH MITHANI

EVOLUTION OF TV'S PORTRAYAL OF HOMOSEXUALITY

A TIMELINE

I recently visited the world's largest traveling gay club—Lady Gaga's Born This Way Ball. The concert was my, as a gay man, dream equipped with unicorns, dancing, and fabulous outfits galore. True to Gaga style, Mother Monster captivated the audience with her risqué performances combined with messages about tolerance and love. Below the technicolor haze, however, existed more than just lyrics about acceptance.

The Born This Way Ball represents a narrative of social progress that has taken over popular culture during the last decade. Disclaimer: If you've taken a queer theory course, you may find some parts of the following article underdeveloped or lacking intellectual prowess. My response? This is my individual point of view, colored by my experiences as a gay man, and I'm guessing the target of popular media is gay men like me, who haven't thoroughly studied queer theory, so just let me give it a shot.

THE FIRST WAVE

In terms of the gay popular culture timeline, I grew up in the Will and Grace Era. My teenage sister made sure that from a young age I was exposed to shows like Will and Grace and Friends. She obsessed over Friends, but I, at the delicate age of 7, gravitated more toward Will and Grace. At the time, I was unsure why I subconsciously associated with the characters. After realizing I didn't identify with the hysterical alcoholic Karen (though sometimes I still like to channel her), I saw that Will and Jack, the show's two gay characters, helped me understand myself. I may not have completely grasped the meaning of this fixation back then, but I now know how important it was for me to feel a sense of belonging. Seeing these gay characters on TV helped me come to terms with my sexuality during adolescence.

For the older and more mature generation, Showtime's Queer as Folk, showed the sometimes promiscuous lives of gays and lesbians living in Pittsburgh. The Will and Grace Era was a momentous time for homosexuals in America. Not only were fictional characters depicting queer life, but cultural icons like Ellen DeGeneres and Rosie O'Donnell came out as lesbians in 1997 and 2002, respectively. Though Will and Grace aired its last episode in 2006, its legacy in both gay and popular culture lives on. I still watch the marathons, and every time I see Will and Jack, I feel the message of my normalcy, a term subjective to all really, radiating off the screen.

A NEW ERA

Not until the popular show Glee aired its pilot in May 2009 did another major era, the Glee Era, begin. Sure, there was some filler between these two periods, most notably Showtime's The L Word, but the introduction of Kurt in Glee marked a new and evolved period of LGBTQ portrayals in popular culture. Rather than distinguishing the gay and straight cultures, shows in this new era demonstrate the ability to consider a single, all-inclusive society. The show's creator, Ryan Murphy, has made sure it attracts

a younger audience than its predecessors, which infuses acceptance into a new and impressionable generation.

DEFINING NEW NORMS

Following Glee, shows like Modern Family and most recently, The New Normal debuted, and in the case of the former, proved very successful. Glee and Modern Family mark a serious advancement from the previous era. In Glee, Kurt is included in a diverse ensemble and the plot is focused on more than just the "gay" character. For me, this representation of a gay teenager within a larger and more diverse cast demonstrates how I am defined by more than just my sexuality, and I should embrace all aspects of my character. In Modern Family, Mitchell and the oh-so-fabulous Cam are part of an overall portrait of the complex modern family, not just the gay couple. These shows integrate the gay characters into the conception of a "normal," which parallels the progress of American society.

The Glee Era has also seen a rise in actual social movements with a popular culture community that promotes both individual and societal acceptance of homosexuality. The "It Gets Better Campaign" went viral, moving from the elite circle of fame with celebrities like Zachary Quinto and President Obama to the plebs like you and me. This campaign has reached millions of LGBTQ youth who constantly struggle to survive the bullying and social intolerance of middle and high school. Even at 20 years old, the videos encourage me to believe in my future and to always accept myself.

WHAT HAPPENS NEXT?

It's hard to see where we're heading next. America's growing privilege to create an accepting culture is at an all time high, and we see the effects everywhere. From states approving same-sex marriage to President Obama openly supporting marriage equality, there exists some correlation with the acceptance promoted by aspects of the Glee Era. Our generation has diverged from our parents in that we rally around the idea of equality for all people, and in this society, that encompasses many different categories. We all know correlation does not mean causation, but it is easy to see how popular culture affects the masses. For example, the "Rachel" haircut from the 90s unfortunately found its way into my own home.

Sure, Hollywood does not provide a perfect portrayal of the "gay relationship." White gay males are not the only homosexuals who can find love. But, these portrayals are part of an evolution. Society progresses, and progress is good. The next era will probably provide a more nuanced view of a gay relationship, perhaps biracial or even transgendered. The LGBTQ community hasn't reached its goal of full acceptance, but with the help of popular culture, it is certainly on its way.

■ ANDREW WILSON

1975 HOT L BALTIMORE

PREMIERES

FIRST TV SERIES TO FEATURE A GAY COUPLE

1998 WILL AND GRACE

PREMIERES

FIRST TV SHOW WITH 2 GAY MAIN CHARACTERS

2003 QUEER EYE FOR THE STRAIGHT GUY

PREMIERES

A HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL BRAVO SHOW ABOUT GAY MEN GIVING STRAIGHT MEN MAKEOVERS

2004 THE L WORD

PREMIERES

A SHOW ABOUT A GROUP OF LESBIAN, BISEXUAL AND TRANSGENDER FRIENDS

2009 GLEE PREMIERES

AN EXTREMELY SUCCESSFUL SHOW DEALING WITH SOCIAL ISSUES AND ACCEPTANCE IN HIGH SCHOOL

MODERN FAMILY PREMIERES

FEATURES A GAY COUPLE WITH AN ADOPTED CHILD WITHIN THE LARGER CONTEXT OF THE MODERN FAMILY

2012 THE NEW NORMAL

PREMIERES

FEATURES A GAY COUPLE AND THE WOMAN HAVING THEIR CHILD USING IN VITRO FERTILIZATION

WHAT JUST HAPPENED? CLIMBING THE FISCAL CLIFF

FOR DUMMIES

BY PATTY SANGER

My mom always told me to never talk about politics in public. Normally, I would agree, but maybe we should consider a tad more dialogue.

Basic understanding of the “Fiscal Cliff” is lacking, and there is a spectrum of comprehension. From the friend that knows more about politics than you think is healthy, to the small minority that thinks it really is a climbable travel destination, if you’re not the one spewing off facts about the fiscal demise of America, perhaps this article can help. When discussing the Cliff, make sure you’re talking about the right Fiscal Cliff. In the past, this term has been used to define major fiscal changes that required bipartisan solutions. First used in 2010, when the Bush tax cuts threatened to expire, Congress struggled with whether to renew them. Ultimately, they decided to extend them for two years, pushing back issues like higher income tax for wealthy Americans. Two years later, we faced the same problem, in addition to the trillion dollar debt.

The name “Fiscal Cliff” comes from the fear that, if a Congressional budget deal is not passed, America will plunge into an unrelenting recession like the world has never seen (i.e. going off a cliff). Luckily for us, we have yet to see this part in actuality. However, Congressional inaction could result in the very real possibility of financial chaos. This year, we were forced to review the Budget Control Act of 2011 which, among other things, raised the debt ceiling, reduced spending, and instituted a “Deficit Reduction” committee within Congress.

If Congress allowed the Budget Control Act to expire, while tightening spending, the Congressional Budget Office speculates, “... contraction of the economy will cause employment to decline and the unemployment rate to rise to 9.1 percent in... 2013.”

This doomsday prophecy provided a lot of wiggle room for parties to push their own agendas. The 2013 “Fiscal Cliff Debate” quickly turned partisan, with many politicians unwilling or downright refusing to compromise. Both parties aimed to demonize the other, in order to prolong the strength of their party. Upon the reveal of Obama’s budget, Senator John McCain questioned his motives “...I think the American people have to wonder, whether the president really wants this issue resolved.” While, in an address to the American people, Obama acknowledged the conflict, “My preference would have been to solve all these problems in the context of a larger agreement, a bigger deal, a grand bargain... But with this Congress that was obviously a little too much to hope for...”

These tactics proved harmful. Many voters are dissuaded by the petty politics. The Pew Research Center, a prominent political polling firm, agreed, “During the debt ceiling debate in July 2011, more than

two-thirds of Americans wanted to see lawmakers be willing to compromise.” In contradiction, Pew did a study that same year asking if the participant’s party should influence the other party’s leaders more to achieve a satisfactory compromise. Though people had a desire to work together, it seems they only believe that to a point—until their party doesn’t get what they want.

According to Pew, “Half of Republicans say party leaders should stand up to Obama; among Democrats, 42% say their leaders should stand up to Republican leaders.” Clearly, the divide the issue is not going anywhere. The antics of the political parties make it increasingly important to stay updated on the facts, and what is actually going on in Washington.

If politics isn’t your bag of tricks, it may be tempting to sit out during the Fiscal Cliff debates. The problem with budgetary cuts is, no matter who you are, the government budget will affect you. From limiting tax deductions for the top 2%, to huge government cuts centered on defense spending, there is a virtual guarantee you will be paying more in taxes this year, or at least your parents will.

We have had a rough decade, America. Financial strife has been the cornerstone of the new millennia so far. Well, that and pictures of cats. Hopefully, further understanding of all that is at stake can help motivate the masses to become involved. America has trillion dollar debt that won’t just disappear. You may not be an expert after reading this, but you know the basics, and next time someone tells you the “Fiscal Cliff” is unimportant, you can politely inform them that they should really reconsider.

The name “Fiscal Cliff” comes from the fear that, if a Congressional budget deal is not passed, America will plunge into an unrelenting recession

No matter who you are, the government budget will affect you. From limiting tax deductions for the top 2%, to huge government cuts centered on defense spending, there is a virtual guarantee you will be paying more in taxes this year, or at least your parents will.

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MODERN FEMINISM

HOW THE FIGHT FOR EQUALITY FITS INTO THE MODERN DAY AND THE VARIOUS MISCONCEPTIONS AROUND THE LATEST WAVE OF FEMINISM

The f-word is a sensitive issue. Feminism is a multifaceted system that incorporates many different sociological perspectives, and includes varied approaches. However, I was recently discussing (with other female friends) a series of posts by author Suzanne Venker that appeared on FoxNews.com and quickly spread across the internet. These posts included the following titles: “The war on men”, “Let’s call a truce in the war on men”, and “To be happy, we must admit women and men aren’t ‘equal’.” It seemed that the titles alone were telling of something troubling in this woman’s perspective, but in the discussion I realized other young women were struggling to unpack a feminist interpretation. In her piece her last piece, Venker claims “The battle of the sexes is over...Why not try something else on for size? Like this: men and women are equal, but different.”

I found many of the girls in the discussion struggling with a feeling of wanting to agree with her, but not quite in the way Venker meant. This brings us to the post-feminist paradox. There is a feeling among feminist scholars today that young women and girls are in a period of post-feminism. From my understanding of RTF Professor Mary Kearney’s explanation, though this term is fluid, it involves a sensibility that both benefits from earlier feminism while simultaneously repudiating it. In essence, post-feminists have a tendency to acknowledge that certain battles have been won by other feminist movements, but the work is done now, so any experience of gender based inequality should be handled by people, as agential independents. That is, if you’re a woman feeling inequality, it is a matter of your circumstances, no longer a systemic problem.

Venker’s comment fits in nicely as she acknowledges that a “battle of the sexes” existed, but she claims it is now over. Venker asserts, “And guess what? No one won.” This supposition implies that past feminist effort was in vain, and takes this feminist work for granted. I would like to contextualize this explanation with a brief discussion of my understanding of cultural feminist and Third Wave feminist ideology as different from the post-feminist trend, or anti-feminism altogether.

Cultural feminism emerged after major battles within the Women’s Liberation Movement of the mid 1970s—1980s. Foundational to this school of thought is the belief that women and men are inherently different. I feel Venker tries to critique this idea when falsely she claims, “That is what feminists would have us believe...anyone who contradicts this dogma is branded sexist.” The truth is that feminists from the cultural perspective tend to believe that women and femininity have been disparaged for so long, that they

should now be lifted up. It does not mean that feminists are mythic man-haters as Venker would have the reader believe. A celebration of women does not equate to a condemnation of men.

On the other hand, Third Wave feminism is both a political movement and an ideology that included critiques of older forms of feminist movements. There is a tension between Second and Third Wave feminism, marked by greater resistance to biological essentialism and increased celebration of women’s sexuality. In her “The war on men” piece, Venker misunderstands this attention to female sexual drive, claiming, “Feminism serves men very well: they can have sex at hello and even live with their girlfriends with no responsibilities whatsoever.” Again, she is wrong to imply that women freely expressing their sexuality and acknowledging sexual drive signify promiscuity or irresponsibility.

Clearly, Suzanne Venker dissects and mischaracterizes feminist messages, not to mention the trouble with her frequent characterization of marriage to man as the key to female happiness. She privileges both patriarchy and heteronormativity. According to her, it is expected that a woman is tasked with finding a husband, and failure to do so is her fault. She very clearly says, “Women aren’t women anymore...In a nutshell, women are angry...that’s because they’ve been raised to think of men as the enemy.” Further, there is no discussion of homosexual relationships in the context of the battle of the sexes. In an ironic twist, there was online buzz that the picture used on Fox News’ website for one of these pieces was actually a lesbian couple kissing on their wedding day, and soon the picture was removed.

Navigating post-feminist rhetoric can be tricky. We must both acknowledge and appreciate the work of past movements, and recognize that equality does not yet exist in our society. For example, there needs to be consideration for women of different races and classes too. I do not claim to be an expert on feminist studies. Admittedly, I am still learning and informed largely by rudimentary coursework on the subject, personal experience, and independent research. At the end of the day, however, Venker’s message may be less post-feminist, and just downright anti-feminist. As a readership, we encounter dangerous terrain if we believe articles like hers offer authority on these issues. To become a more progressive society, we must begin thinking critically about these representations of women, and to question them.

■ CASSIE MANEEN

BREAKING DOWN THE BUZZWORDS

PATRIARCHY (BROADLY):

Social organization marked by disproportionately large share of power controlled by men

IDEOLOGY:

Value system that is shared with others

DISCOURSE:

Systems of ideas, attitudes, beliefs, and practices that construct the subjects and world of which they speak

NEOLIBERALISM:

Economic/political ideology that favors individual freedom through economic freedom

INTERSECTIONALITY:

The various facets of a person (gender, race, class, ethnicity, age, sexuality, etc.) coincide to create their identity and contribute to an understanding of marginalization

BURDEN OF REPRESENTATION OR TOKENISM:

Tendency to task a marginalized group or individual with having to speak on behalf of their whole demographic category

ARE WE READY

The question lingers in every Liberal Arts major's mind: Am I ready? Am I ready to step off the forty acres and begin the journey towards the reality of job searching and starting a new life? Then I realize the question should actually be phrased, what are we ready for - because graduating with a Liberal Arts degree is never a straight path, a fact that for many, proves either a burden or blessing. For those students graduating soon, the stresses of what the road ahead might bring in terms of graduate school, dreadful loans, and staying sane can be suffocating. Pursuing a Liberal Arts degree is a constant battle between passion and practicality, where students must constantly reassure themselves that they can conquer the world after graduation.

THE TRADE OFF

Unlike most specialized majors, the flexibility of a Liberal Arts degree practically leaves the student to choose their own degree path.

"That freedom comes at a cost, like in biochemistry or engineering they basically know what you need to know professionally [and show you the correct way]," Luis Espinoza, third-year said. "The cost is the insurance that you'll get a job."

This responsibility is placed on the students to enrich themselves fully and take advantage of what the college has to offer.

"You get as much out of it as you put into it," Saloni Singh, senior said. Why do I enjoy my Liberal Arts classes more? It's not the content necessarily, it's the structure and how it allows you to go beyond. You can put a lot more of yourself into your work."

WELCOME TO THE REAL WORLD

Having the ability to see the true value of one's work is key when planning the future. That only happens when synthesizing real life experiences with the material learned in the classroom. This makes the search for the next steps even more personal. After Espinoza got hurt, the gears started going and even inspired him to find an internship.

"I broke my back and I sued the company because they didn't want to pay my bills and they fired me the moment I got hurt," Espinoza said. "It took a year for me to get any treatment from them. I got bills over \$12,000 but it wasn't until I got a lawyer that the next day they decided to pay my bills.. This lawyer took the case for free. I already wanted to be lawyer but this hit me, like, this the real thing and not just what I read in books. The following semester, I joined an internship at the Equal Justice Center. I remember in my situation I felt powerless - I had nothing and I'm educated - the people I'm helping didn't have the opportunity to go to high school [and] most of them don't speak English. I know more or less about law and I can help them now. It's empowering."

INTERNSHIPS, ARE THEY WORTH IT?

A huge part of employment after achieving a CoLA degree involves internships, but many of the internships do not begin after graduation, they simply continue with the hopes of making a career out of them.

"The great thing about Liberal Arts is that you can do all sorts of internships during college with

your degree background," Singh said. "You do have to be smart in college and make sure you take those opportunities when you can so you have something to help your résumé out."

While there may be a plethora of internships to choose from, the curse of the unpaid internship is a harsh reality for many a CoLA student.

"I did a lot of varied internships, some that were more Liberal Arts oriented and others that were more science-based," Singh said. "But all of them were unpaid and that's hard to deal with sometimes because you're working so hard 10-15 hours a week and you're not getting paid for them. It was frustrating for a little but I enjoyed them but I also understood them as an investment. As I applied to medical school all of those internships weighed in my favor."

EVEN HIGHER EDUCATION

Beyond the issue of unpaid internships is the world of pricey graduate school. Many Liberal Arts students find themselves at the crossroads between continuing their education and trying to find a job with the skills they have. The decision may feel forced especially with the job market of today expecting higher degrees and more qualifications.

"I feel like a Liberal Arts degree forces you into graduate school- I know if I was still a biology major, I could automatically start working at a hospital as soon as I was done graduating," Sarah Macias, third year said. "For my English major it's a little more difficult and the first thing that comes to mind is teaching [right after graduation]. It's the first question I get asked 'oh you want to teach?' No. Don't go there, I don't want to teach little kids to read. I probably will look into getting a master's in public health before I go on."

Taking the plunge and going to graduate school requires money and resources. After student loans from undergrad pile up, the amount owed tends to be overwhelming. Surprisingly, the price tag is not as alarming to some students as one would think.

"Basically [law school] is an all or nothing for me. I know that I'm jumping into more than \$100,000 in debt and so before I even enter college I'm taking loans. I figured either I go for it, or I'll never do it. I'm the first person in my family to finish high school and the first to graduate college and the first to go to law school if I do that. So I figure I'm just going to swing," Espinoza said.

NOT EVEN A DEGREE IS A SURE THING

What is important for some students is not the massive debt incurred from another few years in college, but the maintenance. The fear is real that 40% of students end up working in jobs that do not pertain to their field of study in college.

"It really is super expensive and I'm really nervous about that right now," Macias said. "The first thing that comes to mind is loans and I don't want to do that, but I mean if I have to I will. I'd rather take out loans and have to pay them off instead of not doing it because I don't have the funds to do it now and postponing it a year or two and not ever wanting to go back. I know that's been a problem with people I've talked to who have graduated with

"[My internships] were unpaid and that's hard to deal with sometimes because you're working so hard 10-15 hours a week and you're not getting paid for [it],"
- Saloni Singh

their degree and are still working at some kind of clerk job that doesn't have anything to do with what they did in college. I'm looking for options but I don't want to give myself the opportunity to lose momentum."

MAKING THE TOUGH CALLS

Besides tacking on more loans, there are other ways to save money during this time of transition. This is the moment where practicality and passion blend.

"Sometimes you have to make compromises," Singh said. "For me, I wanted to take a gap year and I wanted to take an internship but I knew that I wasn't going to get well paid internships, then I decided I wanted to go abroad and it's even harder to get paid internships abroad because you don't have work authorization. So I made a compromise and I'm going abroad and I'm living with my parents and a lot of people think that's regression...but I don't think that's the case. I think living with your parents and saving on rent and food gives you the opportunity to do a lot more. You can do that unpaid internship that you love but won't be paid for - you couldn't do that if you didn't make a compromise. I do not think of it as taking three steps forward and two steps back, I think of it as being resourceful and pursuing what you're passionate about."

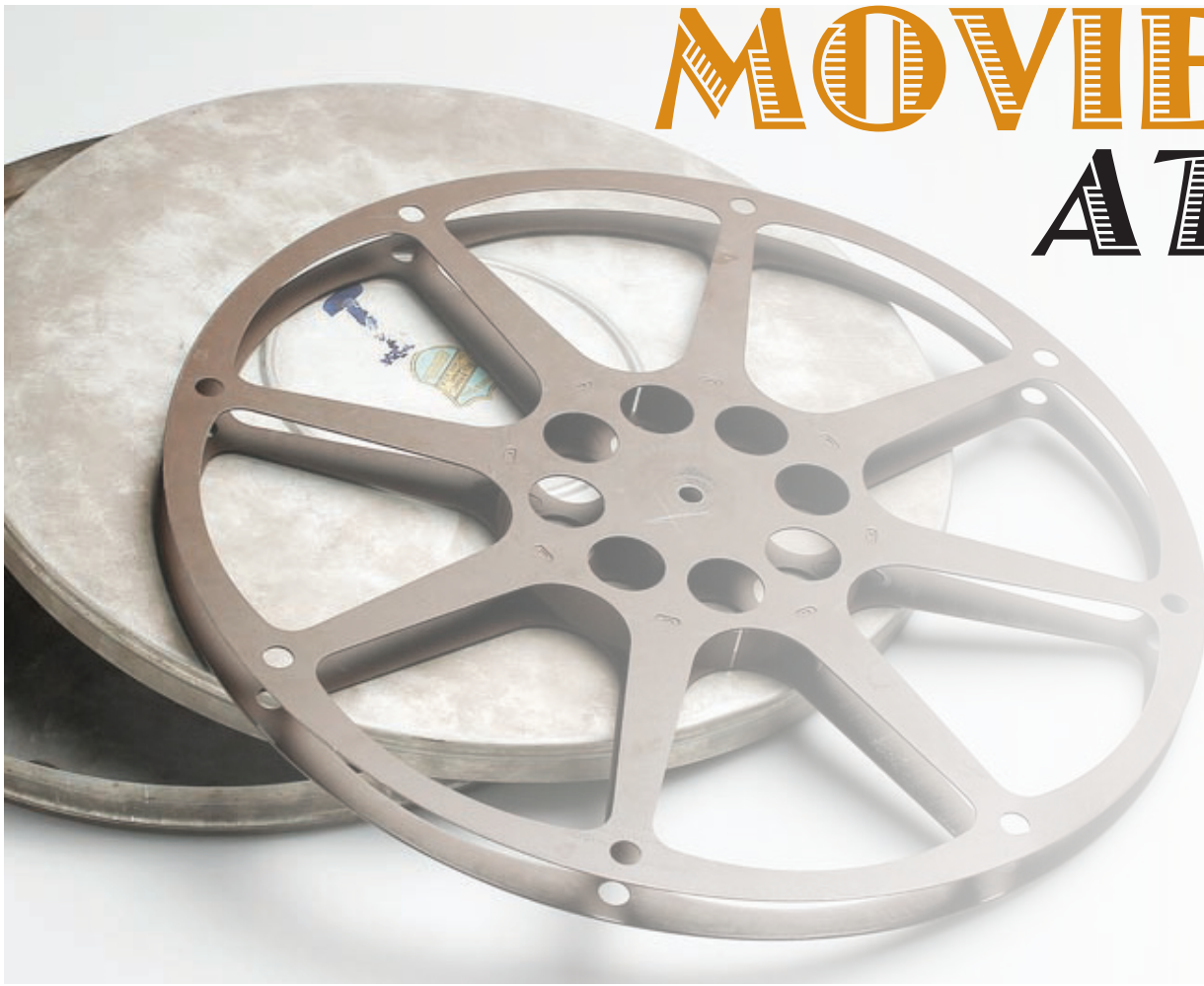
Figuring out the ways of getting a job for Liberal Arts students is a frustrating topic when anxiety fills the back of their brain anytime someone brings up the future in conversation.

BY NATALIA NARANJO
PHOTO BY MADHU SINGH

THE BATTLE BETWEEN
PASSION +
PRACTICALITY

"What the market is going to eventually want are **innovators**, not just people who can pump out equations and ... can't think outside the system," *Luis Espinoza*

MOVIE NIGHT ATX STYLE



*For those of you who struggled to get through the three-and-a-half-hour long Oscars ceremony and didn't frequent the silver screen beyond *Argo* and *Django Unchained*, the 2012 film season was an excellent year in cinema that proved very competitive in both the nomination and awards races. The breadth of great films included a good amount of runaway and tough-to-call categories that have continued Oscar buzz well past the night of the ceremony.*

The race for next year is now beginning, so make sure to catch up on the recent nominee films or start your escapism afresh at any of Austin's unique theater choices. Here's a quick overview to get you in the groove and pick the right scene:

Downtown/Central Austin

1. Violet Crown Cinema: On the west end of 2nd Street District, this four-screen venue fills up fast and includes a mix of hipsters, yuppies, and couples eager to see little-known foreign films, Oscar specials, and new indie works. A cool bar and café common space with concession snack bar (free popcorn and fountain drink refills!) encourage guests to arrive early and linger post-screening. The leather seats are the most comfortable in town (especially the first row recliners with ottomans), but the admission price is a little more expensive and on a reserved-seat policy. Parking in the adjacent garage is redeemed by the theater.

434 West 2nd Street | matinee \$9, Friday night \$13

2. Alamo Drafthouse – The Ritz: This classic 6th Street location has an old Hollywood feel in the lobby with a wide staircase leading to its two screens. A crowd of 6th Street partiers and downtown visitors frequent the place, and food is often subpar to other Alamo Drafthouse locations. Midnight classics and cult favorites make the lineup, but some great new releases (*The Master*) have been known to show up, too.

320 East 6th Street | matinee \$7.50, Friday night \$10

3. Texas Union Theatre: Often overlooked, this convenient screening site is free (with a current UT ID) for UT Austin students and one guest. Films are hosted by the Student Events Center Film Committee and range from blockbusters (*Silver Linings Playbook* and *The Hobbit: An Unexpected Journey*) to late-night classics (*The Rocky Horror Picture Show*) this semester. Although the theater can get loud during crowded showings, the Late Night Film Series is less frequented and offers lasting favorites (*Mean Girls*, *Ferris Bueller's Day Off*).

The Texas Union (UNB) – Room 2.228

South Austin

4. AMC Barton Creek Square 14: This is the quintessential mall theater, with a strong college student and teen clientele that keep the blockbusters packed on opening weekends. The concessions are quite expensive, but the acceptable admission prices and convenient location right off of MoPac make it a reliable bet.

2901 South Capital of Texas Highway | matinee \$8, Friday night \$10

5. Regal Westgate Stadium 11: Located near the Ben White-South Lamar-360 spaghetti bowl, this theater may be tricky for some to get to, but it's not a bad trip from campus. It's similar to

AMC in price and non-descriptiveness, and the moviegoers are more middle-aged than the younger AMC crowd. In the "standard" movie theater category, Regal Cinemas tend to be my first choices with their concessions, quality service, and cozy facilities.

4477 South Lamar Boulevard | matinee \$7.50, Friday night \$10

6. Alamo Drafthouse – South Lamar: Currently under renovation and set to reopen in fall 2013, this is one of the largest and best Alamo Drafthouses in Austin. If the remodeling doesn't fix what ain't broke, this location will continue to have an eclectic feel and selection, great food, and helpful staff. They are terrible about answering phone calls, though, and the place gets pretty crowded on weekends (so reserve via the Alamo website's online seating chart in advance). Beware of the Lamar Plaza Shopping Center's parking availability!

1120 South Lamar | matinee \$7.50, Friday night \$10

7. Cinemark Tinseltown 17: The area's primary spot for Bollywood films (not to be confused with the Cinemark Tinseltown 20 in Pflugerville) this theater right off Interstate 35 is rarely crowded, has great ticket prices and friendly staff.

5501 S Interstate 35 | matinee \$6.25, Friday night \$10.50

8. Regal Metropolitan Stadium 14: This reliable option is across Interstate 35 from Cinemark Tinseltown 17. With a monumental façade and art deco torch cauldron outside, the atmosphere at the Metropolitan is grand and impressive. Parking is ample and seats are comfortable, but make sure to keep your eyes peeled for Little Texas Lane (to your right on the southbound feeder road) unless you want to take a five-ten minute detour circling back around.

901 Little Texas Lane | matinee \$7.75, Saturday night \$10.50

North Austin

10. Galaxy Highland 10: Oh, Galaxy Highland! I've had pretty memorable experiences at this theater, from witnessing a tipsy moviegoer pass out in the parking lot to finding the latest nighttime screening of *Titanic* 3D with desperate friends. Located near Highland Mall and right off southbound I-35, Galaxy Highland is outdated and keeps a less hip and lower-income crowd. It mostly screens tacky blockbusters and teen flicks (*Beautiful Creatures*, enough said), but I am fond of it for the smaller crowds, and a less pretentious nature. Just ignore the sketchy parking lot at night by getting a spot close to the theater.

6700 Middle Fiskville Road | matinee \$7.50, Friday night \$10

11. Alamo Drafthouse – Village: This four-screener between Burnet Road and MoPac puts on many signature events, from Totally 80's Sing-Along mixes to Terror Tuesdays and Weird Wednesdays. The vibe is fairly eccentric and keeps a cool mix of people going to see up-to-the-minute comedies (*For a Good Time, Call...*) and commercial successes. The place is well-run, but stick to the Alamo Drafthouse's website (as opposed to Google's movie database) for accurate show times.

2700 West Anderson Lane | matinee \$7.50, Friday night \$10

12. Regal Arbor 8 at Great Hills: One of my favorites, this theater blends the charm of indie and foreign films (*A Separation*, *Amour*) with the familiarity and convenience of multiplex cinemas. Available options are mostly artistic feature films (*Hitchcock*, *Anna Karenina*), innovative documentaries, and some popular critically acclaimed movies. The charming café tables, friendly staff, and comfortable atmosphere mix with an older crowd for a relaxing evening within proximity to Arboretum shopping and food.

9828 Great Hills Trail | matinee \$7.50, Friday night \$10.50

BY WESLEY HOWARD
PHOTO FROM CREATIVECOMMONS.ORG

A SEMESTER IN THE LIFE OF A TRANSFER STUDENT

A FRESH START

It was my first day as a college sophomore, and my first day as a Longhorn. While peering through the bright sunlight at the Tower, anxieties about finding my classes, friends, and my place began to surface. I was finally here and had my game face on, but couldn't help wondering—now what?

I am a transfer student, a demographic comprised of around 2,500 other students who are new to campus but not to the college lifestyle. Unlike UT freshmen, we did not have a first-year interest group to meet other newcomers, we did not attend UT freshman orientation, and many of us opted out of dorm life (been there, done that!). No, we transfers are left to fend for ourselves on the vast 40 acres. However, with a bit of luck and ingenuity, I survived my first semester as a transfer and am here to share my experience and sage advice.

First, transfer orientation is a joke.

There is no warm fuzzy feeling—attendees can range from sophomores to people returning to college after years in the workforce. At orientation, we got the classic “welcome” speech and had the opportunity to take campus tours, which in retrospect were very helpful.

On the first day of class, I regretted being a shameless orientation underachiever by only attending the mandatory events, like advising and registration. Though it could have been easier if I investigated orientation further, I dotted the i's and crossed the t's, becoming a full-fledged UT student. But, I still had to find my niche.

GETTING INVOLVED

After my first couple of weeks, I could generally avoid getting lost and began to understand UT jargon like “6-pack” and “the drag.” My real struggle was resisting the urge to return to my apartment, slip into my comfiest pajamas, and hang out with my three new best friends: Netflix and Ben &

Jerry. Surfacing from a movie marathon one day, I decided to tackle the enormous UT organization database. This was a struggle because many of the clubs are no longer active or haven't updated their website in a while. Through word of mouth and tabling on the West Mall, I came across a few interesting organization candidates.

Attending information sessions is a great way to meet other students. As a journalism major, I attended an info session held by the Communication Council. There I met fellow transfer student Elysse Alvarado who became my new best friend at UT. Her advice for a transfer student? “Never think you're out of time because you're a transfer student. You can do just as much as everyone else.”

ADVICE FROM A SURVIVOR

Another pearl of wisdom comes from Erin Kelbly, who transferred from A&M as a junior: “go visit teachers in office hours...you'll need professor

references and you won't have many options since you're a transfer.” As for what I have to offer, pick a class or interest and give it your all—you're sure to find like-minded students when you're involved and passionate about something. Often the key to fitting in is showing up, regularly, and ready and willing to participate.

So, to all the transfers without a campus family—keep your chin up. Although UT won't hold your hand, there are many lifelines to grab. We transfers comprise a huge portion of the UT family, and our different backgrounds give us new perspectives and valuable input. At the end of the day, these 40 Acres are ours too, so we should bring all we have to offer, and take full advantage of the opportunities presented to us. Join organizations that give you a voice on campus, chat with your classmates about shared interests, and grab your new life by the horns!

■ KEELY WITHEROW

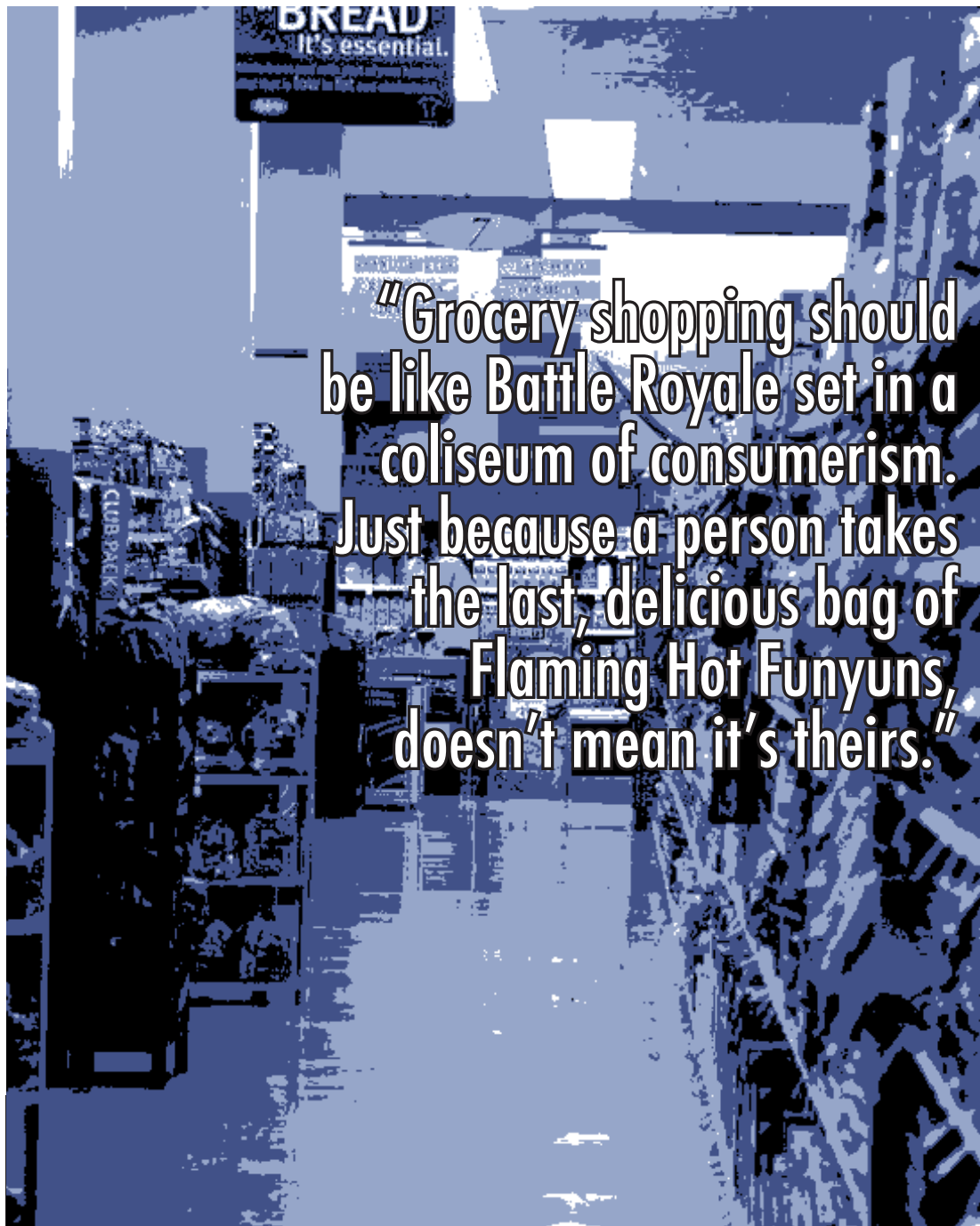
SOME TIPS FOR SURVIVING A TRANSFER:

Attend orientation. If nothing else, you will get a feel for campus before classes begin.

Join on-campus organizations. Go to any information sessions that interest you and ask people in your classes what they're involved in.

Get chummy with your professors. Many applications (scholarships, study abroad, etc.) ask for teacher recommendations and transfer students may find it hard to get to know their new professors otherwise.

If not too late, choose housing near other students. Co-ops can be a fun way to meet other students.



"Grocery shopping should be like Battle Royale set in a coliseum of consumerism. Just because a person takes the last, delicious bag of Flaming Hot Funyuns, doesn't mean it's theirs."

SLACKER GROCERY STORE BREAKDOWN

Wal-Mart: a consumer carnival, where the prices are as cheap as the people

K-Mart: home of Martha Stewart, blue lightbulbs and nothing else

Target: (pronounced 'Tar-jay') Wal-Mart's bourgie cousin

Cost-co: paradise

Whole Foods: wholly crap

THE SLACKER

Creeping on Facebook to get a glimpse of a person's life is trivial when you can just go to the supermarket. If someone glanced at the usual contents of my grocery cart, they would think I'm an unhealthy degenerate, with a destiny towards high blood pressure and a penchant for air freshener. And they might be accurate. You can observe a person's appearance, their dietary habits, their method of payment, their vehicle, and how they interact with others. Grocery stores are our snapshots of our lives. And isn't life beautiful?

No it isn't, because I hate going to the grocery store for as many reasons as there are brands. There is something awful about the supermarket that brings out the most irritable consumer inside me. It could be the fact that I have to deal people, the occasional familiar face (are we supposed to talk about what's in our carts?), or that one guy that stands in the middle of the aisle thinking he's Moses parting the Bread Sea. But the supermarket is a necessary evil. Unfortunately we cannot go back to hunting and gathering, although there are plenty of squirrels around.

HEB is my preferred store mostly due to its proximity and the weird birds dwelling in its roof that shriek like pterodactyls. Contrary to their slogan, HEB actually stands for 'Here, Everything's a Bother.' Granted, HEB isn't as bad as other supermarkets (Wal-Mart dropped the happy face logo because they warrant the opposite emotion), but the experience is still a Harrowing, Excruciating Burden. If you take anything away from this article, let it be this: the Rule of 10. Supermarkets are only bearable before 10 a.m. and after 10 p.m.

Bless your hungry soul if you don't follow that law. From the second you arrive, you must fight for a parking spot and deal with metal cage wielding pedestrians and idiots that decide to drive in the wrong directions. I've always considered proper walking manners to be a reflection, if not precursor, to driving. They follow similar rules. Stay to the right, don't block traffic, make it clear if you intend to turn. If you want to pass someone, speed up and get in front of them. The grocery store exposes bad drivers. An aisle is literally only two carts wide allowing only two directions to travel. If you stay still and get in the way, you put the flow at risk like a clogged artery. You can even get trapped inside an aisle if both ends are blocked by carts. It's like I'm a rat in a maze where Spicy Nacho Doritos are the prize.

Grocery shopping should be like Battle Royale set in a coliseum of consumerism. Just because a person takes the last, delicious bag of Flaming Hot Funyuns, doesn't mean it's theirs. People can't follow common cart courtesy, and they haven't purchased the item, so I should be able to shamelessly pluck it from their cart. If we must fight, so be it. But I seriously can't be bagged. I have the agility of Chester Cheetah, the strength of the Kool-Aid man, and the ingenuity of the Trix rabbit. And unlike him, I don't give a damn about your age – those chips are mine.

If you use the less than 10 items line and have 15 items you had better not be using coupons. If you have 20 items you clearly want to watch the world burn. If you make a special request for paper baggage and you'd rather assault Mother Earth with your trash rather than a plastic bag, go to Whole Foods where you belong. Also, a PSA, supposedly in a month or so, Austin will only allow reusable bags and will dispose of plastic ones. You must also buy these bags. I swear on all that is capitalism, if this actually happens and I'm forced to purchase and bring my own crap to the store with me, I will flip my cart. Next we'll have to bag our own groceries. Thanks, Obama. Grocery stores...

For every trip I take to the grocery store, I cry inside. Usually that's everyday, but the supermarket really hurts. Considering the fact that people I don't know easily irritate me, it comes as no surprise. Knowing how supermarkets are designed reveals the truth though: they're designed to piss you off. That's all there is to it. HEB, Target, you name it, they're awful. Except for Costco. Man, I love Costco.

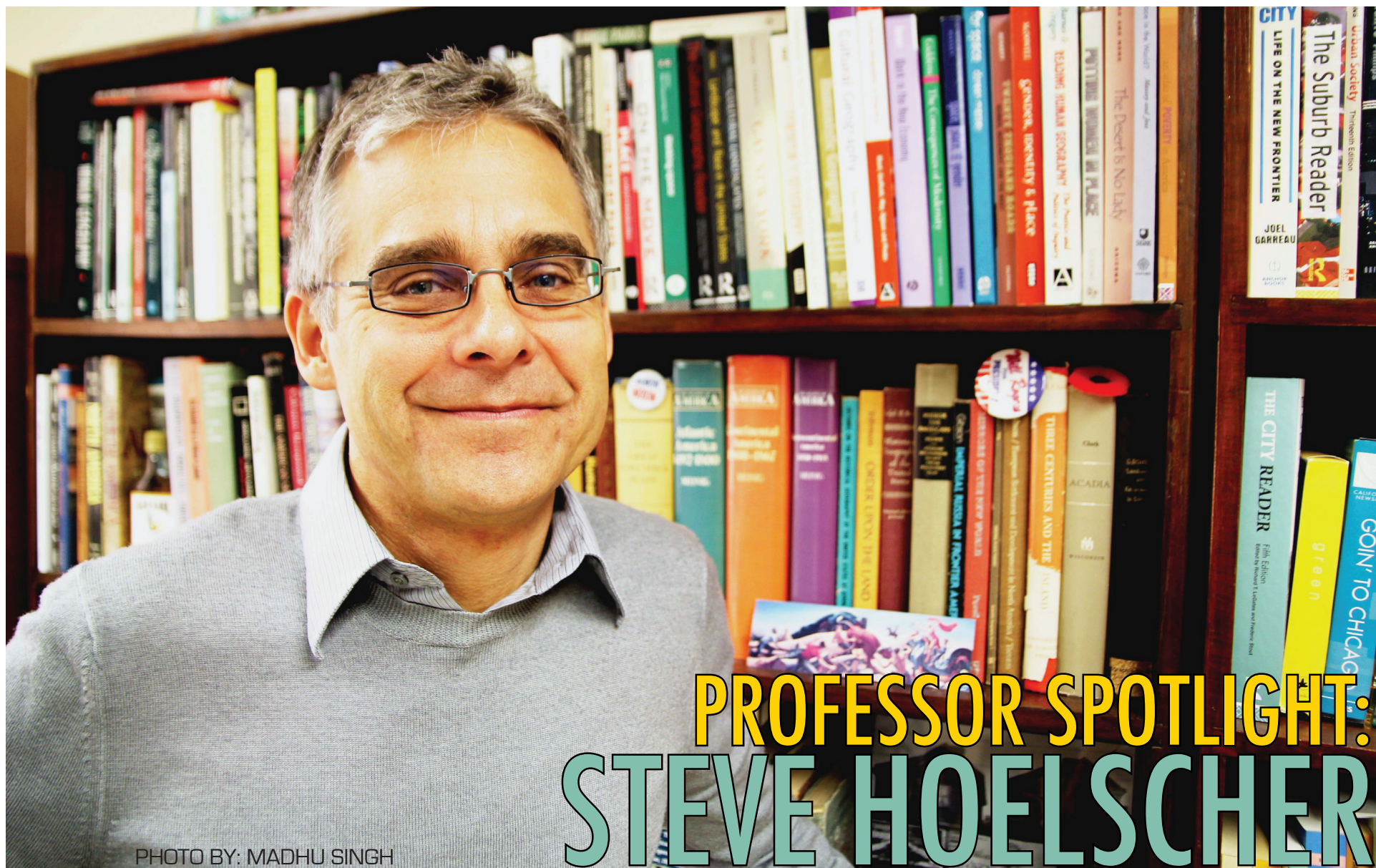


PHOTO BY: MADHU SINGH

PROFESSOR SPOTLIGHT: STEVE HOELSCHER

An outgoing, easy to talk to professor, Steven Hoelscher is the real deal.

"He truly has a genuine care for the intellectual development of his students and their well-being," said senior Joseph Lam of his study abroad professor.

Hoelscher grew up spending much of his time outdoors. While for a time he wanted to be a professional track athlete, Hoelscher knew that career-wise he really wanted to do something with the environment. In college he discovered he was actually most interested in urban areas.

"By taking courses in geography... I found myself more and more interested in the urban elements of the environment," Hoelscher said. "I studied abroad for a year in Vienna, Austria and that really, really moved me much more strongly in the direction of the urban studies."

Today Hoelscher fulfills his love of the city as an American studies and geography professor at UT. After graduating from Gustavus Adolphus College (located in St. Peter, Minn.) with a bachelor's in geography and environmental studies, Hoelscher landed a first job that would send him on an even different path.

"I worked as a teacher assistant in three different courses (at the University of Minnesota)," Hoelscher said. "It really helped me realize that – wow – I like working with students. I was essentially a student myself, but I liked working with students and helping them make their way through their courses. I must have had something to offer them because it really helped direct me towards a career in education."

After one semester on the job Hoelscher decided to apply

to graduate school in geography. After completing his master's at the University of Toronto, he moved on the get his Ph.D. in geography from the University of Wisconsin-Madison. For his next and first four years out of school he worked as an assistant professor at LSU.

"It was fine," Hoelscher said. "But a job opened here (at UT) in American studies and it was really appealing. [I thought] Louisiana was probably not the place I wanted to spend my career and this place opened up which seemed like a dream job, and has turned out to be a dream job."

Hoelscher does many, many different things in his dream job: from teaching large lecture courses to lecturing at graduate seminars to researching and writing books and articles to working in the department of photography at the Harry Ransom Center.

"They're very different things," Hoelscher said. "Sitting in front of my computer for hours trying to create prose that is meaningful and connected to what I'm researching, and then standing in front of 180 students talking about everything from labor strikes to public memorials. You're brain works quite differently and it's always stimulating to have both of those working together."

The aspect he most looks forward to, however, is neither in his office nor a classroom.

"Vienna is such a marvelous place to study," Hoelscher said. "I can really see the effect that it has on students. Many students have been transformed by the experience of study abroad. I certainly was a college student. It changed me profoundly in how I approach, understand and interact

with the world."

While a world record may have been nice, it's safe to say this change was a good thing. Hoelscher has lead students to Vienna four times now and loves how he is able to connect to students in a way that's virtually impossible in a normal semester.

"It's been remarkably rewarding to see the effect that the course has had on the students," Hoelscher said. "It's the kind of teaching I thought and hoped I would do in college. When we're in Vienna for a month we see each other every day for three to four hours and then we go out on field trips. I really get to know students and they get to know me in a way that was something of an ideal in my own mind of what a college professor would be."

Hoelscher stays in touch with students and has two former students currently living in Vienna, one working at the United Nations. It is this dedication to his students and his passion for his work that makes this professor "someone you'd both enjoy working with and having a beer with," according to his longtime colleague and friend Robert Abzug.

"I think the hallmarks of a good teacher are a commitment to the substance of a subject, a willingness to demand hard work of his students and to make that work worthwhile by offering them compelling material," said Abzug, a UT professor of history and American studies. "[Hoelscher] is someone who is willing to go th

■ RACHEL MARINO

LEGISLATION RECAP

SR. 1209

In Support of Annual Gender Equity Reports

PASSED

SR. 1210

In Support of a Bachelor of Science Degree in Economics

PASSED

SR. 1211

In Support of a Comprehensive Minor Policy

PASSED

SR. 1212

In Support of Clarifying the Plus/Minus System

PASSED

SR. 1213

In Support of a New Transcript Policy

PASSED

CAMPUS UPDATES

CTBAC UPDATES

The College Tuition and Budget Advisory Committee for the College of Liberal Arts is working to create a college-wide survey to gauge opinion on student priorities. We are looking at topics including TAs, on-campus housing and food plans, and summer school - just to name a few. CTBAC

is hoping to garner student opinion on these issues to present our next round of recommendations to Dean Randy Diehl. Any student opinion is appreciated, and please be on the lookout for our annual survey!

send comments to la.ctbac@gmail.com

MARK YOUR CALENDAR

SPRING BREAK MARCH 11-16

MARCH 11-16
SPRING BREAK

APRIL 1
LAST DAY AN UG MAY (W/ DEAN'S APPROVAL) DROP A CLASS

APRIL 15 - 26
REGISTRATION FOR SUMMER AND FALL SEMESTER

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT	MARCH
					1	2	
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
24 31	25	26	27	28	29	30	

STUDENT SPOTLIGHT



STUDENT LEADER OF THE MONTH

Jordan Metoyer is a third year pursuing a double major in Economics and Urban Studies and joint Bridging Disciplines Certificates in Social Inequality and Social Entrepreneurship. Her research interests include gentrification, educational access, and the role of women in local government. The proud Los Angeles native loves following current events and will pursue a career in public service, specifically in the realm of urban development and housing reform. During her time at UT Austin, Jordan has been involved with Student Government, serving as the current Chief of Staff, Underrepresented Students Agency Director and Longhorn

Legislative Aide. Jordan's passion for service is exuded in her roles as a Girl Scouts troop volunteer, Rapoport Service Scholar, and a member of Texas Orange Jackets, the oldest honorary women's organization on campus. In her junior year, Jordan has continued to advocate for all students and bridge communities through her involvement with the City Relations Task Force, INSPIRE Leadership Program, Multicultural Engagement Center, and Invest in Texas, a nonpartisan campaign which advocated for higher education during the Texas Legislative Session.

Congratulations to this year's Liberal Arts Council's Study Abroad Scholarship winners. Scholarship amounts range from \$250 to \$2,000 and are based on both need and scholastic aptitude. At the beginning of every long semester, current undergrad Liberal Arts students have the opportunity to apply for a scholarship to help fund studying abroad. To apply, students must be an undergraduate currently enrolled in The College of Liberal Arts and must have a UT-Austin GPA of 2.75.

FALL 2012 LAC STUDY ABROAD SCHOLARSHIP

Alaina Cox
Jose Ricardo Espitia
Ali Breland
Nicholas Reel
Vikraman Parthiban
Elise Voorhis
Sarabeth Flowers
Catherine Moreno

AWARDS AND HONORS

Coming
Soon

Liberal Arts Council
Excellence in
Advising Award
Nominations
announced
March 9th

THE OUTLET

CAMPUS LIFE, POP CULTURE, MINUTIAE.
MUNDANE OR INSPIRING, THE LIBERATOR SHARES ITS
THOUGHTS ON... WELL... EVERYTHING.

I want Wendy's. I want premature high blood pressure. I want happiness.

HARRISON DROMGOOLE

I saw a lady remove the pickles from her Chick-fil-a sandwich. What reason did she have to continue eating it? None. No reason.

CHEYENNE SMITH

All I want in life is for my spring break to be a real life version of "Spring Breakers."

NATALIE BERNSTIEN

You know the semester is off to a rough start when even your DVR's assignments overwhelm you.

CASSIE MANEEN

The people at UT who don't check the weather before they leave for class are those who make the rookie mistake of assuming Austin weather is consistent.

DANA HENNING

Students say battling gale force winds is a great improvement from the usual army of homeless men.

KEELY WITHEROW

I love walking outside and being punched in the face by hurricane-strength winds.

NATALIA NARANJO

In preparation for the 2013 football season, Adrian Peterson re-tears ACL. #SKOLVIKES

MEGAN PALOMBO

I realized the biggest thing I've taken from UT is the networking. Which means I'm paying tuition to make friends. Remind me why this is good?

PATTY SANGER

I found this obscure band from Montreal online last night and just assumed they would be in Austin sometime soon. I was right!

WESLEY HOWARD

Unpopular opinion: I fear the new Gatsby movie will be too over-the-top and ignore the beautiful subtlety of the book. Sorry not sorry.

MADHU SINGH

That awkward moment when you slip and fall in the middle of campus because it actually rains the day you don't wear rainboots.

KELLY DEMOYA

Why is there chipped paint on the wall of CLA? I hate to say this, but it makes the building look more liberal arts-y.

ELIE WU

ADVISING: MAKING THE MOST OF YOUR VISIT

TOP 3 SUGGESTIONS FROM STUDENTS:

Prepare yourself

**Be open and
willing to talk
about yourself**

**Come with
questions**

TOP 3 SUGGESTIONS FROM ADVISORS:

**Use the resources
that the university
provides**

Be open-minded

**Being productive
and persistent is
the key to success**

The hardest step is the first one. But, once you enter the office you have already overcome advising's biggest challenge—getting people in the door. After freshmen orientation many students don't go back to see their advisor with questions or to check in until it is already too late. The information students receive during an advising appointment is paramount because it dictates which classes students take, as well as how many hours and even the amount of time it takes a student to graduate.

The university is struggling to have students graduate on time, which is a university priority considering the 4-year graduation rate currently hovers just above 50 percent. This is not only costly for the students, but it also costs the university money in the long run. Why do so many students not take full advantage of the academic advisors and resources on campus?

KNOW WHAT YOU NEED

Each semester, right before registration, students show up to an advising appointment and expect the advisors to tell them all the classes to take. However, this approach is a waste of time for both the students and advisors. Miscommunication in advising can cause serious problems for a degree plan. A lack of information or insufficient advising creates frustration for many students.

"I wish I had started out taking Greek because it is offered less since not as many people take it," Alenis Leon, a sophomore Economics and Classics major, explained, "It would have been extremely helpful if I had been made aware of that earlier on." More efficient advising could help students avoid degree-planning errors that postpone graduation. To make an advising appointment the most productive, students should come in with questions or concerns. The advisors should also be held responsible for reviewing the interactive degree audit (IDA) prior to the meeting, so they are familiar with the students' major and previous coursework. It is also helpful to familiarize yourself with the digital IDA interface, available through UT Direct, so you can better focus on your specific needs.

"When a student doesn't know where to go or needs help, come talk to us first," said Student Advisor Craig Gilden, "I'll either have the answer to your question, or I'll be able to direct you to the right place to answer your question." However, many students do not realize the extent of resources on campus and in the advising offices. The academic advisors can help students in more substantial ways than just planning a degree; they are here to serve as a guide and a source of information.

"UT is a very large and complex bureaucracy and it can be difficult to navigate or know what steps to take, and I think advisors can play an important role to help simplify this process."
—Craig Gilden

"We are here to help students maximize their time here on campus," Gilden says, "whether that be by talking about study skills, how to earn the best grade in a class, or how to get more involved on campus." Each college here at UT has their own major-specific academic advisors, yet they are often times underutilized and forgotten about after orientation.

COMMUNICATE YOUR GOAL

On the other hand, one thing that has been very helpful for Leon was that her advisors had taken the time to get to know her. "My advisor was generally interested in my life," she beamed, "she said, 'I'm guessing you don't just do school.' And I replied no, I have a job, an internship, am apart of Liberal Arts Council, and have other classes." Many of the departmental advisors are genuinely interested in learning the most about their students, so they can help direct them to the best classes for their interests and future goals. The advisors are eager to give students suggestions and information that will be the most beneficial. However, they can't help if the students don't come in with prepared questions or concerns, and tell them about their interests and long

term plans.

Leon urges, "Appreciate your advisors because they do so much, and they are very underappreciated. Everyone wants to get to know their professors, but your advisors are also valuable resources and can get to know you very well if you go in to see them; my advisor probably knows me better than half of my professors do or ever will know me." Though most students don't know about all of their resources on campus, the university, along with the Liberal Arts Council, is working on making strategic advising uniform throughout the college.

ASK QUESTIONS

It is not a perfect system, and there are many instances of students going awry due to poor advising or a lack of planning. Sometimes students don't realize which courses can cover multiple requirements, or that alternates are available. Other times, there's miscommunication entirely, so that students take things that don't count, or from universities that don't transfer to UT. These are all things to be mindful of, and questions you should feel comfortable asking about, because planning a degree doesn't have to be a traumatic experience.

It can actually be advantageous to form relationships with the academic advisors on campus. "I have gained a much stronger appreciation and understanding of the day-to-day schedule of each academic advisor, what their roles truly encompass, how much work goes into being an academic advisor," explained Ali Raza, a senior government and history major who had the unique opportunity to work in the Government Advising Office, "...their job descriptions are not simply limited to academic advising and extends to information sessions on different programs, internships, study abroad, conferences, and presentations."

Ultimately, connecting with an advisor will enhance a student's experience here at UT and after. They are here to help you, so be knowledgeable about your own degree, visit them regularly enough to acclimate them with what you need, and take advantage of how they can help you reach your goals for your time on campus.

■ MEGAN PALOMBO



SXSW: Inside and Out

South By Southwest isn't a direction, a place or a conference; it's a week long extravaganza of entertainment. Twenty-six years and counting, SXSW annually attracts musicians, filmmakers, leaders in technology and amazing speakers to Austin. During March 8th – 17th, you've got the opportunity to experience some of the greatest in entertainment.

Amidst a sea of events, many notable speakers like Former Vice President Al Gore, MSNBS host Rachel Maddow and basketball legend Shaquille O'Neal will visit to speak about personal and popular issues. Film lovers can look forward to Joss Whedon's "Much Ado About Nothing" or Stephen Finnigan's "Hawking," and for the maniacs of music, prepare your ears for a myriad of music from bands like Macklemore and Lewis, and keynote speaker Dave Grohl.

But enough of the PR – what does this mean for you? Basically, you don't need to pay for the experience, you just need to volunteer! Volunteering is more than just an awesome time – it means free swag and opportunities.

"I heard about SXSW's volunteer opportunities through friends that have participated in it and said it was amazing," says Cheyenne Matthews-Hoffman, a journalism student. "To be honest, volunteering sounds awful and like some sort of charity, but at SXSW, it would be more accurate to call the experience a partnership. I helped out the film crews last year. They were easy and great to work with, and the best part was all the free movies I got to see. It was like a working for a movie theater where you could just help out and then go in and watch the movie free of charge and before everyone else."

To volunteer, check out SXSW's website for details and instructions. But make sure to register

quickly, because the event is just around the corner. Volunteering for SXSW benefits you and everyone involved, but most importantly, you can literally get some free food and clothes on your back.

"I volunteered with the interactive portion of SXSW," says Scott Rumsey, a Computer Science major, "and it was entirely worth it.

Helping out and listening to the speakers was amazing, but the trade show was a gold mine for free opportunities. You

can play games, look at new technologies and find amazing things you can't just see anywhere else. The best parts

were the free shirts and food. Sponsored food trucks give away free food everywhere, so if you pay for your food, you're doing it

wrong. Businesses also hand out clothing like everyone's a walking advertisement, which is pretty much true.

And the event is great at getting small business's a solid start up. SXSW is really just fantastic for everyone involved."

Everything free is good. South By Southwest is also good. So you should volunteer. There's no reason to miss out on the entertainment spectacle of SXSW. Technology, food, music – you name it, they've got it. And you've got the opportunity to see what you want free of charge.

■ HARRISON DROMGOOLE

VOLUNTEERING AT SXSW

There are two types of volunteering opportunities, with a ton of subsections within each type. There are over 3000 volunteers with 50+ crews.

The Conference volunteers primarily work at panels and monitor events (like the golf tournament or the softball games), but they also help at the awards shows and manage the filmmaker lounges. These crews earn benefits based on the number of shifts worked, and the volunteers are limited to one crew for the week.

The Production volunteers work as managers and crews for the theaters and venues. They also can work as photographers or banner crew, and things of that nature. These crews earn benefits based on the number of hours worked.

SXSW rewards their volunteers primarily with the perk of badges which range from a t-shirt and wristband to maximum access to all the events going on in the week. For more information, visit:

volunteer.sxsw.com

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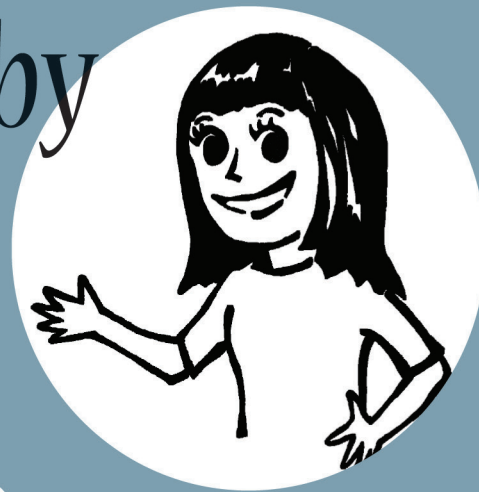


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