UF Honors Program’s Prism
New Joe in Town
A Trader Joe’s comes to Gainesville: see how it compares to the already (very) established Publix.

How to Get Started in Research
What you should do to get involved in your favorite research project

Stop Crisis Management
Steps to teach you how to really retain the information from lectures in order to ace your exams

Stressonomics
The economics of de-stressing

Letter from the Editor

I mustache you a question. How do you view college? Is it your stepping stone to graduate school? Is it your opportunity to live out Animal House? Is it your chance to prepare for reality? Or is it a four-year long nap where you can sit back and enjoy the ride?

Whatever college means to you, that’s your perspective. The most important part of that perspective is that it is a perspective. A perspective is not concrete or universal; it is an abstract idea that is subjective. You define college in a way unique to you. What you define college as is not the next person’s definition too. That’s the point. It can be many things all at once.

College can be like an abstract painting. You lose the experience art transports you into if you look at everything concretely. What you see in it may not be what the next person sees, but that doesn’t mean either perspective is wrong. They’re both right. But you’re missing out if you think your idea is the only right one. Experience life and the unique college experience for everything it is: everything you see it as, everything your friends’ see it as, everything your parents’ see it as, and everything else in between.

As this semester comes to a close, one more of the precious four years we have is gone. With whatever time you may have left in college, I challenge you to change your perspectives. Everything around you is not only what is appears to be. It can be whatever you make it to be. Experience what you have in a new way and enjoy that experience.

Sincerely,
Lexy Khella
Founding Editor-in-Chief
Duchamp created Fountain, a ready-made, in 1917 for an art exhibit hosted by the Society of Independent Artists, who then rejected the piece from the show. Fountain was part of a contemporary art movement called “Dadaism,” or “Dada,” which emerged out of resistance and frustration with World War I. By embracing the idea that the war was fueled by “logic” and “reason” of its supporters, Dada denounced all rationality and embraced the irrational. Why? Because it could. It looked for every outlet to counter the norms and traditions of society. Who would dare stain the world famous Mona Lisa, upheld as one the world’s greatest pieces of art? Duchamp. Society says DaVinci achieved perfection, and Duchamp adds a mustache to “perfection” in his L.H.O.O.Q. Whether it be adding facial hair or flipping a urinal, his art resists what society dictates.

But who has the right to deny these pieces as art? Who can say that a 180-degree turned urinal is not a fountain, or a work or art for that matter? Duchamp, like the other Dada artists, challenged the institutions and people of society that defined abstract concepts with a concrete meaning, such as “art.” In parallel, these artists rejected the definitions of reason and logic that Dadaists believed led to war.

By adopting the theme of resistance against all odds, they refuted every notion that society embraced because they felt entitled by the laws of personal interpretation and freedom of the mind. Dada art was not just about art; it was not exclusive to the aesthetic beauty that traditional art maintains. Because tradition dictates aesthetic qualities, Dada drove to reject such traditional qualities. Therefore, Dada works, such as Fountain, were more than something to look at; they were statements.

If society says that a urinal is only a urinal, Duchamp said no. He said it was a fountain instead. Why not? Why be bound to the notions that are given to us instead of recreating and redefining them? It is unrealistic to expect every subject of society to readily adopt someone else’s perspective. Challenge what you are told to create a new perspective that is your own.

Duchamp’s perspective allowed him to make art out of a urinal, which society labeled as only a urinating vessel. This represents our four years in college, minus the urine context. Higher education allows students the opportunity to expand their horizons, challenge their preconceptions, and create and redefine perspectives to view the world. We are encouraged to challenge all notions given to us, both the abstract and concrete. Is a urinal really only a urinal? If you accept that notion as it is given to you, then the answer is yes. If you challenge and resist the concrete nature that is assumed, you have a fountain.

We are engulfed in a world where society finds comfort in the status quo. This concrete nature provides stability. But society will not progress unless something new is put forward. We have four years to explore and change our realities. Not once, but over and over again because a urinal will never only be a urinal. It is our responsibility and luxury as students to discover what else it could be.
In his latest book, a collection of essays titled *The Show Culture* (or *La Civilización del espectáculo* in Spanish), Peruvian writer and Nobel Prize laureate Mario Vargas Llosa dedicates a couple of pages to what could be considered a 21st-century debate: print publications versus electronic publications. Not surprisingly, Vargas Llosa sides with the print format. He recognizes that the differences between the two are practically nil considering that both an e-book and a traditional book offer the same content to the users, but he argues that printed books simply cannot provide the same sensorial experience to the reader as printed books do. In other words, and by taking the liberty of rephrasing his argument, you simply cannot make love to a screen.

Regardless of personal preferences, the reality is that recent technological improvements have slowly shifted the balance in favor of electronic books and other publications. In the last two years, e-books have outsold print books. Products such as Amazon’s Kindle, Apple’s iPad, and most recently, smartphones, offer a lighter and more practical way of storing and reading books, magazines, and newspapers. Now, when you search for a book on Amazon (a company started for selling print books), it usually sells both formats. Acclaimed magazines and newspapers, like *The Economist* and *The New York Times*, now provide customers with both digital and print versions of publications once they have subscribed. This current trend seems to be putting print books under the spotlight and has led many people to wonder if books as we know them will at some point become obsolete. Though it is too early to tell, many “traditional” readers, such as this humble servant writing to you, fear that print books will remain for too long under technology’s light and burn.

The current e-book trend resembles the rise of the mp3 file, which was created a decade ago and almost led to the disappearance of the CD industry. Though CD stores remain, the industry has not recovered since. One may ask if print books will have the same fate.

They could, but then again, it is too early to tell. At the end of the day, it will be the customers’ preferences that will decide, the same way that we now have those who brag about their iPhones, and those who claim “an iPad is not a music collection!”

Consumers’ preferences matter because as long as there is considerable demand for the print format, publishers will supply them. Also, saving the printing process does not dramatically minimize the production cost for publishing companies. According to publishers, printing a book barely amounts to 8 percent of its production cost. Considering that publishers charge more for a print book, and that there is still a demand for them, we should not expect them to disappear soon.

Ultimately, it will all come down to which version works better for you, the reader. Preferences for digital publications are increasing. Digital books are more practical, easier to carry, and more environmentally friendly. Yet, they are not beautiful. Digital books are intangible and, to an extent, “lifeless” objects. While the reader’s interaction with a digital book ends where the eyes meet the pixels, a print book can be felt, can be written on, can be destroyed or preserved, and, most importantly, can be admired. In theory, there are almost no differences between digital and print in terms of sharing a message or in terms of the content itself. Then again, can an iPad or a Kindle reproduce that peaceful and calm feeling one gets when entering a book store? Can your computer screen transmit that electrifying feeling that travels through one’s fingers when turning the pages of a book and getting lost in another world? As much as you try filling up your electronic device with all the classics, ranging from Tolstoy’s *War & Peace* to Garcia Marquez’s *One Hundred Years of Solitude*, you will have a hard time matching the visual and emotional effect such collections would have on any book worm when displayed on a bookshelf.

Needless to say, save your matches for later.

*The Future of Publications: Shall We Start the Book Burning?*

**BY JOSE M. ALVAREZ C.**

**SOPHOMORE, HISTORY AND ECONOMICS MAJOR**
Scandal: The life of a T.V. Addict

BY MIKAELA HARRIS
SENIOR, ENGLISH AND FRENCH MAJOR

Every story starts with an idea, an idea that some author somewhere
over the rainbow dreamed up. Shonda Rhimes created the Scandal ad-
dict. Years ago, Rhimes made her debut as the head writer and executive
producer of the popular medical drama Grey’s Anatomy. It is to say
that Grey’s Anatomy spawned generations. From my mom and her friends
to my sorority sisters, people of all ages made Thursday night at 9:00 Grey’s
Anatomy time. Scandal has taken this craze even further.

Thursday at 10:00, your T.V had better be set to ABC because that is
how Shonda Rhimes does it. Watching olivia and Fitz has created a T.V addict who revolves around
a woman so emotionless that she makes up a miscarriage to win votes.

How does Shonda do it? How does she have us loving a man for being
moral, but at the same time have us empathizing with him for having to
hide his passion for olivia? The answer to this is that she created people, not characters. Olivia,
Fitz, Melly – they’re all real. None of them are perfect, but their flaws make them real to the viewers. We sympathize with Fitz for being married to a woman so emotionless, mar-
rried presidential candidate, Fitzgerald Grant. And from there, the drama absurdly
continues.

As honors students, we are united in our ambition to make the most of
our brief time here at one of the top universities in the nation. The honors program
has taken this craze even further.

The new Honors Program Requirements

Academic (min. 8 points)

• 1-2 credit Honors course (grade of B or higher) (Note: Science For Life does not count as an Honors course)
• Apply for a nationally competitive scholarship or fellowship (e.g., Rhodes, Marshall, Truman, Goldwater, Fulbright, etc.)
• Induction into Phi Beta Kappa or Phi Kappa Phi
• A publication in a refereed undergraduate journal (such as the UF Journal of Undergraduate Research)
• Complete a minor
• A regional conference presentation in a discipline relevant to the student’s major
• Serve as an undergraduate teaching assistant (note: a max. of 1 point is allowed for this activity)
• 3+ credit Honors course (grade of B or higher) (2 points)
• Graduate course (grade of B or higher) (2 points)
• A publication in a refereed professional journal (2 points)
• Complete a second major (2 points)
• A national conference presentation in a discipline relevant to the student’s major (2 points)
• Complete an Honors thesis as part of requirements to graduate magna cum laude or summa cum laude (3 points)
• For students in the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences, complete the CALS upper-division Honors Program (3 points)

Enrichment (min. 6 points)

• Short-term study abroad
• Participate in a Partners in the Parks program
• Honors program in leadership activities (e.g., hold a leadership position in a student orga-
nization or activity) (note: a maximum of 3 points is allowed for this type of activity)
• Participation in a leadership conference (e.g. LeaderShape, Gatorship, UF Women’s Leadership Conference)
• Participation in a Florida Alternative Breaks trip
• On-campus or off-campus service at least 40 hours per year (2 points)
• Complete an internship at least 45 hours in duration (2 points)
Math tends to be so boring much of the time because you know you’re not hearing the whole story. Well, maybe you don’t know that’s the reasoning behind your animosity, but just stop to think about it for a second. Could you really justify some of those “obvious” facts you learned all through grade school? It’s “common sense” that there are no whole numbers between 0 and 1, and it’s also a slightly more advanced “common sense” that any whole number can be written uniquely as a product of primes. For instance, 6 = 3 × 2, and no other way exists to express it as a product of primes (up to ordering).

Surprisingly, these related facts are not always true. There are plenty of rational numbers between 0 and 1 (in fact, there are countably many), and in more sophisticated number systems there is no unique way to factorize numbers. Most of math education is taught without showing why these fundamental properties are indeed true. In essence, the analytical and argumentative side of mathematics is left alone entirely.

Contrary to popular belief, creativity plays an even larger role in the advancement of modern mathematics. New ideas fuel solutions to old problems, and sometimes, these observations contribute to other fields of study. For example, the periodic table of elements in chemistry is a result of symmetries of different geometries. More specifically, the study of Lie algebras (an advanced abstract mathematical structure) provides much of the fundamental background for understanding the way in which atoms of different elements arrange themselves. Figure 1 is an example of a creative branch between algebra and geometry – the simple geometric property was found to have profound algebraic meaning.

On the other hand, some of the more interesting mathematical quandaries do require a greater understanding of the fundamentals prior to being verified. For instance, it can be proven mathematically that no matter how vigorously you stir a cup of coffee, at least one point in the cup will return to its original position. That is, one infinitesimal-sized particle will have no net change in its position.

Consider a ball. When this ball is sliced into a finite number of point sets in some fashion, and then some of these sets are removed, all of the sets can be rearranged to form two balls identical to the first. This so-called “paradoxical decomposition” is known as the “Banach-Tarski paradox.” Interesting implications such as this in higher levels of mathematics give evidence that math is a creative science with remarkable applications.

Unless you were very lucky, such no-nonsense justifications and creative results were generally left out of your math education. If you start figuring out why things are true in math, classes will become easier, you’ll gain mathematical confidence, and you’ll start to see math as the wonder that it is.

**By Mitchell Harris**

**Freshman, Math/Finance Major**

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**Sudoku:**
- Fill the grid with numbers so that every row, every column and every 3-by-3 box contains the digits 1 to 9, without repeating.

```
 4 5 6 7 8 9
 9 1 7 2 3 4
 2 3 1 4 5 6
 7 8 9 6 4 3
 6 4 2 1 9 8
 3 1 8 4 2 9
```

**Kakuro:**
- Fill all the empty squares using the numbers 1 to 9 so that the sum of each horizontal set of digits equals the number in the black triangle to its left, and the sum of each vertical set of digits equals the number in the black triangle above it. No number may be used in the same row or column if the numbers are separated by a black square.

```
 14 16 11 27 16 20 31
 14 15 16 22
 19 26 9
 15 13 10 12
 16 5 10
 6 10
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The figure is an example of a creative, geometric “picture” proof that the sum 1/2 + 1/4 + 1/8 + 1/16 + ... converges to 1.
August 17, 2012: As I unpacked my last suitcase and fell down upon my tiny, stiff dorm room bed, I sighed and wiped the drops of sweat from my face. At this moment, I was completely alone. For a second I panicked, a million “What If’s” and “Why’s” flashing through my mind. “What if I don’t make any friends?” “What if my roommate is incredibly weird?” “Why didn’t I just stay home and go to the local community college with all my high school friends?” I gather my senses. “Alright Cassidy, breathe,” I tell myself. “You go to the University of Florida now, your dream school and the best in the state.” Although to me it seemed as if this uncertainty and intense nervousness was unknown to anyone else, I have come to know now that everyone had been feeling these same misgivings. So when did I know I was in college? When the security, comforts, and routines of home were gone, and I was forced to make my own way through such obstacles as rush, the first day of classes, the bookstore, and that perilous realm that is the UF Financial Aid office.

Austin Sanchez, a freshman Finance major, said UF was, in comparison to his high school in South Florida, “definitely a lot harder; it’s no joke.” He said it takes time management skills to balance his in-major courses with his general education requirements, one such being Marriage and Family Issues, a popular diversity class.

Anna Stamas, a freshman Applied Physiology and Kinesiology major made her room in Hume more comfortable by bringing an icon of St. Ana to commemorate her greek orthodox heritage. She said her IB program work in high school greatly prepared her for the rigor of college. “In high school, I was given a lot of work, a lot of essays, a lot of papers, a lot of at-home work. I was used to that when I came here, so it was the same in that aspect.” She added that the large lecture classes were an adjustment since the professors aren’t as “one-on-one with you as in high school.”

Chehade Boulos, a freshman Chemical Engineering major said he made college feel more like home by doing what he calls, “refining [my] comfort” – basically by using his wireless mouse to control his TV from bed and listening to music to fall asleep each night. As for the academic side of college, he states, “you could coast through high school, and I, for the most part, did, but here you cannot do that... You need that first semester to get into shape.” He also added that the best decision he made in his first semester at UF was going to class, even if it was only twice a week at 8:30 am. However, putting off three weeks of microeconomics lectures until the day before the exam is something he does not recommend to anyone. “I will managed to get an A,” he boasts with a slightly satisfied smirk.

February 11, 2013: Now I sit here writing about my experiences. It seems so long ago that I was that wide-eyed girl who’d stepped into her first state politics class and worried where to sit. With my first semester gone before I could blink, I saw myself make friends, make memories, and acquire confidence I never would have thought possible. I attended my first college football game (and was embarrassed I didn’t know the words to “We are the Boys of old Florida”) and experienced my first week of midterms and finals (which I wouldn’t have survived without the 24 hour Starbucks in Library West).
Early January was upon us. We tried to cling to the final moments with our family and friends at home as Winter Break came to a close, not to return until Spring Break. The end of Winter Break not only brings a separation from our loved ones, but also the beginning of the Spring semester, and, with it, countless hours of studying and all the stresses of college life. Coming back to school after Winter Break simply seemed bleak, and we didn’t even have football games to look forward to.

This year, however, something was different. In scent, in allure, filled the air. Something had sprung up while we were gone, and that “thing” was our very own Trader Joe’s in Gainesville.

Trader Joe’s is a chain of specialty grocery stores that prides itself on carrying hard-to-find items at low prices. They do so by stocking mostly their own brands of products and buying local whenever possible. Gainesville has the privilege of having the second Trader Joe’s in Florida, the first located in Sarasota, meaning this store will be many students’ first exposure to the brand.

Walking into Trader Joe’s satisfies nearly every college student’s culinary desires. Vegan, organic, and local options lines the shelves—like a super (farmer’s) market—and nearly everything costs less than Publix.

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The produce section at Trader Joe’s carries all the standard fruits and veggies, plus organically-grown versions. Most of the produce is sold at lower prices than at Publix, but some items did not look as healthy as the same items at Publix. The fruit looked smaller and paler, considering both organic and non-organic varieties. The cheese section at Trader Joe’s however: takes the cake—or would it take the cheesehead? Trader Joe’s has any type of cheese to satisfy any cheesemonger’s taste, and they have it organized by sharpness. From fresh mozzarella to perfectly aged balms, they have it all.

Trader Joe’s also has several aisles of frozen touring a wide variety of frozen foods. The ethnic section of their freezers will impress any palate: they carry everything from frozen falafel to frozen pho. Frozen organic vegetables, pre-made meals, and desserts fill the freezers. Everything is all-natural and they offer organic and vegan options in every category.

The low-prices and specialty items also hold true for snack foods, cereals, breads, pastas and sauces, and more. But Publix offers convenience not found at Trader Joe’s. Publix has a larger meat section, although Trader Joe’s offers lower-priced organic meats and even carries kosher meat. Trader Joe’s lacks both a deli and a bakery, and they do not carry many spices, drug items, or paper goods either. Publix offers more items than Trader Joe’s, and the few name brands that Trader Joe’s carries, such as Morningstar and Fage, cost more than they do at Publix.

Trader Joe’s is a welcome addition to Butler Plaza and Gainesville and will undoubtedly attract a regular customer base, but it would prove difficult to give up Publix as our main grocer. But because of Trader Joe’s convenient location between the two Butler Plaza Publixes—one of life’s biggest mysteries—it is convenient to stop by to pick up some organic ketchup for your kosher hamburger.

New JOE in town

Here’s one for the ladies: the election of Korea’s very first female president, Park Geun-Hye, has sparred not only a monumental wave of patriotic pride concentrated in South Korea but such news has also drove a wave of feminine pride that has swept across global political and social realms.

If you’re still impatiently waiting for that action-packed drama on ABC to air the life-changing finale, look no further: Park Geun-Hye’s own personal story of obtaining power compares to that of a heart-racing television show.

Finishing first in a close presidential race, Park Geun-Hye won office on December 19, 2012 against her competitor Moon Jae-In and officially took office on February 23, 2013. In a typically patriarchal society, a victory for the first female president seems like the opportune moment for the underdog to shine. However, believe it or not Park-Geun Hye already had political power in the past. At a staggering young age of 22, she assumed the position as First Lady. In fact, her father, Park Chung-Hee obtained presidential authority as South Korea’s third president in 1969 and overruled his two year rule limit to 1979. During a failed assassination to her father, Park Geun-Hye’s mother was finally wounded, making Park Geun-Hye First Lady. Five years later, the director of the Korean CIA and supposedly close friend of the president, Kim Jae-Gyu, made a Shakespearean Brutus-like move and tearfully shot President Park Chung-Hee at a banquet. Some criticize Park-Chung Hee for acting in such a manner compatible to that of a merciless dictator. If so, does such unfavorable ruling pass through the genetics of his daughter? The new Korean president assures her people this is not the case. In her inaugural speech, Park Geun-Hye pledges to distribute wealth, create jobs, and reestablish ties with North Korea. Even more interestingly, Park Geun-Hye’s life journey is a cultural road less traveled. The average Korean woman is expected to marry, have children, and fulfill her duties as a responsible housewife. Surprisingly, certain clubs in Korea exist solely for the main goal of young, beautiful Korean girl meeting wealthy business men. However, Park Geun-Hye not only has refused to obey Beyoncé’s suggestions of “putting a ring on it,” but she also doesn’t have any children of her own. She emphasizes the lack of these things normally present in a woman’s life because of her life commitment to public service.

South Korea, a modern-day patriarchal society has elected its first female president whereas the United States, the image of equality and freedom, has yet to attain a strong female presence in the presidency or vice presidency. What kind of implications does this small fact make at all? With that being said, perhaps our generation needs to revisit the female-empowering lyrics of Kelly Clarkson’s Miss Independent and Destiny Child’s Independent Woman.
## Cinema from around the world

### LEVEL 1

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movie</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Color Purple</td>
<td>African American</td>
<td>This movie is famous for being directed by Steven Spielberg and starring Oprah Winfrey. It was nominated for many awards, including Academy and Golden Globes. It is about a young African American girl named Celie Harris and shows problems women faced during the early 1900s. Themes portrayed in the movie include poverty, racism, and sexism.</td>
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### LEVEL 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Movie</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Namesake</td>
<td>South Asian</td>
<td>The Namesake portrays the struggles of Ashoke and Ashima Ganguli, first generation immigrants from India to the United States. They have an American-born son, Gogol, who grows up accustomed to it. As an international student, cultural diversity and acceptance are of the utmost importance to me, as they should be to you as our world grows more and more integrated. So here is a breakdown of the movies I think are worth watching.</td>
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### Joy Luck Club

Based upon the popular novel by Amy Tan, the film portrays four older women, all Chinese immigrants living in San Francisco. They meet regularly to play mahjong, eat, and tell stories about their Chinese-American daughters. The film reveals the hidden pasts of these women and their daughters' lives influenced by the clash of Chinese and American cultures. The film has been positively received and has won an award for being one of the top ten films in 1993. |

### Central do Brasil

This Academy Award and Golden Globe nominated film is set in Brazil and was produced in 1998. It is about a young boy's friendship with a middle-aged woman. The story is about a former school teacher who writes letters to one will read and a young boy whose mother has just died, in search for the father he never knew. |

### Les Choristes

This story is set in a boarding school and revolves around a choir. The film was praised for its songs. Basically, a new teacher shows up at a school and inspires the children by bringing music and putting it into their hearts. Consequently, he transforms them and brings joy into their lives. It was shown at many film festivals and qualified for an Academy Award. |

### 3 Idiots

This highly influential movie portrays the education state in India. The stereotype of South Asian parents is that they are very expectant of their children to perform above average and score excellence in their academics. This movie explores this culture block through a story about three students at a school and how they bend the rules. It went on to win countless awards all over India and was declared a blockbuster. |

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General education classes may annoy us to no end, but somehow, somewhere along the line, we find ourselves returning to their lessons. For me, that happened with LIN2000, an Intro to Linguistics class. I love culture and language, watching foreign films, listening to international music, and simply speaking to people from different backgrounds. This class gave me a new perspective, as we learned about first and second language acquisition, the difference between languages and dialects, and basic phonetics. The most influential idea I took from it was the "exposure effect." The exposure effect argues that the more time you spend immersed in a culture, the faster you will acquire the language, and with much better fluency too! This concept seems so simple, yet it has profound implications. How many of us have learned Spanish in high school and now are barely able to string out a few sentences? I have personally experienced this effect. I learned French for nine years and now find it frustrating that, although my reading comprehension and writing is impeccable, I can barely speak a straight sentence. This theory was further supported for me through my ASL (American Sign Language) class in which we had to attend mandatory "silent meals" and practice our ASL technique. Being surrounded by a culture and its local occupants can have nothing but a beneficial impact for language learners. 
.quickly chat up a few of your friends. You got time. You don’t have much time to make your point, so you need to be concise. Your e-book and the web for reference. You've got this. You've got this.

But, of course, you soon realize that tonight’s the night you were warned by all those DHNet e-mails piling up in your inbox. DHNet would be unavailable just a certain hour, and that certain hour has just passed. Your eye switches. Of course, at the beginning of your professor’s class lecture, he’d explicitly warned against taking the online exam at the last minute for this very reason, but he’d neglected to include this warning online. You look out a sigh. You have all these technological facilitators at your disposal, and they all go to waste. This is not one of your better days.

Instances like this occur quite regularly in higher education. Universities and colleges are reputedly quick to adopt new forms of technology, but even some of the most seemingly-beneficial technological advances implemented in higher education come under scrutiny when one takes their effect on students’ work ethic into account. To single out such a technological innovation: online classes. Many of us have taken them, and whether they are deemed easy or difficult, we sometimes find ourselves dedicating the time to them when we’d take the same class live, even when the exact same material is presented. Is this a hindrance to our comprehension, or is it merely the byproduct of giving us our own freedom to structure as we wish? With book and web access and no moderator to keep us in line, test questions must be rewritten (or sometimes made more difficult) in order to accommodate students’ access to resources, and by association, the entire structure of the course must be changed from that of an in-class format.

Though not as generalizable, smartphones used as class clickers also fall into such a category. While meant to facilitate group response, the clicker app on smartphones requires us to access our phones during class, consequently distracting us. In fact, we might ask a text or Snapchat and thus become preoccupied with this social outlet instead of dedicating our attention to the material at hand, undermining the entire concept behind technological innovation in higher education.

It’s important to note that these situations can be generalized to other facets of schools’ technological implementation as well. Calculators with stororable information, old exams (often with recycled questions) available online, and even online message and discussion boards are making the “education” portion of higher education into a much easier to achieve goal. Yet this goal comes at a price. With “education” seemingly so much easier to achieve, we aren’t truly dedicating the time needed to conventionally learn the material and apply it to our lives. We are instead coasting along at the top of the technological wave, while higher education itself struggles to compensate for these new modes of acquiring knowledge.

Sure, online exams are often timed, and we’re not always allowed to use programmable calculators on tests or quizzes, but this is still a far cry from the era that higher education must scale to compensate for technology’s advancements. In essence, we are happily wasting away our time on the computer, at the top of this technological wave, costing ourselves dedication, and discussion boards are making it possible to communicate effectively without considering the full blow of its potential consequences. Hopefully, we won’t evolve into a society where my mom will tweet that dinner is ready or where someone will tweet about how much fun they had at their birthday party over the summer, we gathered around the table waiting for the cake to come when I noticed that everyone was busily tweeting away on their phones. Because I did not own a smartphone at the time, I felt the absurdity of the whole situation rising as I sat back in silence, staring at the glare reflected on their faces.

Social media today instills us with a sense of instant gratification—as if we are a bright light. Remember the marshmallow test conducted with children? Those that waited for a few more minutes received a second marshmallow. Later in their lives, the children that had delayed gratification grew up to become more successful individuals. Think back, too, the days when people used snail mail as a form of communication. Those letters were thoughtfully composed because it took time for the other party to receive it, unlike Facebook chat where we can talk to someone anywhere instantaneously. The fast-paced news feed and tweets are not allowing us the proper amount of time to let our natural human emotions digest the information we take in. As sociology expert Manuel Castells put it, “…right now, our attention spans are smaller than our cell phones. And just like our cell phones, our attention spans are getting smaller.”

In addition, as the popularity of social media sites steadily increases, we become more vulnerable as a whole. The average age of children who log onto Facebook or Twitter on a daily basis has dropped dramatically from 13 to 7 years of age. Many are too young to understand the dangers of posting pictures of themselves on a public domain where their personal information can be compromised. I have often seen my Facebook friends post their vacation plans on their statuses, giving potential crooks an advantage in committing a successful robbery. Moreover, instead of using social media, there are many who promote social media on which we upload our personal information to a server that could lead to a misuse of power in the future.

The most alarming concern is the fact that people are losing the ability to communicate effectively with each other in person. These sites allow us to project a superficial image of ourselves. There are many instances where friendships are reduced to solely sharing status. When the two individuals meet up in person, neither has anything to say because online, one has time to think of a witty response whereas in person, one has to think on one’s feet.

Regardless of the many cons of social media, there are many who promote social media because it makes communication so much easier. It has allowed me to reconnect with friends I have not seen or had lost contact with since second grade. Furthermore, through tweets or re-tweets, individuals can spread information quickly. Individuals can also use social media to find jobs quickly, especially during a recession.

Despite these pros, the reasons to be cautious with our use of social media will only multiply. It has turned into what one may call the “Pandora box,” something that was released into society without considering the full blow of its consequences. Hopewell, we won’t evolve into a society where my mom will tweet whether she is going to take a photo of her drab, but delicious, dinner that doesn’t warrant the attention of the entire world.
We all know those people. They are the ones who tweet with eight hashtags, who only seem to know how to work the front-facing feature of their iPhone cameras, and who even wish the world a heartfelt “good night” via their Facebook statuses. To help you avoid becoming one of these infamous individuals, here is a list of proper and improper etiquette when dealing with social media.

DO:

1. Make sure your profile is professionally acceptable. Whether you choose to believe it or not, the truth is that many employers scope out the Facebook profiles of their potential employees. Steer clear of the excessive swearing and inappropriate pictures. Whether your profile is set to private or not, some information can always be viewed. Make sure that you would be fine with an employer viewing your Facebook posts.

2. Use Twitter for networking and communicating. With so many businesses and companies hopping onto the Twitter bandwagon, you can “follow” the companies you find interesting and potentially be the first to read about new job opportunities and great deals on merchandise. Twitter is not only for professionals. Follow people who make you laugh! Post about your day-to-day activities, and go back and read over your old tweets in a few months. You might get a kick about what you posted that time you got on the wrong bus, and you will smile remembering that awkward conversation you had to endure that you thought would never end.

3. Post pictures of your surroundings. Take a second to look around you. The world in which we live is beautiful. Every day, we get the chance to view stunning sunsets, amazing architecture, and magnificent views of nature. Yet, somehow, some Instagram users only seem to find Starbucks cups, screenshots of text conversations, and self-portraits “worthy” of posting. These aren’t bad images to post, but you should try to break up the “selfies” with more artistic images every now and then.

DON’T:

1. Start Facebook drama. This type of pitiful virtual arguing can be caused by a number of situations, but it is especially prevalent around the time of any political election. If you choose to post your opinion about politics or any other controversial topic, feel free to do so! Facebook is all about sharing your thoughts. However, be willing to listen to opposing viewpoints, and have the information to back up your beliefs so that you are not the person saying, “Oh my gosh, that guy TOTALLY shouldn’t win! Anyone who votes for Romney is so dumb, LOL.”

2. Overuse hashtags. A hashtag, which is just a pound sign (#), is a great tool—when used correctly. It is meant to link your post with other posts that are similar; it is not meant to be abused. Using too many hashtags, and using hashtags that are way too long (see #omgthisissofunnyhaha), are ways to make sure that your posts are incomprehensible.

3. Post pictures of your food. Unless your plate of food is somehow extraordinarily beautiful (and I mean REALLY beautiful), please refrain from posting images of Thanksgiving dinner or your bowl of cereal. To be honest, it usually looks disgusting. Instagram was made for sharing pictures taken by cell phones, not by fancy digital cameras, which is a whole other “don’t” in itself. That being said, mobile phones aren’t made to be professional cameras, so they often don’t capture every image in great detail. Unfortunately, this makes your delicious dinner look incredibly unappealing.
Adding to the “healthy is better” mantra, a recent study published in the British journal of Health psychology found that diet is directly related to mental and physical health. The related article reported that young people would need to consume approximately seven to eight total servings of fruits and vegetables every day to notice a meaningful positive change.

That sounds ridiculous, you might say. I can barely fit a bag of apples in my mini-fridge, and who has the money to buy all that stuff?

It actually isn’t all that difficult. one of the best staple fruits is bananas: easy on the go, easy to cut up and pair with oatmeal, easy to create a parfait – you get the idea.

Apples are also cheap and easy to eat while walking to class, while grapes are the sweetest way to be healthy on the go. try freezing your next bag of grapes for a no-guilt dessert.

Spinach is one of the best all-in-one foods. Buy a bag of spinach and it will last at least a week, so make a salad, cook some in a pan on the stove or add a handful to a sandwich. Besides being one of the best-tasting green veggies, spinach contains calcium as well as Vitamins A and K for a healthy cardiovascular system.

For a calcium-filled meal, try adding broccoli. You’ll get a healthy vegetable almost immediately by separating a head of broccoli into florets, covering them and cooking them in the microwave with just enough water to cover the bottom of the bowl for about five minutes. Add a little cheese or just a simple dash of salt and you’ll be set.

Another easy vegetable to cook is a sweet potato. Filled with Vitamin A for healthy skin and eyes, sweet potatoes only need about seven minutes in the microwave (remember to stab a few small holes in the skin) and can then be eaten immediately. Don’t forget to add honey for the extra “this isn’t-a-vegetable” factor.

College is about having fun and being in the best shape of your life, and the only way to maintain yourself over the years is to keep nutrition in mind. The good news is that there is no need to fear the spatula or the nutrition label – it’s easy to find convenient, delicious foods that are also college-student savvy.
Freshman 15

BY AMANDA DECANIO
FRESHMAN, ENVIRONMENTAL ENGINEERING

You have lived away from home for some time now. The food generation hubs around campus have become the go-to spots for socializing and energizing. Your stomach has regretfully experienced some concoctions of odds and ends from your pantry and mini fridge that probably should never be put together. Food is energy, and you need plenty of it. No longer are your parents force-feeding you at dinner time. Consequently, there is no such rule as ‘eat your vegetables’ if you just do not feel like it.

This is college, and as a student, you realize that food helps conquer sleep, work schedules. In general, weight gain is common and is nothing to fear. In an effort to stay fuller longer, consider the following ideas. Wake up to a protein-rich breakfast (eggs or yogurt) over a carbohydrate-rich one (bagels) to feel satiated longer. When three-fourths of the brain is made up of water, nourishing yourself is crucial. Sometimes, people confuse dehydration with hunger cues. Eat away from mindless distractions, like the computer, television, and intense homework. Keep your metabolism active by snacking on nuts, fruits, vegetables, and other whole foods. If whole foods are out of reach, grab yogurt, pretzels, pita chips, or granola. Try to save the Ben and Jerry’s Food carton in the freezer only for special occasions; it will make those times you enjoy it more special.

Manly, treat eating as an art, not a means to an end. Appreciate what food is, what does to the body, and where it comes from to get to your plate. Relish its flavor and experience life with food harmoniously.

Freshman 15

HOW TO:
Get Started in Research

BY KAYL SMENDEC
FRESHMAN, POLITICAL SCIENCE AND ENGLISH MAJOR

Red light. Hit the brakes. STOP. Research about research no further. The University of Florida is one of the nation’s driving research institutions. It is highly encouraged that students participate in research regardless of their year, major, or future plans. It is well known that research enhances the college experience and serves as an excellent resume booster; however, many students do not know where to begin. First, identify your interests, then take the initiative, and finally, execute a plan.

The best candidates for research portray passion in their work. Once an interest in research is established, you must choose a topic. Keep in mind that research does not necessarily need to be relevant to your major. At this stage, students should not participate in research for the sole purpose of appearing more involved. Students who have chosen an interest area are one step closer to research. It is important to remember that students with a genuine interest in the subject matter will conduct the most successful projects. However, brainstorming about long-term, not merely short-term goals, will help narrow down options.

After students have selected an area of study, they must take initiative. Research requires a faculty advisor. Students may either join a research team that is already running, or they may submit a new idea for a project and pursue that route. Confidence is essential. Students must believe in themselves in order to convince instructors to believe in them, too. Those interested in research should reach out to professors, graduate students, or even friends who are participating in research. In a professional e-mail, one can provide a brief introduction, a description of the research they are interested in and why they are interested in it, concluding with a request to participate in research under the researcher’s supervision. Reach out to as many instructors as possible, and do not be discouraged by a negative response or no response at all. Persistence is key.

Finally, after joining a research group, students may begin their research and reap the benefits of such an enriching experience. Students who have worked diligently thus far must maintain their perseverance. Research is a rewarding experience, but it is also a challenging one. It requires critical thinking, hands-on activities, application of knowledge, and organizational skills. Ultimately, students get out of their research the amount of dedication they put into it.

Research requires passion, persistence, and diligence. The University of Florida provides countless research opportunities for its students. However, it is up to them to seize the opportunities. Getting involved in research is an easy drive. Green light. Hit the pedal. GO, Gators!
Cramming, Learning
No matter your major, it is always the same story. Phenylalanine, Tryptophan, Histidine, Tyrosine. An alien language? Close, biochemistry.

These words represent only four of the 20 amino acids. That means there are 16 more words that the typical pre-health student will have to know for his first Biochemistry test, and 300 pages of material. So much to know, so little time. If you think a few all-nighters and a couple cups of coffee are enough, you will be lucky to narrow down your answer choices from five to three. As the storm of finals rapidly approaches, anxiety is sure to follow.

I would advise you to take a deep breath and calm down, but who can breathe when instructors suffocate you by cramming mountains of work down your throat? Here are some tips and tricks to help you, bite your teeth, swallow, and pull through the weeks to come.

By MICHAEL CHIANG
FRESHMAN, BIOCHEMISTRY MAJOR

This simple guideline may be the most important but almost everyone has trouble following it. Often the conundrum begins when we realize how much time we have before we have to do our work. Start immediately! Remember, Rome was not built in a day. In order to succeed, you will have to put in the required time and effort.

1. START EARLY

What do you think is easier to remember, a list of 20 words or the first time you skydived? Skydiving stimulates senses to varying degrees. When processing information, you decode the foreign stimuli, transform it by drawing on prior knowledge, and then encode it within your brain. Think of your brain as a tree; when you encode information, you tether it to your understanding via a mental connection. The inherent strength of this connection (whether you use paper or iron), results from how deeply you interact with the material. Scientists have found that asked to rate the amusement factor of each word in a list, people are more likely to recall a larger number of words than if they had simply attempted to memorize it. This suggests that the more creatively and deeply you interact with material through reflection/connection, the more successful you will be in recalling it at a later point.

2. DEEP/COMPLEX ENCODING

No one has the ability to master complex material after a single encounter. The key to maintaining your understanding of material is to review. Reviewing is not simply the act of recalling information that you have learned from the deep, grimy recesses of your mind, utilizing it, and then putting it back in the dusty cabinets labeled BCH 2051. Every time you interact with previously gained knowledge, you manage it a little differently and gain something new. Biologically, you are strengthening the neural connections that you have already made while constructing new ones. Unfortunately, most students forget the material they spent hours learning minutes after a test and those that have not usually forget within the week. You have already done the hard part - you learned the material! Why would you spend hours on a project to throw it away, when you could spend a few minutes more to save it for a later use?

3. TEST YOURSELF

Who says testing only has to be in the classroom? Goals, purposes, and motivations influence how a person learns. For example, a sketch artist would learn a person’s face in more detail than a grocery clerk would. Likewise, if you wish to learn for a test there is often no better way to learn than to constantly test yourself. Asking yourself meaningful questions as you read an article or section will increase retention and understanding as you outline your information in a complex way.

4. FIND YOUR WEAKNESSES

Have you ever had the misfortune of walking out of a test thinking you had aced it only to learn that reality did not meet your expectations? Our distrust of most students is their inability accurately judge what they have and have not learned. How can you correct this? Luckily for you tip 3 and tip 4 often go hand in hand. By constantly testing yourself in a way similar to that of a real test, you will begin to realize where the holes in your understanding.

5. REVIEW, REVIEW, REVIEW

No one has the ability to master complex material after a single encounter. The key to maintaining your understanding of material is to review. Reviewing is not simply the act of recalling information that you have learned from the deep, grimy recesses of your mind, utilizing it, and then putting it back in the dusty cabinets labeled BCH 2051. Every time you interact with previously gained knowledge, you manage it a little differently and gain something new. Biologically, you are strengthening the neural connections that you have already made while constructing new ones. Unfortunately, most students forget the material they spent hours learning minutes after a test and those that have not usually forget within the week. You have already done the hard part - you learned the material! Why would you spend hours on a project to throw it away, when you could spend a few minutes more to save it for a later use?
Decisions, decisions, decisions. They’re like a hot potato that you pretended to pass around in elementary PE class. Nobody wants to make big decisions. That’s why we call out parents, ask for our friends’ opinions, and over exhaust the question “what should I do?”

So what do you do?

The answer: apply economics. Economists look at decision making with marginal analysis, weighting the marginal (additional) benefit against the marginal cost of an action. The marginal benefit is the extra benefit you gain from one more unit of that action. Similarly, the marginal cost is the extra cost from that additional unit.

In college terms, let’s say it’s 10:00 p.m., and you’ve been studying for two hours after napping. Do you study for another hour? If you do, you’ll get 10 more pages of reading done. But if you don’t, you’ll get an extra hour of sleep. Say you choose to study: your marginal benefit is the additional 15 pages you’ll gain, and your marginal cost is the loss of that extra hour of sleep.

Was that a good decision?

It depends on how much you value the 15 pages against the hour of sleep. Are the additional pages gained worth giving up the extra hour of sleep? Put it in terms of something you really like, for example, gummy worms. Because you haven’t been studying for long, those additional 15 pages are worth 15 gummy worms to you, and the hour of sleep lost is worth 5 gummy worms.

Trade the 15 gummy worms for 5 gummy worms? Of course! You choose studying over sleeping because the marginal benefit of studying is greater than the marginal cost.

Now it’s 11:00 p.m. Those 15 pages were worth it, but you’re getting tired. If you keep studying for the next hour, you’ll be able to accomplish 10 pages of reading. If you don’t study for the next hour, you’ll be able to salvage another hour of sleep. Your marginal benefit of studying is 10 pages and your marginal cost is 1 hour of sleep. Translation: 10 pages is now worth 10 gummy worms to you, and the hour of sleep lost is also worth 10 gummy worms.

10 at the cost of 10? Deal, or no deal? Deal!

But wait, that sounds counter intuitive? What’s the point in taking 10 gummy worms if it costs you 10 gummy worms? That leaves with you none.

Marginal analysis tell us that optimal decisions are made where the marginal benefit equals the marginal cost. You want to take every action up to and at this point, where marginal benefit is greater than or equal to marginal cost. Prior to trading 10 pages for another hour of sleep lost, your marginal benefit was greater than your marginal cost.

Studying any further would make your marginal cost greater than your marginal benefit as you lose more sleep and become less productive. Translation: you’ll be trading gummy worms at an overall loss. Who would put themselves in gummy worm debt?

Whether you think in terms of economic marginal analysis or gummy worms, it all comes down to the same point. Choose the decision that leaves you best off. Knowing you are making the optimal decision help relieve you of stress.
Prism