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Letter From the Editor
It’s that time of year again - back to school. Personally, I’ve been ready all summer to get back to Gainesville and the glory of the Swamp. But let’s not kid ourselves, school is not just football and social events. It’s school, with which comes homework, quizzes, tests, and the overall idea of applying ourselves for a better future. Whether you’re ready to admit it or not, that’s what we’re all here for. Back to Library West for late night study sessions, coffee dependency to stay awake, and Facebook procrastination to put off that studying just a little bit longer. Don’t try and deny your innocence - everyone is guilty of this. But this (that is, school work, not Facebook procrastination) is why we’re here, and it’s why we bleed orange and blue.

Freshmen, get ready for a thrilling four years. Whether your favorite hot spot becomes lane 2 in Reitz’s bowling alley; the fourth floor of Library West; the famous, albeit slightly uncomfortable, bleachers of the Swamp; or (eventually) the bar stools in Grog, these four years will be incomparable to anything else you’ll ever experience. And to give you a head start, here’s your Guide to Survival: how to tackle the school work, the city that is Gainesville and home to Gator Nation, and all of the opportunities that make up the , the University of Florida.

Welcome back Gators!

Sincerely,
Lexy Khella
Founding Editor-in-Chief

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Contact Us:
E-mail us with comments, questions, and suggestions at UFhonorsprism@gmail.com

“Like” us on Facebook and look for news about how to get involved with Prim this fall!

Design by Lexy Khella
Freshmen, you’ve waited all your life for this moment—freedom from the rigidity of grade school, the ability to be independent and plenty of distance between you and strict curfews imposed by even stricter parents. Plus, all your hard work paid off and you were accepted to the greatest university of all time!

The change doesn’t really hit until your parents kiss you goodbye and leave you to sit in your dorm room next to a pile of orange and blue paraphernalia. You’re a college student now. It is your responsibility to take care of yourself, get good grades and find your niche in the diverse Florida campus.

Don’t worry! You’re one of thousands of newborn Gators, and everyone has felt overwhelmed and frightened at least once since entering college. Here are a few tips from the Gators who carved the paths you will now follow:

1. GET TO KNOW YOUR CAMPUS

A lot of people forget the real reason they’re going to college. One of your first priorities should be leaving your dorm room to find your classes. There are maps at the front desk of most dorms, or you can use the UF Mobile App to find your way around, and find your classes before school starts.

Being lost is always more fun in groups, so use this venture as an opportunity to get to know other people living on your floor! Which brings us to no.

2. MEET YOUR NEIGHBORS

You may have friends from home living in other dorms or even as roommates, but you will spend a large chunk of time in and around your room. So get to know the people around you! You might meet life-long friends, or at least find someone who bakes really good cookies or takes your classes.

If you live in Hume, your suitemates can turn into invaluable resources. Mine graciously allowed me through the bathroom when I forgot my keys (which happened frequently). I also took my suitemate to the hospital during our second semester when she woke up sick. I was happy that I could help her when her friends couldn’t answer their phones, and I know she would have done the same for me.

3. FIND HEALTHY FOOD OPTIONS

The phrase “freshman 15” is murmured in hushed tones by the end of your first semester. Unlimited access meal plans and late-night binging can be the kiss of death for your high school pants size, so be smart. Don’t rack up debt on your Gator 1 vending account, and don’t overuse the Hume ice cream machine.

Remember to control your diet. The dining halls serve vegetarian options and can help control your portion sizes. And if you’re craving green, your meal plan covers Croutons, a fantastic salad bar in the Reitz Union. Even the Graham Convenience store has a host of healthy options, including Boar’s Head sandwiches.

Of course, it’s okay to treat yourself every once in a while. After all, Sarkara cupcakes are now sold on campus.

4. GET INVOLVED

One of the best ways to find your place on campus is to join a student organization. Not only is it a great way to meet people who share your interests—and trust me, if you’ve thought of it, there’s already a club for it here—it’s also important to start building your resume early, even during freshmen year. Starting with something you enjoy, like an improve troupe or photography club, will make it easy to get involved.
Skin care fun fact: The average human will lose 23 kg (about 50 pounds) of skin cells over his/her lifetime.

David Lakin
Sophomore, Chemical Engineering major
Where are you interning? Proctor & Gamble - Cincinnati, Ohio
What are your future aspirations? To go on to graduate school and achieve a Masters in Biomedical Engineering.
How do you find this internship? I attended UF's career showcase and other associated "meet and greets," where I spoke with many recruiters from Proctor & Gamble. They invited me to an on-campus interview, after which I was invited to an official Recruiting Day in Cincinnati where there was a final interview and general academic test (kind of like a mini-SAT).
What are your internship responsibilities? At P&G, interns are each given individual projects that all represent areas of discovery. We are all doing research to find answers that do not yet exist — so even as interns, we are doing REAL work, not just filling in space or pushing pencils. I was very impressed when I heard about this. In general, I am responsible for taking ownership of my project, and doing all that is necessary to achieve the answers that I am looking for. This can vary significantly between interns. My project was a Research & Development role, which involved a heavier amount of science and lab work than other roles. I was responsible for creating experimental plans, carrying out those experiments, testing the results, and analyzing the data. After the first few weeks, I was pretty much in charge of my direction and began working independently - although, I met with my supervisor as often as I needed to, and discussed all of my plans with him. Furthermore, I solicited information and help from other P&G employees who were very happy to assist me. I was able to try equipment that had never been used before and branch out to discover new possibilities. So your responsibilities as an intern are well-defined in some ways and left to the imagination in others. All that matters is that you are exploring the possibilities of your project and striving to get the answers you need.
Would you recommend this company? I enjoyed my time here very much, and would highly recommend this company, especially to freshmen looking for their first internship. They are a company known for hiring freshmen (especially chemical engineers) and it is an excellent opportunity to get your foot in the door and gain some invaluable experience. If invited back, I would give the offer serious consideration. At the same time, since I am still in the beginning of my college career, I will also be looking for other opportunities for internships in order to try out other companies and expand my range of experience. That, however, is more of a personal decision and should not be a point against this company – they are fantastic and gave me a priceless experience.

Deina Bossa
Sophomore, Biology and Economics major
Where are you interning? I am interning with Procter & Gamble in Cincinnati, Ohio. I work in Research & Development doing consumer research in Skin Care
Career Plans? Attending medical school and becoming a physician
How did you find this internship? During my first semester at UF, I took IDH4995 Honors Professional Development. We had an internship panel where other honors students came in and talked with us about their internship experiences. One of the panelists completed an internship at Procter & Gamble and his experience piqued my interest in the company. I spoke with him after class and he put me in contact with some P&G UF recruiters. P&G also held a few events at UF during Career Fair week, which I attended. The recruiters encouraged me to submit an application and I did. The rest is history.
What do you do during an average day? On a typical day, I get to my office at 8:30 AM. I usually have meetings with project team members to discuss details of my project. There’s sometimes company-sponsored events during the workday, such as trips to the zoo, baseball games, etc., which I attended if I have time. I also spend time planning and organizing panels or focus groups that I conduct as part of my project. I usually leave the office at 4:50-5:00 PM and do fun things around Cincinnati with other P&G interns. P&G stresses work-life balance so I don’t usually work outside normal business hours.
Favorite and least favorite aspect? My favorite aspect is the fact that interns are given meaningful projects that solve key business questions for the company. My project findings will be used to make important business decisions that have an impact on the kinds of skin care products P&G offers consumers. I find it very rewarding to be placed in such a position. I also like the people and culture at P&G. Everyone is very welcoming to interns and always willing to help answer any questions.
My least favorite aspect is being far away from home for such an extended period of time (12 weeks). Staying in touch with family and friends helps ease the homesickness.
Were you nervous before/about interning? Have your fears been assuaged? Because I got my internship the summer following freshman year, I was afraid I wouldn’t have as much knowledge and experience as older interns I would be working with. P&G does an excellent job of placing interns with projects that match their skills and experiences. After my first week, I was no longer nervous because I knew I had a plethora of resources if I needed help with anything and was given a project that matched well with my current skills.
Fun facts about your internship experience? Working in skin care, I now have enough Olay skin and body care products to last me a whole year! Skin care fun fact: The average human will lose 23 kg (about 50 pounds) of skin cells over his/her lifetime.

Nina Plocek
Sophomore, Psychology, Communication Sciences/Disorders major, Linguistics minor
Where are you interning? I am interning in Berlin, Germany at the "Charité" University/Medical School/Hospital
How did you secure this internship? I was able to find this internship through my work at the Veteran’s Affairs (VA) hospital in Gainesville. The researcher I work with introduced me to a colleague who does neuropsychology/language research in Berlin, and with this fluidity and interest in the German language, it seemed to be the right fit.
What are your internship responsibilities? My internship responsibilities include working with the patients in speech therapy sessions, assessing their fMRI scans, inputting/analyzing data sets, and running various experiments. I also work with a non-invasive brain stimulation technique called tDCS, short for "transcranial direct current stimulation." Basically what this means is that we attach an anode and a cathode to different parts of the brain to provide a low-intensity current and measure the effects. The goal is that this technique will aid recovery in patients with speech problems — in our case the speech problem is aphasia, which often occurs after a stroke.
What is your favorite aspect of your internship? One of the most intriguing parts of my internship has been experiencing the German research system. I have had incredible insight into the methodology and perspectives that define the work performed at the Charité. The most fulfilling aspect for me involves working one-on-one with the patients. The reason for this is because it is clear how patient-centered the treatment is for each and every patient, and how frustrating speech problems like aphasia can be. They work so hard to make progress, and we are hoping to find new ways to make the recovery process more efficient. Honestly my least favorite part was just that the experience didn't last longer!
Were you nervous before/about interning? Have your fears been assuaged? I was definitely a little bit nervous before I began, and also in the beginning of the internship. The day I was most nervous for was the first time I did a speech therapy session on my own. The responsibility my co-workers and boss trusted me with was unbelievable. I was apprehensive about running the session on my own because I was not sure how they would react. It is important to speak in short words or phrases in German. My co-worker had walked me through the whole process the day before though, and had reassured me that I wouldn’t have any trouble. The therapy went well and I was thankful they had challenged me to push myself past my comfort zone.

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Nelson Monterrosa Diaz
Sophomore, Nuclear Engineering/Mathematics and Physics major
Where are you interning? I am currently a Design Engineer at Eaton where my responsibilities range from processing customer order descriptions and transforming them to designs to actually elaborate my own new technology designing for future businesses of the company. Being a Freshman I had little knowledge on the actual engineering processes in the company. Nevertheless, I received training and support from my coworkers that have allowed me to enhance more difficult assignments.
Briefly describe a typical day as an intern: As the weeks have progressed in my internship, my responsibilities and my time at work have also increased. I started working from 8 AM to 5 PM with an hour lunch break in between. In the last weeks I have started working at 7 AM and left by 5 PM without taking any lunch break. My days start working in the current designs I have, normally followed by one or two meetings in which I present my improvements and update my manager on my on-going projects. In other weeks I assess the economical impact on the company with our last designs or brainstorming on how to improve current models.
What are your favorite and least favorite aspects of your internship? I love the fact that I am obtaining a great amount of information and experience as I am making so many new friends and impacting so many lives. I now understand the impact of my actions as an engineer and have found how much I love my career. Not withstanding, sometimes as a student I feel the work load is rather big to what I expected and time management can be a real issue if I don’t pay enough attention to it.
Were you nervous before/about interning? I was extremely nervous before my internship/My first contact with it was at our opening ceremony up in the International headquarters in Cleveland, Ohio. The company paid my airfare and stay at the local Marriott. There were three days of presentations and black tie meals where we had to dress up as much as possible. By the end of our week there I was already looking forward to the day I would be able to describe some of my experiences in German. The company had walked me through the whole process the day before though, and had reassured me that I wouldn't have any trouble. The therapy went well and I was thankful they had challenged me to push myself past my comfort zone.
Elizabeth McNeill, a senior from Tallahassee, Florida, has surely been an important contributor to the campus during her time at the University of Florida; as a former president of the Student Honors Organization, an Honors Special Events Intern, a member of the History Honors Society Phi Alpha Theta, and an editor for the History Department's journal, *Alpata*. What's next? Germany.

This Gender Representation in History major will reside in Freiburg for a month participating in an intensive German language course at the Goethe-Institut, before moving on to Berlin where she will take a Third Reich history course at Freie Universität while conducting research in the historical archives. McNeill's research will analyze “the effectiveness of Nazi propaganda aimed at Aryan women, who were encouraged to return to the domestic sphere and to produce racially superior children for the Reich.” Faculty advisers Dr. Giles and Dr. Kligerman support McNeill as she follows her interests by applying a unique interdisciplinary perspective to her research on Third Reich visual propaganda and how “it epitomizes the persuasive potency of visual communication and the Nazi desire to build an Aryan nation.” After graduation, McNeill hopes to become a German history professor who specializes in women’s social history; but in the meantime, she loves to kick back with a good book or get out onto the field for a game of soccer.
Flatbread Pizzas

By Hannah Gamache
Sophomore, English major

After a college student has graduated from the meal plan, they are faced with the responsibility of making their own food, and as much as we’d like it to be, it’s simply not practical to live off of Mochi’s frozen yogurt samples. This can mean only one thing: Yes, we must learn to cook for ourselves, and preferably with the least amount of effort possible.

To the amateur college chef, the kitchen can seem daunting. With all those different types of pots, pans, openers, choppers, and processors, things can get downright confusing! Luckily, not all cooking is as difficult as it seems. And trust me: You don’t want to get stuck in a rut of microwave meals. A college student is perfectly capable of putting together a simple, yet satisfying meal.

One of the tastiest and most versatile meals you can make is a flatbread pizza. Ordering delivery pizza can become monotonous, so making your own flatbreads is a less greasy alternative. Making your own pizza gives you the flexibility to choose your own ingredients, and they are remarkably easy to make. All you need is a package of lavash bread from the supermarket. This is a type of Armenian bread that looks like a large tortilla but becomes crispy when baked in the oven. Sami’s Bakery is a good brand. You can deck out your flatbread with cheese and deli meats, load it with vegetables, and choose whatever sauce you like. Pop them in the oven for 10 minutes, and you’ve got your own customized pizza. Get creative with the different flavor combinations and it won’t be repetitive if you have a pizza two days in a row. Flatbreads have the capacity to taste drastically different each time you make them.

Some favorite flavor combinations are:

- Feta cheese, mushrooms, onions, and pine nuts. Substitute olive oil or pesto for sauce.
- Parmesan cheese, sliced tomatoes, garlic, kalamata olives, and a dash of balsamic vinegar.
- The classic: tomato sauce and mozzarella with basil.
- Goat cheese, roast beef, onions, and pesto.
- Bacon (pre-cooked), onions, tomato sauce, feta cheese, canned red peppers, and raisins.

You can throw together a gourmet pizza from just about anything you have in your fridge. Feel free to go crazy with the endless possibilities. Take the opportunity to break away from the monotony of Easy Mac and instant ramen, and get creative in the kitchen.

What I’ve Learned In College So Far...

By Christina Hunt
Freshman, Journalism major

1. Putting a bookshelf together with a manual screwdriver = blisters. Lots and lots of blisters.
2. There’s no point in getting up before 11 a.m. because most places on campus are still closed and everyone else is in bed.
3. How to tie-dye a shirt. (Thanks, Tutoring Zone!)
4. DO NOT throw out receipts until you’re sure you won’t return the item (duh, right?)
5. You can totally bring more clothing than everyone acts like you should.
6. Wearing a UF lanyard with all of my keys and Gator1 is so convenient that I don’t care if I look like a freshman.
7. My bike is my new best friend.
8. Powermint Tic Tacs are disgusting.
9. Instant coffee is also disgusting.
10. Losing power in your residence hall for more than twelve hours is a great bonding experience with your floor mates!
11. I’m pretty sure tuition money is going toward 4th of July fireworks, but this might actually be okay.
12. The mile bike ride from Lakeside to main campus really isn’t that big of a deal; especially since it takes me less time to ride my bike than it takes to ride the bus.
Academic Calendar
Drop Add week - August 21-23, 26-27

Withdrawal without fee deadline - August 27

Labor Day (no class) - September 2

S-U grade option deadline - September 6

Homecoming (no classes) - October 18-19

Veterans Day (no class) - November 11

Last withdrawal option deadline - November 25

Thanksgiving (no classes) - November 27-30

Classes end - December 4

Honors Theses due to College Advising Offices - December 4

Reading days (no classes) - December 5-6

Final exams - December 7, 9-13

Final grades available - December 18

Have you ever felt like tearing your hair out, running through the halls yelling nonsense while beating your chest, or crawling into a deep, dark hole and never coming out again? Perhaps you are feeling somewhat nervous about the upcoming semester with new roommates and classes?

Well take this moment and just stop. Seriously. Close your eyes and inhale slowly through your nose. Hold your breath for a couple of seconds, and then exhale slowly through your mouth. Repeat as necessary.
Avoid procrastinating and cramming by taking care of assignments as soon as you learn about them! Stay consistent throughout the semester, even if it is just a little bit at a time, so that you don't end up panicking at the last instant.

**STEP 2: DO WHAT YOU WANT TO DO**

While examining your schedule as you fix up your calendar and planner, remember that doing your best is all you can do, and you are still a great person. This is not! Think carefully: do you like what you are doing? This may seem a bit drastic, but do you want to change your major? Find what you are passionate about, and create a list of things that make you happy. Also, make a committee to volunteer somewhere about once a week. This shouldn't be something you do solely to put on your resume, or to make it easier to find something that you do love. You might even start your own club or organization! Do something you really enjoy that provides you with a sense of fulfillment! Try www.gainesvillevolunteer.com/where-to-volunteer.

**STEP 3: LEARN & KEEP POSITIVE**

Meanwhile, realize that mistakes happen. Learn from them. Habits will not form overnight, so work on changing one thing at a time. If you try to do it all at once, chances are you will burnout before knocking the door any time soon. Keep a positive attitude, get motivated, and smile! Laugh. Let yourself be a kid. If you feel ridiculous, channel your frustration and anger into whatever your project may be. Be creative! Even if you don't feel smiling, do it. If you can't smile, fake smile. This will help things to not poke through the bottom. For the sides, than the inside base. Tape this bundle together and place inside. Turn it around, preferably the same one.

**STEP 4: CREATE A HAPPY ENVIRONMENT**

Exercise is a great way to help relieve stress. Even if you're not athletic, set simple goals, such as running one mile on the treadmill. When you accomplish that, you'll feel better. As a UF student, you have a free membership to both gyms on campus - Southwest Recreational Center and the Student Recreation and Fitness Center. Student Rec is conveniently located next to Moe's, the Murphy Area, and the stadium, while Southwest is a bit further out, across the street from the Phillips Center and the Harn Museum on Hull Road. You can even visit the RecSports website to check their live cameras to know how busy Southwest is before you go! When you can't possibly get to the gym, don't panic. There are alternative physical activities such as going for a walk, hiking some stairs, or doing chores. Accomplishing these everyday tasks helps your body to stay fit.

**STEP 5: SLEEP**

Don't forget that despite the sleepless college student stereotype, sleep really is essential to functioning! You know the drill, seven to nine hours every night. However, waking up is also essential if you want to get anything done. Perhaps you don't think of yourself as a morning person? Think about it this way: instead of groggily distilling yourself through homework, all hours of the night, stop at a decent hour and go to bed, then wake up early and finish it then. You will be refreshed and able to work more efficiently. If waking up is too difficult, you can do something to help you get to sleep. Try deep breathing or listening to soft music to help you fall asleep. Once you are asleep, try not to think about the to-do list, or the projects you have due in the morning.

**STEP 6: EXERCISE**

You may catch yourself thinking, "I AM STRESSED RIGHT NOW. HOW AM I SUPPOSED TO RELAX?" Well, half of the problem is simply preventing the stress from happening in the first place. There are plenty of ways to feel relief and avoid stress altogether. In addition to everything already mentioned, draw cards, take a relaxing bath, or be your neighbor's best friend and maybe stay overnight at their house. It is never too late to start making the changes because, if you don't, it is too late to start!

**1.) Be creative!**

Think outside of the box, and just be a kid with some arts and crafts! Draw a smiley face on the back of your hand and get to work.

**2.) Channel your inner tourist.**

Whether you are sitting in your dorm room, in the library, or outside, take at least six pictures from an odd perspective. No camera, no worries, just use your mind. Examine things as if you'd never seen them before.

**3.) Make a card tower.**

It doesn't have to be out of playing cards, you can use business cards, mail, or books as well! Use your cards to play a game of solitaire once you're tired of making pyramids that the ancient Egyptians would envy.

**4.) Snail mail.**

Write a letter or a card to someone, not to be delivered, but to be destroyed. This is your send on a slip of paper, or at least as much of it as can fit.

**5.) Hello, circle!**

Draw a circle on a piece of paper and then fill it in however you choose - words, doodles, anything. You can also do this with the entire piece of paper, but for all of those weird little things that make us human, filling in that circle is often more relaxing.

**6.) Record those thoughts.**

Keep a journal. Every morning when you get up, write what you are thinking forward to that day. Repeat. Night time, instead writing what you enjoyed about the day. Write a word, a sentence, or a paragraph wherever the mood strikes you. Or if words aren't your thing, keep a photo journal - after all, a picture speaks a thousand words!

**7.) The Ever-Helpful Alligator.**

Contact this list of suggestions for what you can do after you have read a copy of the Alligator, or your other favorite newspaper:

- Recycle it.
- Make a paper airplane.
- Roll it up and play basketball with your recycling bin.
- Origami.
- Fill in all of the letters.
- Roll it into a cylinder and peer through it while wandering through the halls, shouting "Land, hot!" or "Walk the plank!" at random intervals.

- Bring out some markers, colored pens and pencils and color in the classifications to make a patchwork quilt. Only one rule: the same color can't be used on any two ads with shared edges.

- Mold it into a figure of an alligator.

- Cut out other objects to create a collage (you can use headlines and ads may be easier to work with), and write yourself a letter. Make it funny!

- Find a letter "a" on the page. From this A to some Z, connect the letters with a line. Behold, you have created an alphabet monster!

- Make a spiffy pen holder or vase or bowl or something creative: a) Cut newspaper long-ways into strips. Width of strips is up to you and does not have to be the same. Try cutting them between half an inch to one inch.

- To increase strength of final product, pair or triple up about half a dozen of the strips. Weave them together into a small square.

- Place a water bottle on the square, which should be roughly the same size as the base. Note: You can also use a shoebox, an oatmeal container, a bowl, or something else in place of the water bottle to end up with a different shape. You are only limited by your imagination!

- Slide a rubber band onto water bottle towards the top, and slide strips under the rubber band, leaving some slack in the paper. These will help form the sides of your pencil holder.

- Next, take some more strips of paper, pair them up, and start weaving them around the bottle starting at the bottom. Once you get to the end of one strip, grab another and continue on. Don't worry about your strips being long to the bottle yet. Keep in mind that you have an even number of strips forming the wall up from the base, so you'll need to skip one of them each time you go around, preferably the same one.

- Keep weaving until you get to where your rubber band is. Now is the time to slide all of your strips down towards the base of the bottle, and ensure that they are snug into each other and the bottle. This will probably mean that you'll have to do some more weaving at the top to reach the band again.

- Now you will finish off the strips to keep them from going crazy! Do so, select one of your poking up strips. Right above the rubber band, bend it down at a slight angle, and then bend it back up so that it is perpendicular to the ground. Carefully removing the rubber band after a step or two of this, repeat this step going all the way around the bottle. You may need to use a few rubber bands if some of your strips are on the shorter side and want to escape. However, most of them will hold themselves down.

- Remove water bottle, and behold your beautiful pencil-holder!

**Optional but highly recommended:**

Reinforce your vase! For the bottom of your vase, pile and fold a number of sheets of newspaper into a thick stack slightly smaller than the inside base. Tape each side together and place inside. This will help things to not poke through the bottom. For the sides, take several sheets of paper taller than the vase and just slightly longer than the circumference of the vase and roll them into a circle, and stick inside, pushing them against the walls.

- Decorate your vase as desired!
get crafty on a college budget

By Alexa Gedigian
Junior, Public Relations major

Let’s all be honest: we will always assume we will have much more free time during the summer than actually pans out. Right? Because I know that even between work, summer classes and beach trips, we each have a list of things we want to accomplish before fall classes begin again. My summer plans include making things for my apartment so that when August rolls around, I won’t have to spend all of my summer paychecks on expensive decorations. The projects that I’ve chosen for this summer will definitely fit into your busy summer schedule – right in between hitting the pool and grabbing frozen yogurt with your friends.

Eco-friendly Vase

If your living room or dorm is in need of sprucing up, you don’t have to go any further than your recycling bin (because I know you all recycle, right?). This project is the best because it is almost completely free, especially if you have some paint on hand from previous projects.

Do It Yourself:

1. Although I specified in the materials, any plastic bottle will work for this project.
2. You are very simply shaped without any curves or indents.
3. You don’t have to clean the bottle in the same way with soap water for about 10 minutes. Afterwards, rub off the sticky stuff with a bright cloth or even your fingers.
4. Now that your bottle is clean and adhesive-free, use your creativity and the paint you like. I did all black and white and plan on finishing it up with a pattern of bright colors along the bottom. For new ideas, I like to go online and find more expensive vases with cool designs to try and replicate with paint.

Watercolor Crayon Painting

Remember when you were a kid and you had to buy a 24-pack of crayons for school? I always remember getting to the end of the year wondering what all of my crayons sadly worn down or broken. Except for the white crayon. Who ever used that one anyway? Well, I found a fantastic art project that uses a white crayon to make a beautiful watercolor painting. http://alisaburke.blogspot.com/2012/03/creativity-with-crayons.html.

Candy Stripes Friendship Bracelet

For me, summer vacation is equivalent to summer camp. I’ve been attending the same camp since I was five years old, and I’ve spent the last six summers working as a counselor. One of my favorite memories from camp is sitting outside with my group and making friendship bracelets in the shade. They are so colorful and really signify laid-back summer style. I’m going to show you how I do the simplest of the bracelets, based on the tricks and tips that I’ve come to learn.

Do It Yourself:

1. Begin by measuring out about 5 feet of each of 3 colors. You know it seems extremely long, but you’re doubling the string so it’s easier to tie your bracelet when you’re finished.
2. Match up the end of all the strings and fold in half. You should have a loop on top and six ends on the bottom.
3. Tie a knot in the top with an overhead knot and tape to a surface.
4. Separate the colors so that you have a pattern: 1 2 3 4 5 6
5. Begin on the left and pull 1 over the 2 and make a “4” shape with the two string off the sticky stuff with a bright cloth or even your fingers.
6. Tie a knot in the top with an overhead knot and tape to a surface.
7. When wrapped around your wrist. These two braids will be used to tie your bracelet on so that you are able to take it off at whim.
8. Side note: Don’t worry if your bracelet doesn’t look quite like mine for the first few rows. It takes a lot of practice, but they always come out looking great at the end!

Materials:

Water bottles, shampoo bottles or wine bottles Paint Brushes paint pen and conditioner bottles from Tresemme.

Get Organized

The final weeks in August call to mind new classes, new friends and new things to stress over. It doesn’t matter if you’re entering as a baby Gator, still trying to figure out the quickest route from Hume to Turlington, or if you’re starting your final year, desperate for more time in The Swamp. When I start feeling anxious about the upcoming semester, one of the easiest ways to relieve pressure is by organizing as much as possible before classes begin. If it goes slightly against your nature to prepare this far in advance (deep breathing, procrastinators), just think how you’ll feel come move-in day if you’ve already set for the semester.

One of the best investments for the upcoming school year is a large whiteboard calendar. I bought mine from Target and it has served me well for two years. Every month I can just erase all the dates and assignments and start fresh. It’s one of those cathartic moments at the end of each month, sort of like crossing things off a checklist as they’re finished. I also tend to color code as much as possible, so I bought a pack of skinny, colorful dry erase markers and assigned one to each course. Make sure to add in football games (in orange or blue marker, of course) and rehearsals, practices and meetings for the month.

Something else that I’ve recently seen is an organizational board, where you dedicate a portion of your wall to cork boards, dry erase boards and a calendar. All of your organizational tools can be displayed creatively in one area, which makes your life that much easier. Make sure when you pick up your corkboards you also grab some cute pushpins to pin your class schedule, football tickets and anything else up. Mine are bright green, blue and purple.

Do you remember in middle and high school when your teachers would require a 2-inch binder that you weren’t allowed to share with another class? And heaven forbid you accidentally buy the 2.5-inch binder instead. The reason they spent so much energy forcing you into those identical binders was to hopefully instill in you some understanding of organization. In college, you thankfully don’t have to deal with class lists or specific supplies, but that makes the mountains of papers from each class seem overwhelming. I’ve found that getting an accordion folder is the easiest way to alleviate some of the confusion. Assign each section to one of your classes and start filing. You can also use one of the areas for those extra resumes or. portfolio pieces. I also highly recommend printing the syllabus and course calendar that your professors send out in their introductory emails and adding these to the file for reference. By the time final exams roll around, you won’t have to worry about where or who yours is taking place since your syllabi will be handy.

One of the last things I’m going to suggest is one of the most simple of the list: check your bag before you leave for that first class of each day. You don’t have a locker in college, so if you’ve forgotten your books in your dorm or apartment, they might be an entire bus ride away. Give yourself an extra minute or two in the morning to figure out your plan for the day. If you live off-campus, are you planning on going home again before heading to your other classes? Or would it be better to spend that period between in the Hub working on your online class? Figure out what you need and intend to work on so you can ensure you have the necessary items before you leave.

Hub working on your online class? Figure out what you need and intend to work on so you can ensure you have the necessary items before you leave. I’m a procrastinator, remember how I recommended some deep breathing at the start of this article? Hopefully I’ve inspired you to rethink your ways and take a little time to organize your life before running out the door in the morning. College is supposed to be the best time of your life, so don’t ruin it by stressing over the little things. Organizing your life in these small ways might be just what you need to get your year off to the best start possible.
save it
for the nights out
for eating out
for anything else

By Christina Hunt
Freshman, Journalism major

Post-secondary schools across the nation estimate the cost of textbooks at around $1,000 a year for an undergraduate student. Multiply that by four years and you’re looking at spending $4,000 on books that’ll be sentenced to a life of collecting dust once you’re done with them. And that’s not even including summer classes! Want to cut back on your exorbitant textbook bill this semester? Follow these tips and you’re sure to save upwards of 30 percent!

Class: AMH 3423 Florida Since 1845 with Steven Noll
Book Title & Author: Florida: A Short History by Michael Gannon
UF Bookstore: $14.95 New, $11.25 Used
Amazon.com: $8.00 New, $3.55 Used
Half.com: $8.97 New, $3.55 Used
Chegg.com: $15.99 New, $14.49 Used

Tip 2: Share textbooks with friends in your class! You study in groups, right? Why have five textbooks piled onto that library table when you could have just one or two! This will allow you to split the cost in half, thirds, or maybe even more!

Class: POT 2002 Intro to Political Theory with Manu Samnotra
Book Title & Author: The Human Condition by Hannah Arendt
UF Bookstore: $17.50 New, $13.25 Used
Amazon.com: $8.00 New, $3.89 Used
Half.com: $7.00 New, $4.23 Used
Chegg.com: $6.96 Used

Tip 3: Once you find out which textbooks you need, ask students you know who may have already taken the class. Did they really use that textbook? Do they still have their copy that you could borrow or buy for a cheap price? Also, make sure to join the Facebook group “UF Textbook Exchange.”

Class: RTV 3405 TV & American Society with Jessica Malone
Book Title & Author: Cognitive Psychology of Mass Communication by Richard Jackson Harris
UF Bookstore: $67.95 New, $51.00 Used
Amazon.com: $1.99 New, $0.99 Used
Half.com: $39.99 New, $26.09 Used
Chegg.com: $60.49 New, $39.99 Used

Tip 4: If you’re sure you won’t drop the class, buy your textbooks before you get to school. Taking a proactive approach and preparing ahead of time will provide you with more options in price and book condition when selecting your textbook from an online source.

Class: MAC 1140 Pre-calculus Algebra with Shannon Street
Book Title & Author: Precalculus by Larson
UF Bookstore: $140.00 New
Amazon.com: $122.95 New

Tip 5: Got a Kindle? Nook? IPad? Websites like ecampus.com, coursesmart.com, and kno.com provide etextbooks to rent, often for less than a hard copy! Carrying around that e-reader versus a load of heavy textbooks could relieve that shoulder pain as well as the sting of the cost!

Class: MMC 1702 Rock ‘n Roll and America 2 with Ji Hoon Lee
Book Title & Author: Rock and Roll: An Introduction by Michael Campbell and James Brody
UF Bookstore: $51.99 Rent
Amazon.com: $83.10 New, $12.00 Used
Half.com: $83.92 New, $15.00 Used
Chegg.com: $36.99 New, $32.49 Used

Tip 6: Sell your books after the semester is over! Don’t just leave them in your dorm when you move out. You can use that extra money to purchase next semester’s supplies.

Compiled by Ryan Baum and Kaityln Johnston

I am an avid cyclist and pen maker. I have been a cyclist my whole life and have aspirations of making it on a professional team sometime in the near future. I am excited to join the UF cycling team not only to improve my skills and practice, but to meet a great group of UF students. My other passion in life is making pens; something I have been doing for almost three years. Using a lathe, I have made over 200 pens of various materials from exotic hardwoods to solid titanium. I love the challenge of pushing the limits of the hobby and seeing how well I can blend both form and function. I plan on starting a lathe turning club at UF to share my passion with other Gators.

I'm super excited to start my college career as a Florida Gator! My parents, both alumni, raised me to bleed orange and blue; the power of hard work, family, and friendship. I would not be the person I am today. I have a passion for traveling, and one of my life goals is to travel to all seven continents.

I was raised in the Florida Keys on a sixteen acre commercial fishing island. Growing up in an environmentally and culturally diverse area has allowed me to see and experience things from a very different perspective. I have lived through the strength and destruction of a hurricane, and I have learned the power of hard work, family, and friendship. I would not change anything about my upbringing because it has shaped who I am today. I have a passion for traveling, and one of my life goals is to travel to all seven continents.

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The Scholarship

The Lombardi and Stamps scholarship is awarded to 11 outstanding high school seniors on their way to becoming baby gators in the fall. Scholars rank at the top of their class, or near it, in academics, service, extracurricular activities, leadership, moral character, and creativity in their endeavors. The scholars receive $2,700 a semester, and are expected to attend 4 summer trips, included in the scholarship, with their class of scholars: study abroad in Mexico, leadership training through Outward Bound, an exploration trip to South Africa, and a service trip to Peru.
**ARTS: OUTSIDE OF HONORS**

**AUGUST**

19-21 | Sorority Formal recruitment

23-25 | Gator Anime International

30 | Information meeting for Student Government

**SEPTEMBER**

16-17 | Primary Election

17-23 | Residence halls open

19-21 | Children's Home Society Treasure Hunt Shopping Event

24 | Go Global Fair

29 | Family Weekend 2012: Bringing Home the Orange and Blue

**OCTOBER**

17 | Student Government Elections

21 | Gator Anime International

23-25 | Information meeting for Student Government

29 | Student Government Open House

30 | Student Government Open House

**NOVEMBER**

5-6 | The Capitol Steps

19-23 | Homecoming: Talent Night

27-31 | Alachua County Library District Friends of the Library’s Fall 2012 Book Sale

28 | Homecoming: Swamp Symphony and Education Celebration

**DECEMBER**

7-9 | Holiday Markets

12-14 | Christmas Lights and Holiday Market

19-21 | Swing into the Season Gala

**ARTS: OUTSIDE OF HONORS**

**AUGUST**

**Primary Election**

**Residence halls open**

**Children's Home Society Treasure Hunt Shopping Event**

**Go Global Fair**

**Family Weekend 2012: Bringing Home the Orange and Blue**

**Student Government Elections**

**DUE: Registration for Student Organizations**

**Improving Ourselves in College**

**2012 Walk to End Alzheimer's**

**11th Annual Downtown Latino Festival**

**Labor Day (No classes)**

**Interfraternity Council Rush**

**Gator Anime International**

**First Gator Anime meeting of the year, featuring a presentation of information for both new and returning members followed by a showing of the summer’s hottest anime with the possibility of free food!**

**Student Government Open House**

**Check out this open house to learn about all of the events, programs, services, and offices that the Student Government has to offer.**

**DUE: Registration for Student Organizations**

**All new and existing student organizations must register/re-register.**

**2012 Walk to End Alzheimer's**

**9:00am - The Dudley Community Plaza**

**Participate in this annual nation-wide walk to raise awareness and fundraise for Alzheimer’s care, support, and research.**

**11th Annual Downtown Latino Festival**

**12:00-9:00pm - The Dudley Community Plaza**

**Celebrate Hispanic Heritage Month at this family friendly event filled with cultural performances, live music, informational booths, food vendors, and more!**

**Information meeting for Student Government**

**6:30-7:00pm - CSE E222**

**First Gator Anime meeting of the year, featuring a presentation of information for both new and returning members followed by a showing of the summer’s hottest anime with the possibility of free food!**

**Student Government Open House**

**11:00-4:00pm - SG Office (3rd floor Reitz Union)**

**Check out this open house to learn about all of the events, programs, services, and offices that the Student Government has to offer.**
9 Homecoming: Parade
12:00pm - University Avenue
Watch UF’s 89th Annual Homecoming Parade featuring the theme “United We Growl,” and check out spectacular floats, bands, and special guests showcasing both community and student organizations.

9 Homecoming: Gator Growl
7:00pm - Ben Hill Griffin Stadium
Celebrate the culmination of Homecoming Week at the world’s largest student-run pep rally, “United We Growl,” complete with an amazing fireworks display, the Fighting Gators Marching Band, student skits, world famous entertainers, and more!

9 Homecoming: Alumni Barbeque
2.5 hours before kickoff - O’Connell Center
Everyone from baby gators to current students to alumni is invited to this huge tailgate to celebrate the love of the Gator Nation. Event entrance is free, and there will be appearances by the Cheerleaders, the Dazzlers, and Albert and Alberta, plus raffle drawings, trivia contests, carnival games, “Most Spirited Gator Guy and Gal” for kids under 12, and more! UF student admission $10.

12 Veterans Day
(no classes)

21 Sing-a-Long-a Sound of Music
7:30 pm - Phillips Center
You certainly don’t want to miss this fun, interactive showing of The Sound of Music complete with lyrics on the screen so the whole audience can sing along! Wear a costume to compete in the fancy dress competition, and get ready to have the time of your life. UF student admission $10.

19 Final grades available

4-14 Reitz Union De-Stress Study Fest
All Day - Reitz Union
Relax and prepare for your exams with free tutoring sessions, open study rooms, arts and crafts, the coffee fairy, the pizza fairy, therapy animals, and more! For details check the Reitz Union website closer to the end of the semester.

5-14 Poetry Jam
Every Friday night
6:00pm-2:00am - Reitz Union
Don’t forget your Gator1 to enjoy this free weekly campus-wide event which offers everything from bands, improv shows, and first run movies to arts and crafts, video games, novelties, and DJs. There is even a free midnight breakfast!

5-14 Gater Nights!
Every Friday night
6:00pm-2:00am - Reitz Union
Don’t forget your Gator1 to enjoy this free weekly campus-wide event which offers everything from bands, improv shows, and first run movies to arts and crafts, video games, novelties, and DJs. There is even a free midnight breakfast!

5-14 Afternoon Knitters
Every Thursday
2:00-4:00pm - Millhopper Branch Library
Bring your knitting, crocheting, etc. and meet with this group to share ideas and work on creative projects together.

5-14 Gainesville Scrabble Club
2nd and 4th Wednesdays of the month
5:30-8:30pm - Millhopper Branch Library
Everyone - beginner through expert - is welcome to come to the library and play Scrabble. If you have your own Scrabble board, you are encouraged to bring it.

24-25 Craft Festival
Saturday: 10:00-6:00pm, Sunday: 10:00-5:00pm - O’Connell Center
Bring your Gator1 card and get $1 admission as a UF student to the Craft Festival showcasing handmade crafts by over 300 different talented artisans. Satisfy all of your unique decorating and gift giving needs!

24-25 Trey McIntyre Project
7:30pm - Phillips Center
Attend this captivating and transformative contemporary dance performance by the Trey McIntyre Project. UF student admission $10.

Gainesville 101:
Gainesville 101: Restaurant Guide
Written by Lexy Khella
Sophomore, Political Science major
List Compiled by Sama Imran Ilyas
Sophomore, Biology major, Disabilities minor

ARTS: OUTSIDE OF HONORS

Gainesville 101:
RESTAURANT GUIDE
Need a pick-me-up, an escape, a good bite, something to hit the sweet spot, or some cultural cuisine - it’s all right here.
**Words from the Wise**

When I posted on Club of 2015’s page asking what the best places to eat in Gainesville were, someone instantly replied “the dining center, of course.” So I suggest you try that out, and well, if it doesn’t work out, here’s a little preview of what Gainesville has to offer. This is a list for those of you who don’t have a mealplan (and can’t cook). And also for those people who want to escape the dining hall by their second week of school.

The on campus options of Chick-fil-a, Subway and Starbucks get boring really easily. They also don’t stay open late. Luckily, the area across University Avenue (“midtown”) will become a frequent source of food. For those living in the Murph- phone area, especially, off-campus food is just a few strides away (quite literally).

-Sama

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**Chipotle**

Who doesn’t like Chipotle? Warning: This will become a staple in your college diet, but it is possible to eat too much of Chipotle in a short amount of time and get sick of it. However, don’t worry, it is only temporary.

2 locations: University Ave and Archer Road

**Sushi Chao**

Craving buffet? Or better yet, craving buffet that is only 59 cents an ounce? From the creators of Mochi and Bento Café, Sushi Chao is 2 locations: University Ave and Archer Road, and don’t worry, it is only temporary.

**Leonardo’s Pizza By the Slice**

You’ll learn teachers and students all over campus talk about Leonardo’s. Needless to say, they have legendary pizza. Also try the roll!

Location: 1245 W University Ave

**The Swamp Restaurant**

Watch the swamp from The Swamp. Whether you’re looking for a good burger, salad, or sandwich, sit back and enjoy our Gator games; this is school spirit.

Location: 1642 W University Ave

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**Bento Café**

Quick, delicious Asian food. Whether it’s the rice bowl, noodle bowl, or famous bento box, this a personal favorite of many and sushi lovers will love Bento’s.

Not too pricey either!

Location: 3841 SW Archer Rd, 3832 W Newberry Rd

**Dragonfly Sushi and Saki Company**

If you don’t love sushi, you will once you come to Gainesville, and only Dragonfly does this college favorite best. But if you’re already had sushi that week, you can still enjoy their upscale Asian dining.

Location: 201 SE 2nd Ave

**Satchel’s Pizza**

To put it simply, everybody loves Satchel’s. Extremely good pizza, and worth the wait. Ask to be seated in the van that started this Gainesville icon, and you’ll get a dining experience you literally can’t get anywhere else.

Location: 1800 NE 23rd Ave

**The Top**

There’s a hipster in all of us, but even if you’re still in denial, you won’t be able to deny that the food is simply great. From brunch to the late-night bar scene, they’ve got every option for you, covering seafood, burgers, vegan options, and everything in-between.

Location: 30 N Main St

**Stonewood Grill & Tavern**

Pricey, but great meat – remember this one for when mom and dad come to visit.

Location: 3812 W Newberry Rd

**Sweet Mel’s**

Craving a burger? Look no further. And if you’re feeling just crazy enough, order the onion ring volcano too.

Location: 1 W University Ave

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**Pita Pit**

Tired of the college diet already? Too many pizzas and burgers, and more pizzas? Add in some Lebanese spice and build your own pita.

2 locations: University and Archer Road

**Kay Bros BBQ**

You’ll learn that the semester will go by quicker than you imagined, and before you know it, the whole year is gone too. Kick back with some friends, slow down the pace, and enjoy Gainesville’s best slow-cooked barbecue.

Location: 1620 W University Ave

**Johnny & Company’s Pizza**

Watch the campus from across University Avenue. “Midtown” will become a frequent source of food. For those living in the Murphy phone area, especially, off-campus food is just a few strides away (quite literally).

-Sama

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**Domino’s**

Study, order online, study, run outside, grab the pizza, pay the delivery guy, and study some more.

Locations: 2106 SW 13th Street, 3309 W University Ave

**Jimmy Johns**

Instead of arguing with your roommate about who can concoct the perfect sandwich, put your order into Jimmy John’s and they’ll bring you your food right to your dorm or apartment.

Location: 1724 W University Ave, 2220 SW Archer Rd

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**Reggae Shack**

Jamaican! Jamaican me crazy for their fries

Location: 619 W University Ave

**101 Downtown**

Bored of the normal restaurant setting? Spice it up with some quesadillas, or go fancy with a filet or duck. Consider this college nightlife dining. Prepare yourself for a night of martinis, mojitos, beer, and wine. But beware, if it’s someone’s birthday – 101 Downtown knows how to celebrate.

Location: 201 SE 2nd Ave

**Panera Bread**

Need a getaway from the distractions of the dorms? Grab your books and head to Panera for lunch – with great soups and sandwiches and free Wi-Fi, you have no reason to leave until you’re done with your work.

Location: 3443 SW Archer Rd

**Cripsers**

Panera too crowded? Swing down the street to Crispers for a change of pace and more space. Also equipped with free Wi-Fi, you can escape campus distractions and bury yourself in the books, and get some delicious food.

Location: 3102 SW 54th St

**Gyro Plus Grocery**

If you’ve grown up on middle-Eastern or Greek food, you understand how delicious some foods are that others look at you like you’re crazy for eating, no less loving. College doesn’t mean you have to give this up – head over to Gyro Plus for warm gyro and baklava for dessert. And don’t forget to hit their wall of groceries on the way out so you can make your own Middle-Eastern food in your kitchen at school.

Location: 1011 W University Ave

**The Gelato Company**

Satisfying at the sound of gelato? Now, wait, what if it was free? It is when you order their sandwich and drink combo. Get your slice of Italy for the afternoon, or an early morning if you’re still downtown Saturday night!

Location: 11 SE 1st Ave

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**Midnight cookies**

The perfect midnight snack, or after-dinner snack for those lucky enough to get to bed before midnight

Location: 2022 SW 34th St

*Note: You can also use 2dollardelivery to order in from other places, including Sankara and Bento's*
Rise and Shine

Do it Right: Chase with Dessert

**Karma Crème**
Delicious ice cream, and vegan! Sweet tooth lovers, once you go Karma, you'll never go back
Location: 1025 University Ave

**Sarkara Sweets Café**
Create your own cupcake for just $3! Not only is it the cutest shop in town, but its bright furniture and board games will snap you out of school stress or a bad mood. And with free Wi-Fi, you can study with cupcakes – motivation doesn’t get much better than that. Raw, vegan, and gluten-free options too!
Location: 201 SE 2nd Ave

**Sweet Dreams of Gainesville**
There's nothing like home-made ice cream to make Gainesville your new home. And it's so irresistible, that it's in all of the dining halls on campus.
Location: 5437 West University Ave

**IHOP**
For those mornings of recovery from long nights of hardcore studying, a stack of pancakes is the perfect remedy.
Location: 3615 SW 13th St

**IHOP**
Flying biscuit café $5
Can biscuits really fly? No, but you'll feel like you're flying when you try their heavenly food. Taste it, love it, and make it in your own kitchen with their online recipes and own cookbook.
Location: 4150 NW 16 Blvd

**Peach Valley Café**
Craving mom's homemade cooking and the dining hall just isn't doing it? This is your next best shot. Get home-style cooking without the long trek home
Location: 3275 SW 34th St

**Flying Biscuit Café**
Can biscuits really fly? No, but you'll feel like you're flying when you try their heavenly food. Taste it, love it, and make it in your own kitchen with their online recipes and own cookbook.
Location: 3275 SW 34th St

**IHOP**
For those mornings of recovery from long nights of hardcore studying, a stack of pancakes is the perfect remedy.
Location: 3615 SW 13th St

**Starbucks Coffee**
Best whipped cream. Period.
Locations: Library West – open 24/7, the Hub, 3443 Archer Road, 1520 Northwest 16th Terrace

**Dunkin Donuts**
Don't like coffee? Their delicious blends will mask the taste and give you the motivation you need to get through that late night study session.
Locations: 3411 SW Archer Rd (includes a drive through!), 1730 West University Avenue

**PICK ME UPS**

**Start Studying**
Accomplished: 0%

**Consider Procrastinating**
Accomplished: 9%

**Facebook break**
Accomplished: 5%

**Back to studying**
Accomplished: 15%

**Youtube distraction**
Accomplished: 15%

**Time to be serious**
Accomplished: 15%

**Need a new cup... for studying**
Accomplished: 18%

*Price comparisons from Yelp.com

WARNING:
You may become addicted to caffeine if consumed in excessive amounts
Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter
Seth Graham-Smith’s story about the secret life of our sixteenth president is a quirky, humorous, and unique tale. If you’re looking for something action-packed, intensely different, and maybe a little odd, you most definitely need to check out Abraham Lincoln: Vampire Hunter. History buffs will surely love it, and how can you go wrong with axe-wielding presidents that fight blood-sucking monsters?

The collective bible of cinema is modern fiction. It certainly comes as no surprise that many successful movies are based on literature. As both a book and movie enthusiast, I am teeming with impatience and excitement for all the upcoming movies with roots in literature. Despite the traditionalist tragedy that the movies can never fulfill the expectations of readers with regard to attention to detail and sheer awesomeness of our favorite books, they have still spurred some pretty great films that are worth seeing.

Below is a compilation of several books and their film and television counterparts that you will not want to miss out on.

Read on a Rainy Day and Watch Movies at Night

By Hannah Gamache
Sophomore, English major

The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy
One of the most brilliantly comedic science fiction novels out there is Douglas Adams’ The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy. The story follows the intergalactic adventures of human survivor Arthur Dent after the destruction of the Earth. The movie version came out seven years ago, but it is an absolute gem. If you haven’t seen or read The Hitchhiker’s Guide to the Galaxy, I am strongly inclined to ask what you are doing with your life. Although there are some significant differences between the book and movie, the film remains an all-time favorite.

Extremely Loud and Incredibly Close
The 2011 film, based on Jonathan Safran Foer’s novel of the same name, is a moving story of a nine-year-old boy, Oskar, who lost his father in the 9-11 terrorist attack on the World Trade Center. Oskar searches for an unknown lock that is opened by a key that used to belong to his father. The story is not an entirely depressing one, but thought-provoking, adventurous, symbolic, and highly emotional. Have tissues ready, but it is definitely a worthwhile watch.

Sherlock
BBC’s television series Sherlock is a modernized version of Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s classic detective fiction The Adventures of Sherlock Holmes. The ongoing television series that began in 2010 is a crime series that is as thrilling and intriguing as its literary counterpart. The show is more intellectual than previous adaptations, and it is extremely fun to watch the quirky Benedict Cumberbatch play the famous detective in the present day. Read the classic works of fiction and then watch the show for a different take on these great crime stories.

Ender’s Game
Orson Scott Card’s Ender’s Game is an award-winning science fiction novel, and one of the most carefully constructed and clever stories that I have had the good fortune of reading. The story centers on a young tactical prodigy, Ender Wiggin, who is sent to Battle School to train for a war against an alien race that threatens the future of Earth. The novel is exceptionally intelligent and explores significant themes of violence, fear, ethics, and empathy. I implore you to pick up this novel before watching the movie, slated for release in 2013.

The Hobbit
Though I am now in danger of facing accusations of being a shameless Martin Freeman fan, I simply must recommend J.R.R. Tolkien’s The Hobbit—the prequel to The Lord of the Rings trilogy. Its film counterpart will be hitting theaters this December and it is sure to pack a punch with great visuals and a compelling story. The Hobbit is a classic adventure and fantasy novel that paints an intriguing and imaginative world that you must experience.

Be sure to catch up on all these excellent reads before you hit up Netflix and the theaters, and never forget that popcorn goes great with a good book, too.
With almost 200 independent nations in the world, there are bound to be numerous countries that you are unfamiliar with. So why not broaden your horizons by learning about a new country and culture while picking up a unique way to impress your friends? Spewing out information about Tajikistan would definitely make you the life of the party. So, without further ado, step into the world of Tajikistan.

Quick facts:
• Tajikistan is central Asia’s poorest country. It is populated by seven million people who share a language, culture, and history with Iran and Afghanistan.
• The capital of Tajikistan is Dushanbe.
• The chief languages spoken are Tajik, Uzbek, and Russian, and the major religion is Islam.

Landscape:
Tajikistan has a very mountainous landscape—in fact, 90 percent of the country is covered in mountains. The most prominent ranges include the Pamir and Alay mountains, while the north and south are filled with lush valleys.

Political Situation:
Immediately after Tajikistan's independence from Soviet rule in September of 1991, a brutal five-year civil war began in the nation. The civil war between the government aided by Russia and the Islamist-led opposition caused the death of as many as 50,000 people and led to one-tenth of the population fleeing the country. Although the civil war ended with the help of the United Nations in 1997, recovery continues to be difficult for the nation.

Tajikistan is now a republic led by President Emomali Rakhmon. Rakhmon's success in winning a third term in the 2006 elections has internationally been recognized as neither free nor fair; opposition parties have dubbed it a “Soviet-style staged attempt at democracy.” Rakhmon has not maintained considerable public support, especially because the elections from 2005 to 2010 did not meet international standards. However, as long as his People’s Democratic Party retains the vast majority of seats in parliament, Rakhmon will maintain power. Additionally, Rakhmon’s efforts greatly contributed to the end of Tajikistan’s civil war, a reality for which many Tajiks are thankful.

Economic Situation:
Due to limited job opportunities in Tajikistan, a large part of the population works abroad, especially in Russia, to support family members through remittances. The soil is poor and the main crop is cotton, which the government closely controls. Thus, the economy is dangerously reliant on remittances and the export of cotton and aluminium. The reported unemployment rate is 2.2 percent, but the actual employment rate is much higher and over half of Tajiks live below the poverty line. With a per capita GDP of only $2,000, the nation is attempting to institute reforms, but its corrupt government, debt burdens, and power shortages have hindered progress, leaving it dependent on Russia to help it deal with security problems and the poor economic situation.

Culture:
Tajikistan boasts an ancient culture, and numerous traditions that have survived through the centuries. The traditional costumes worn by Tajiks on March 21, during Nauruz, Tajikistan’s New Year Celebration, have remained the same. During a festival that celebrates the gathering of corn crop, horse races and wrestling contests take place. Since 1940, the Tajik language has been written using a modified Cyrillic script, and folk literature is an important part of the culture. The 20th century has produced various notable Tajik poets and novelists including Abdarrauf Fitrat, who is known for Munazärä (The Dispute) and Qiyamät (Last Judgement) and Sadriddin Ayubi, recognized for his novel Dokhunda (The Mountain Villager) and for his autobiography, Yoddoshtho. Additionally, al-poets Qāsim Lāhūtī and Mirzo Tursunzade reflect on changes wrought by the Soviet era through their works.

Arts and Communication:
The Tajik National Theatre was established in 1929 and has since presented opera, ballet, puppetry, and musical comedy, while regional theatres and troupes have also been established in various towns. Tajik films and documentaries have been created as well. Since the final years of Soviet rule, radio and television have become more widespread. After the end of Soviet subsidies around 1985, cutbacks have endangered the performing arts and broadcasting. The majority of Tajiks watch television but Russian channels are the most popular. Although there are 200 newspapers, none of them are daily. Very few are privately owned and the rest are government-run or affiliated with political movements. Radio stations, both private and state-run, are the only broadcast medium that is available throughout the nation. Although Tajikistan’s constitution acknowledges the freedom of press, it is not respected. About 700,000 people use the Internet and competition is limited, so access charges remain high.

Tajikistan is a culturally vibrant country that is slowly overcoming its economic and political problems. The poverty rate continues to fall, going from 73 percent in 2003 to 55 percent in 2009. The growth rate rose to 6.9 percent in 2011 after falling to 3.9 percent during the 2009 global economic recession. But regardless of its situation, its people have maintained their traditions, language, and customs, and will continue to do so.
I also witnessed the powerful role that art has played in telling the history of Northern Ireland. As our group toured the cities of Belfast and Derry, we saw several famous murals that depict a period of conflict known as “the Troubles.” This conflict was fairly recent, beginning in the late 1970s. During this time, the two groups involved were the Loyalists, who wanted Ireland to be under British rule, and the Republicans, who believed Ireland should exist as an independent nation. Violence and riots were common, resulting in the death of many innocent people. The conflict ended with a peace treaty in 1997, but I could see that divisions between the two groups still exist in many areas. Nearly everyone I met in Northern Ireland had been affected by the Troubles in some way, but most people seemed to be ready to move past the conflict and restore peace and stability to their country.

In addition to a strong presence of art and a rich history, Northern Ireland has a stunning landscape. The weather was much colder and mistier than I was accustomed to in the summer, but we still spent a good amount of time outdoors. One of my favorite memories from my trip was trying to pet one of the many sheep grazing on the beautiful green hills. Unfortunately, no matter what we did to entice them, the sheep always ran away from us. We even made it to the beach, which was lined by huge cliffs. I hiked to an area of the coast called Giant’s Causeway, crossed a rope bridge between two cliffs and climbed up rocks to visit an old castle.

Throughout my month in Northern Ireland, I was able to interact with people in different health care settings and work with them to create and enjoy art. I gained a deeper appreciation for the arts and learned to embrace my own creativity. Although my four weeks in Northern Ireland flew by, I know the memories I made will continue to inspire me.

Hello from Northern Ireland

By Hema Kher
Senior, Health Science Major

“So, what exactly are you doing here for one month?”

I tried to describe the purpose of my study abroad program to an aggravated Customs officer in Belfast, Northern Ireland. After 12 hours of flying, three airports and one missed flight, I had survived my first experience traveling alone. This was the last obstacle I would face that day. I attempted to explain that I was studying with the University of Florida rather than a university in Belfast, and that I did not have a student visa. The officer, not satisfied with my explanations, held me in the Customs area while she made a phone call to my professor to gather more details. After she had collected the information she needed, she begrudgingly stamped my passport and allowed me to proceed to the baggage claim.

After this encounter, I was unsure how friendly the people of Northern Ireland would be. Fortunately, the locals turned out to be some of the friendliest, warmest people I have ever met. When they found out our group was from America, they would often say, “You are very welcome here!”
The UF Summer Requirement

By Shruti Shah
Sophomore, Management major, Spanish minor

We all have to find a way to fulfill that dreaded summer requirement, so why not find a fun way to do so? There are several options for those who prefer not to spend their summers on the UF campus. First of all, the UF summer requirement only applies to incoming students with fewer than 60 credits. The maximum number of IB/AP/AICE/CLEP credits awarded is 45, so AP and IB students do not automatically meet this requirement. Students must take nine credits over the summer at a State University System Institution before they graduate. Online classes will count as well, so you do not have to sit in a classroom. It is important to note that the summer credit requirement must be completed at one of Florida's public universities; private institutions and community colleges do not count.

If you are one of those students eager to leave the confines of Florida campuses, it is possible to satisfy this requirement through studying abroad during a summer session. A variety of study abroad programs and scholarships are offered during the summer semesters. The University of Florida International Center contains an extensive list of scholarships, and countless students will tell you that it is an immensely rewarding experience. Requirements often differ across colleges, so make sure to talk to your advisor for major-specific opportunities or requirements.

Above: Maria Viitaniemi, a second year Chemical Engineering major, dancing the tango on her study abroad trip in Buenos Aires, Argentina, studying Spanish.
In recent months, NATO’s relationship with Russia has soured primarily in reaction to plans for the modernization of Europe’s missile defense system. The proposal calls for the construction of military bases equipped with ground-based defensive missiles in Poland, Romania and Bulgaria—close to Europe’s eastern frontier with Russia. This would mean the removal from the eastern flank of the anti-ballistic missile system in the Mediterranean Sea. NATO also plans to upgrade their nuclear weapons from aircraft deployed free fall bombs to land based missiles. NATO claims that this missile shield is designed to defend Europe against rogue states like Iran. Representatives from the State Department have insisted that the defense system was neither designed nor has the capability to limit Russia’s strategic defenses. But when Russian officials asked to be a part of the defense program, NATO leadership systematically rejected them. According to the Russian media, the Kremlin, their government, is infuriated—it is the treatment they receive after assisting NATO in Afghanistan that has built such high tension. An American analyst has done all they can to enshroud the game, going so far as to accuse Makarov of being drunk at the conference. However, Makarov’s point was made—NATO’s current plans are unacceptable to Russia. As James Ludes, an analyst at the Paul Center for International Relations, stated, “…that Makarov would make this kind of remark in a public forum is chilling.” Chilling it right: If it is cold war tensions have returned.

**BREAKING DOWN THE ISSUES**

Of the many topics examined in Chicago, the two that I believe are the most relevant to this discussion are the proposed upgrade to the missile shield in Europe and the timetable to end the war in Afghanistan. Within the context of these two topics, let’s discuss NATO’s relevance to the modern world, focusing upon Russia’s role in international politics.

Contrary to popular belief, the end of the Cold War did not bring an end to the military tensions between Russia and NATO. As the Russian Federation rose from the ashes of the U.S.S.R., the nation remained the outcast stepchild of Western geopolitics. Even as many of the former Soviet Republics have joined NATO and attempted to begin a new era of Westernized politics, Russia has, by mutual agreement, remained a distinct separate entity.

Relations have been cordial in the past years as Russia has played a critical role in the war in Afghanistan, providing strategic supply routes and staging areas for the NATO lead International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), the convoying of supplies, and assistance for removing terrorist leaders from the country. These supply lines have become very important because NATO has since struggled to maintain good rapport with Pakistan, the other major supply line into the land-locked Afghanistan.

In reaction to a recent air strike that killed over twenty Pakistanis civilians, supplies from Pakistan have recently slowed to a trickle.

In Chicago this past May, protesters marched down State Street and Michigan Avenue to demonstrate in front of the 2012 North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) Summit. The evening news was filled with videos of police in full riot gear standing inches away from angry activists. But the real story lies not with those exercising their liberties with angry chanting and demonstrations. It lies with the leaders of NATO, charged with protecting those liberties by managing the nuances of modern diplomacy.

The new summit, which is to be held September 5th and 6th in Chicago, comes after a series of tension-filled meetings between NATO and Russia. The most recent of these meetings was held in 2010 when NATO moved two of its forces, including tanks, to the eastern flanks of the country. Russia responded by moving two of its military and Logistic units to the western part of the country. This was followed by a series of battles that included a NATO tank being shot, a Russian helicopter being shot down and a NATO jet being shot down.

In addition to the missile defense initiatives, there are some other concerns that are on the minds of NATO and Russia. These concerns include the future of the financial world and its dependence on the United States. Russia has been trying to wean itself off the dollar as its main currency and is looking to the Chinese Yuan and the Russian Ruble as its main currencies.

**ANOTHER COLD WAR?**

It is easy to criticize NATO for their overzealous defense systems and seeming belligerence towards Russia. But Robert D. Kaplan, a specialist at global intelligence company Strategic Forecasting, Inc., suggests that we may not have departed from Cold War geopolitics.

It is important to realize, says Kaplan, that Europe’s military is “dead.” Even since the Cold War, NATO’s military was dominated by American forces and controlled by American officers. Not much has changed in that regard in fifty years. As military budgets in Europe are plummeting, European nations now account for a mere 20 percent of all of NATO’s military expenditures. The rest is spent by the United States. But just because European military power has fallen, their importance to the politics of the world economy cannot be overstated. In fact, in the midst of our current financial crisis, the future of the financial world hinges upon the decisions of European leaders. NATO, as strange as it may seem, is a political stabilizer. Beyond providing a security mechanism to the European countries and defending their interests abroad, NATO, Kaplan argues, provides a “seal of approval” for former communist countries in Eastern Europe. All of the former Soviet Republics from the Baltic States south to Bulgaria are struggling to attract foreign investment to kick-start the European continent.

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**LOOKING FORWARD?**

Europe has many areas ripe for conflict. Unrest in the Balkan states, a new regime in Russia under the leadership of Vladimir Putin and fallout from the growing debt crisis could all pose serious threats to the unity and security of the European continent. As I think about the protestors in Chicago who call for the dissolution of NATO, I implore that they look deeper into the realities of the modern world. Though the Cold War is over, the tensions between Russia and the western world have not subsided but simply changed and have new names. NATO certainly has its flaws, but, for the time being, it is good enough.
From Native To Tourist
By Sama Imran Ilyas
Sophomore, Biology major, Disabilities minor

I spent four weeks of my summer in my hometown, which is the capital of Saudi Arabia, Riyadh. It had been a year since I had moved to the United States as one of the very rare international students at UF; and after a year of convincing my entire household, I owned an infinite amount of camels, playing musical chairs, being too homesick for words, but also bonding with some of the best people you’ll ever meet… I headed home after almost exactly a year flew by. Riyadh: the capital and heart of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. A conservative city, it is very difficult to get a visa for the country unless you have family working there. Not an ideal tourist destination (in fact, almost impossible to actually be a tourist) and not a place I can say I studied abroad or interned. But a place of cultural immersion.

My first reaction was… dust. I must have looked like a lunatic because shortly upon meeting family and friends I would point incredulously at no specific point in the sky and basically demand if the weather had gotten worse. It was only later I found out that it was just the most unexpected of places – and no matter where life takes me a part of my heart will always belong to the kingdom.

During my stay, our crown prince passed away. It was quite a sad occasion and the city mourned for a few days, at the end of which a rising prince was crowned. This is how a prosperous kingdom continues. From afar – across the Atlantic Ocean – it may seem a conservative capital full of harsh tongues and malevolent agendas, but as you get closer, you see the Arab generosity and goodwill that lies within the people. There’s beauty in being home, but as you get closer, you see the Arab generosity and goodwill that lies within the people. There’s beauty in being home, but as you get closer, you see the Arab generosity and goodwill that lies within the people. There’s beauty in being home, but as you get closer, you see the Arab generosity and goodwill that lies within the people.

So here are the things I have learned after seeing Arabia as a tourist, for perhaps the first time in the 13 years I lived there:

1. People will pay anything for Victoria’s Secret. One of the times I Skyped with my best friend and roommate, Agustina, I told her people would spend obscene amounts of money on something marked VS on it. She pointed out that I had more than likely been one of the impulsive shoppers, and I shamefully retracted my argument. Although, quite honestly, the Victoria’s Secret passport holder, no matter how overpriced, did prove quite useful during my international travel (where I spanned five cities over four flights).

2. I might as well stop eating now because I’ll never have as great food as in the kingdom. International cuisine galore, this city has everything: the best Asian place in the world (honey ginger lamb chops, lamb tepenyaki, fine shrimp tempura sushi… just to set the scene), the fanciest Four Seasons Friday breakfasts, and if you prove to yourself that you’re good enough you’ll get to sit in the most comfortable casual Turkish diners, where they keep the hot bread coming straight from the oven. And oh, those Ferrero Rocher pastry desserts are to die for.

3. America is something of a equivalence to Narnia for locals. It’s pretty impressive. Speaking of locals, I realized I pretty much lived my whole life in Saudi Arabia and never really met Saudis. With the exception of the Saudi princesses and princes who went to our school, our school consisted of expats from all around the Middle East and world.

4. Our cable is terrible. They are currently showing season 4 of Gossip Girl (yes I rewatched it). Also, I only realized my obsession with Netflix when it failed to work overseas. The most comfortable casual Turkish diners, where they keep the hot bread coming straight from the oven. And oh, those Ferrero Rocher pastry desserts are to die for.

5. Independence is not overrated. I only realized the privilege of solitude when no one would leave me alone. I wasn’t allowed to travel without an escort, and all I wanted to do was run free. Yes, our gas is cheaper than our water, but that doesn’t mean anything for me if women are never granted the privilege to drive (not that I even know how to drive… I’m working on it).

6. That being said, I love my home in Saudi Arabia more than I can possibly imagine. You can say anything about it, but I’ll always love my kingdom. Neither am I Arabian by blood, nor by passport, but by choice. Because home is home. Why do you think people stick with a country till the end? There’s such a thing called nationalism.

7. The further you are from your culture, the more you want to immerse yourself into it. I had the best time wearing shalwar kameez (Pakistani national dress) and attending dinners with the most divine cultural food. I honestly liked the feeling of wearing my abaya – a black cloak imposed on women by law – one more time. What to others feels restrictive and conserva- tive, for me feels shielding and protective - a familiar comfort. It’s all about perspective. I mean, how fun is it to be dressed in your pajamas for fancy dinners because no one can see what you’re wearing anyways? That’s comfortable dining.

8. I live in a perpetual abyss. For the whole of my freshmen year in college I wondered where I was truly anyways? That’s comfortable dining.

5. Independence is not overrated. I only realized the privilege of solitude when no one would leave me alone. I wasn’t allowed to travel without an escort, and all I wanted to do was run free. Yes, our gas is cheaper than our water, but that doesn’t mean anything for me if women are never granted the privilege to drive (not that I even know how to drive… I’m working on it).

Photograph contributed by Sama Imran Ilyas
Partners in the Parks

By Lexy Khella
Sophomore, Political Science major

No whip required. You don’t have to be Indiana Jones to go on an adventure. Take it from senior Casey Cox and junior Kelly Jones, two fellow honors students and adventurers from the program Partners in the Parks.

Love the outdoors? This is for you. Started in 2008, Partners in the Parks is a program sponsored by Southern Utah University and Cedar Breaks National Monument, partnering with the National Collegiate Honors Council. The goal is to bring honors students from universities all over the world into the beauty of the outdoors and its universal serenity. The various sites of nature are applied as a learning instrument with, but not limited to, historical, scientific, and cultural lessons directly related to the grounds and waters the students are immersed in.

Cox and Jones took flight to the Virgin Islands this past summer and dunked themselves in the waters for a week of unparalleled snorkeling among the endless list of other experiences. Cox, who has been on two other Partners in the Parks programs – first, to the Denali National Park in Alaska, and the second to the Grand Canyon–Parashant National Monument – found this trip through the Honors Daily Opportunities List. Not to students: make sure you read these – you never know where you might end up afterwards. Encited by the stories of Cox’s experience on the previous trips, Jones couldn’t resist either. “She said that the best part of Partners trips is that you are able to see more areas of the national parks than normal tourists are allowed to go, and that you meet a diverse group of students from around the country,” Jones said. “I love the outdoors and I love meeting new people, so this program sounded like an amazing opportunity.”

The program lasted a week and their group was made up of 14 university students – 13 girls, and one boy. They stayed at the Virgin Islands Environmental Resource Station (VIERS), managed mostly by volunteers from all over the United States. They provided every meal, “excellent home-cooked meals three times a day,” according to Cox, for the multiple groups staying there at a time. For housing, they stayed in a large cabin with a water supply derived from filtered rainwater, with a focus on water conservation. “The atmosphere was very much marine biology summer camp for college kids – it was an excellent place to stay and collect field data for those who were taking a tropical ecology course,” said Cox. But they certainly weren’t exploring on their own. Guided by their local taxi driver Hamilton, they were in good hands. To get from one side of the island to the other, they went safari style in this open-air “taxi.” The group snorkeled every day, and one night, went exploring in the Greater Lameshur Bay with underwater flashlights. “It was a surreal feeling to be under water in complete darkness, but it allowed us to see animals that are hidden during the daytime. We spotted shrimp, a large lobster, and a puffer fish. At one point, we turned off the lights and waved our hands under water to see the phosphorescence—it looked like underwater neon fireworks,” Jones said. When they weren’t exhausted from a day of hiking and snorkeling as part of the group experience, they had the option to go swimming, snorkeling, hiking, or kayaking on their own. But no trip would be complete without s’mores and guitars around a campfire at night.

“Marine biology camp for college kids,” is how Cox describes the atmosphere of this trip. “It was an excellent place to stay and collect field data for those who were taking a tropical ecology course,” she said. But still, this was no ordinary marine biology camp. “The marine component of the trip was unlike anything I have ever seen. I alternated between feeling as though I were snorkeling in a postcard or a high-definition National Geographic documentary. Everywhere we snorkeled was unique and beautiful in a different way,” Cox continued. “Since it was my first ocean snorkeling experience as well, I was not fully prepared for the magnitude of the species we would see.”

Out of the many ruins the group visited, one of the experiences was to a former sugar plantation and slave quarters. “Many [ruins] were still in great condition, so it was easier to envision how things were done in the plantation era on the island,” Cox said. She explained that one of the impacts that the plantations had was clearing the island’s natural vegetation. Now, the majority of vegetation is exotic or invasive, while what is left of the native vegetation is endangered. “The remaining structures serve as a reminder of society’s progression in human rights and equality compared to that of the colonial era,” she continued.

While the diversity of life under water was breathtaking, the diversity was matched above the waves in the group camaraderie. The trip was made up of students from Florida, Georgia, New York, Arkansas, Maryland, and Thailand. The trip was only one week, but that did not inhibit the sense of community and friendship that was quickly forged. “We all had such different personalities, but had a ton of fun and got along really well,” Jones said.

Advice from our expert adventurers: Cox says, “Have an open mind! Try to be adventurous if presented with a unique opportunity.” And from Jones, simply, “Go! Pick somewhere you’ve never been, and just be enthusiastic about each activity that takes place and you’ll have an incredible week.”
This summer, instead of staying in Gainesville taking classes or interning at a news station, I am able to fulfill a lifelong dream of being a camp counselor for middle school girls. Every year at summer camp I thought my college counselors were fearless—leading hikes and camp songs, and cooking meals over an open fire. For ten weeks, I get to serve as a confident camp counselor for eleven and twelve year old girls. The job isn't all kumbayas around the campfire, but so far it has surpassed my childhood dream.

Having grown up going to camp in Florida and Southern Georgia, I used to always associate camp with lakes—I never pictured hills. The camp I am working at this summer is in Northern Georgia at the foothills of the Appalachians. Besides the dining hall and auditorium next to our cabins, every place on camp requires a mild or intense hike. But the hills create a canvas for spectacular sunrises and sunsets. I have seen plenty of picturesque sunsets into the Gulf of Mexico, but nothing compares to the sun creeping up in the morning behind a fuzzy haze over the rolling hills. The natural beauty of camp is rejuvenating; it awakens my senses. At night I can see every star, and during the day I smell more wildflowers than I ever have before. I spot all sorts of animals—rabbits, deer, and even snakes—throughout the day. Nature's splendor is not only refreshing to other counselors in addition to myself, but also to our campers. Even middle schoolers are excited about a baby deer speckled white or a bird's nest outside our cabin. While some campers are calmed by nature, for others, camp brings out their pent-up energy and they run wild with the animals.

One eleven year old camper, Hayden, told her counselor that camp is the one place she gets to be herself. Camp is her natural habitat. On the first day she scaled five trees. She explained that she is in a rock-climbing club back home, but the trees at camp create a challenge incomparable to any indoor rock-climbing wall. One night, while we were camping out in tents, Hayden created a bow with a stick another camper gathered for firewood. She ran around the campsite claiming she was hunting dinner. Hayden got too close to nature when she was climbing a tree on the third night of camp. Her legs and arms turned red, she had a frightening case of poison ivy. Her counselor said her cabin had never been so silent—Hayden had to take Benadryl to calm the reaction. Nothing could keep Hayden or the other campers out of the woods—not rashes, blisters, itching, or even antihistamines. Only at camp can some girls explore creation foreign to their city or suburban backyards. Once campers are introduced to the world of nature nothing can stop them.

As a counselor, I may complain about hyper, energetic campers but they motivate me to be more enthusiastic. In fact, they have all been considerate and excited about camp traditions and new adventures. They remind me why I love my job. The camper that counselors fear, however, is the boy obsessed. Though I am at an all girls' camp, there is a boys' camp on the other side of the hill. The camps come together every session for a cookout, dance, and relay race known as the "mega relay." The girls and boys write letters to each other during the days leading up to the dance, describing what they look like and what they will be wearing. For some girls, mail time is the highlight of the day: they await lunch with anticipation and sometimes cry if they do not get a response. Boy-obsessed campers will seize any opportunity to head to the other side of the mountain. On a mountain biking trip, Alyssa, who, after six summers at camp, is known for wandering to the boys' side, took a detour to see if the boys were at the pool. Boy-obsessed campers are only interested in connecting with nature when the male species is involved.

Sometimes, when I get a wireless signal up at camp or head into the neighboring town, I see photos from my friends studying abroad or tweets about their competitive internship. I feel disconnected from the real world and slightly jealous. But in the mornings when I run and catch the beautiful sunrise, or when a camper nearly chokes me with a hug, I know I am right where I belong. I am a part of nature in a way I may never be again. I do not have to worry about what I look like, where I am going next, or what I am doing. I get to teach archery and mountain biking, lead hikes, and sing silly camp songs out of key. I am fulfilling a dream and hopefully inspiring girls to dream.
WE, ‘MERICA

By Lexy Khella
Sophomore, Political Science major

‘MERICA – RESOUNDING PRIDE BOUNCES OFF OF THE WALLS
AS CITIZENS SHOUT THE “ABBREVIATED” NAME OF THE COUNTRY THEY ADORE, OFTEN A RED SOLO CUP IN HAND.

AND WHO DIDN’T CELEBRATE THE FOURTH OF THE JULY, TOASTING TO THE COUNTRY WHOSE COLORS WE WORE FROM HEAD TO TOE? GUYS – HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE A SHIRT THAT SAYS “AMERICA.” GIRLS – AMERICAN FLAG BIKINIS ANYONE?

NATIONALISM IS PART OF WHAT MAKES THIS COUNTRY ENVIED BY OTHERS AND BINDS US TOGETHER WITH STRENGTH, BUT HOW OFTEN DOES IT BECOME A TREND OR FASHION STATEMENT MORE THAN POLITICAL UNITY? HOW MANY OF YOU WHO BOAST AMERICAN PRIDE HAVE RESEARCHED THE ISSUES OUR COUNTRY IS STRUGGLING THROUGH TO MAKE INFORMED DECISIONS ABOUT YOUR VOTE- OR REALLY, HOW MANY OF YOU HAVE EVEN REGISTERED TO VOTE YET? SUPPORT YOUR COUNTRY IN MORE WAYS THAN WEARING ITS COLORS AND BUYING BEER WITH ITS FLAG ON THE CAN. DON’T JUST FOLLOW YOUR PARENTS’ PREFERENCE, OR JUMP ONTO THE ‘COOL’ CAMPAIGN BANDWAGON. READ ABOUT THE ISSUES AT HAND, FIND OUT WHAT IS IMPORTANT TO YOU, AND VOTE FOR YOUR FUTURE.
The United States needs to thrive again. More and more Americans have given up looking for work. The national debt is at an unprecedented level. Our health care system is broken, education continues to decline, and we face potential threats overseas. These pressing issues may seem overwhelming, but accepting defeat has never been the American way. The hard work and ingenuity that has so defined the American spirit still dwells within us, we just need to let it out. We can restore this country’s promise, but we first need to fix its economic policies. To do so, America needs a leader at the helm with decades of private-sector experience. America needs somebody who has spent his entire life turning around companies and organizations. America needs Mitt Romney.

Romney’s success in business cannot be overstated. When he joined Bain & Company, Romney quickly became the firm’s top consultant and rose to Vice President. Six years afterwards, Romney co-founded the private equity investment firm, Bain Capital. As CEO, Romney helped create tens of thousands of jobs for new and struggling companies. About 80% of his clients experienced growth, including Staples, Sports Authority, Domino’s, Steel Dynamics, and Brookstone. In 1991, Romney returned to Bain & Company to save them from collapse. In two years time, he turned around a struggling firm into a prosperous one. Not only did he save the company, he increased their financial transparency and avoided layoffs. Romney soon returned to Bain Capital, where he continued to lead a company that revolutionized the industry. The Stamps Scholarship offered by UF’s Honors Program is funded by E. Roe Stamps. Stamps is the co-founder of Bain Capital. He holds Romney in the highest regards, saying that he admired the strong company he built.

Romney’s continued as CEO until he left the company in 1999 to preside over the then ailing Olympic Games in Utah. The event was experiencing a $379 million shortfall and major sponsors were pulling out. When Romney came on as the new president and CEO, he began making major changes. On his first day, the Olympic Committee wanted to have a meeting at a fancy restaurant in town. Seeking to create a different culture, Romney chose to have the meeting in the headquarters. Instead of catering, he ordered Domino’s Pizza, and made the officials pay for the lunch per slice. Right then, Romney sent a clear message about the direction he wanted to take these games. He then proceeded to examine the budget line by line and cut out millions in excessive waste and unneeded luxuries. He reached out to the corporations that abandoned the games and convinced them, along with new sponsors, to give money. Under his watch, the Olympics raised more money than ever before, and he left the game with a profit of $100 million. The games turned out to be an amazing success, in part because of the strong leadership that Mitt Romney provided.

His experiences are certainly impressive, but his most assuring qualification is his character. The media likes to portray Governor Romney as a wooden, lifeless fellow when in fact his colleagues regard him as fun, friendly, and compassionate.

By Gators for Romney’s Treasurer

You won’t see the outdoorsman and the handyman and the prankster. You won’t see the man that refused or doated his salaries at Bain & Company, Olympics, and Massachusetts. Romney shut down his entire business for a month to search for an employee’s kidnapped girl in NYC. He values his family’s input just as much as his campaign’s. His successes in life have been due in large part to his ability to assemble competent teams. His approach that made him so successful in business lets those who know more on certain issues do what they do best. That’s the sign of a good leader, not running the show but maximizing your group’s potential. He can inspire.

Returning to prosperous times won’t be easy, but we need to find a way or we will spend the rest of our years a shadow of our former self. The choice between President Obama and Governor Romney in the 2012 election couldn’t be clearer. With a poor economy, sub-par job growth, and mounting debt, students will have a choice to make. Do we want our government to continue down an unsustainable path of excessive spending and regulations, or do we want to elect a president committed to fiscal responsibility and more economic liberty? Gators for Romney chooses the latter, and that is why we promise each and every student at UF that we will work our hardest to ensure that Governor Mitt Romney wins on November 6th.

To get involved or contact Gators for Obama: visit http://www.facebook.com/gatorsforromney or www.GatorsforRomney.com

Gators for Romney
In the 2008 presidential election, voter turnout at the Reitz Union was at an all-time high of 87 percent of registered voters. There is no doubt that President Obama won the election in Florida in part due to the strong support of college students across the state. Now in 2012, Gators for Obama is actively working to ensure that students at the University of Florida understand how much President Obama has accomplished for our country since 2008 and the importance of re-electing the President to a second term.

As college students, access to education is priority of ours. President Obama shares our view on the importance to educate as many Americans as possible by doubling the funding for Pell Grants, which has helped make college more affordable for an additional 3.7 million students. This was achieved in part by restructuring the college loan program to divert taxpayer money from banks to students working to finish their education. This year, President Obama also signed a bill that stopped student loan rates from doubling, saving about $1,000 in loan payments for almost 8 million students. These achievements make it clear that the President sees education as a necessity for all, not a luxury for some. We couldn’t agree more.

But it’s not just support for education. President Obama’s Affordable Care Act has tremendous benefits to young Americans as well. Thanks to that bill, over 3 million young Americans can stay on their parents’ health insurance until age 26. Insurance companies can no longer deny those with pre-existing conditions or charge women more for their insurance just because of their gender. All of this progress will be gone under a Romney presidency, who has promised to repeal the Affordable Care Act on “day one” in office.

President Obama’s accomplishments are vast, but here are a few more of our favorites: repealing “Don’t Ask, Don’t Tell”, turning the principle of equal pay for equal work for women into law by signing the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, restoring the U.S. manufacturing and auto industry, and achieving more than 28 straight months of private sector job growth.

There is no doubt that President Obama is moving this country forward. However, the next 4 years will determine whether or not this progress will continue. The next president will most likely nominate several Supreme Court justices, shaping the balance of the Court for the next 15-20 years. The next president will determine if America is a nation that fights for the middle class or one that gives tax breaks to the wealthiest Americans. The next president will decide whether education is a priority for all or something that is reserved for those who can afford it.

This is why Gators for Obama needs your help. We need you to make phone calls, to knock on doors, to register new voters, but most importantly, to help share what President Obama has done for you and why he must be re-elected. We’ve already begun this process by actively reaching out to students through weekly phone banks, canvass events, and voter registration drives in the past year. Last spring we even had the chance to host an event on UF’s campus with David Axelrod, a former senior advisor to the President and the current chief campaign strategist to Obama’s re-election effort.

Even if you cannot volunteer, we urge you to vote in November. In 2000, the presidential election was decided in the state of Florida by 537 votes – smaller than the size of the incoming honors freshman class. Every vote counts. Make sure yours does.

To get involved or contact Gators for Obama:
visit www.facebook.com/gatorsforobama or www.gatorsforobama.org

By Christina Ford
Sophomore, Political Science and Economics major
Communications Director, Gators for Obama
November 6, 2012

* REGISTER to vote by October 9, 2012 to vote in Florida.

* To register, complete the Voting Application form, found on the Florida Division of Election’s website

*N.B.: You must be registered for at least 29 days prior to the election in which you wish to participate in.
The heavy research and development costs taken on by pharmaceutical companies are central to the development of new drugs for the healthcare system. Large pharmaceutical companies must also show profit to meet shareholder expectations, which limits the risk they are able to take in product development. These companies have a higher tendency to invest in research that can be applied to a large market segment in order to maximize returns, which historically has left research for small markets underserved from the private sector. But new partnerships and incentives are changing the private sector’s long term ability to pursue drugs that directly affect only a small proportion of the population.
Blockbuster drugs have the potential to capture large market segments for an extended period of time offering revenue streams with high rates of return, given that the pharmaceutical company still holds exclusive patent rights for market exclusivity. These patents protect pharmaceutical brand name products from generic competition for approximately twenty years in order to offset the expenses incurred by research and development. Take for instance Pfizer’s blockbuster statin Lipitor, which in 2011 had 8.7 million American users (most of whom will use the statin to lower cholesterol levels over a lifetime). When Pfizer’s patent on Lipitor expired in late 2011 allowing generic production of the drug, the company quickly offered incentives and discounts to keep current customers and insurance companies on board. Despite Pfizer’s efforts, brand name Lipitor sales fell close to 73% in the first quarter after the first generic FDA-approved avarastatin was placed on the market. A pharmaceutical company must look at both market size and product protection to protect their revenue streams in the long term.

With many of their best selling drugs now threatened by genetic competitors, large pharmaceutical companies have recently turned their attention to a new market segment: rare diseases. A rare disease, or orphan disease, is quantified by affecting fewer than 200,000 individuals in the United States or less than 5 per 10,000 in the European Union. It’s not surprising that pharmaceutical companies tend to shy away from segmented markets, but what is surprising is a recent trend back to pursuing niche markets by pharmaceutical giants.

In 1983, the United States’ Orphan Drug Act was identified and proposed incentives to pharmaceutical companies who might incur financial losses for developing drugs that targeted the niche markets characterized by rare diseases. These incentives included federal tax credits that would cover up to 50 percent of research and development costs, a seven year monopoly guarantee on drug sales per use, and waiving of drug application and annual FDA product fees. Additionally, the US Office of Orphan Product Development was created within the FDA to oversee additional federal grants and expedite regulatory processes for companies pursing orphan drug development. Like all other drugs, orphan drugs must be proven both safe and effective by the FDA prior to release.

In early 2005, Shire Pharmaceuticals saw its patent for an attention-deficit drug called Adderall XR expire and threaten almost half its revenue. The company made a bold move and bought Transkaryotic, a biopharmaceutical company with a mediocre debt ratio that produced high-priced gene and protein therapy treatments for rare genetic diseases. While at the time investors viewed the move as a risk out of the Shire’s area of expertise (at the time mainly attention deficit and small-molecule medications), the Transkaryotic products have since brought Shire approximately $3 billion in sales with a growth rate of 30 percent each year, making Shire the second-best stock performer of the 30 top drug companies. Competitors like Sanofi and GlaxoSmithKline now want a piece of the action, and have either set up their own wings dedicated to orphan drugs or acquired small niche-oriented biopharmaceutical companies. The orphan drug market is growing, but why exactly?

These large companies not only can take advantage of incentives towards orphan drug production in both the United States and Europe, but can also maintain high prices on their products while only dedicating a small amount of infrastructure expense for the niche market. With treatments often the only one of their kind, the companies can take advantage of their monopoly markets to divert their revenue streams beyond large market drug. This switch may usher in a new era in which new treatments for rare diseases are powered not just by government grants and incentives, but by economic incentives recognized by large pharmaceutical companies.

In early 2012 the FDA approved Vertex Pharmaceuticals’ drug Kalydeco, the first of its kind in the treatment of cystic fibrosis. Cystic fibrosis affects about 30,000 people in the United States, making it an orphan disease by definition. This genetic disorder is caused by mutations in the Cystic Fibrosis Transmembrane conductance regulator (CFTR) gene found on chromosome 7. Though there are approximately 500 mutations of the CFTR gene that can cause the disorder, Kalydeco specifically targets the G551D mutation that affects approximately 6 percent of people with cystic fibrosis. Mutations in the CFTR gene lead to defects in the cystic fibrosis transmembrane protein, which regulates chloride ions and water transport in the cells. Kalydeco opens the transmembrane protein channels by increasing chloride ion movement through the protein, which helps thin the characteristic thick mucus of cystic fibrosis and improves pulmonary function. Kalydeco, thus named a transmembrane potentiator, is not effective on the most common Delta F508 mutation so genetic testing must be done to specify if the patient’s mutation matches the protein targeted by the drug. The drug is significant because its development began at the molecular level of basic genetics, worked successfully up through an FDA-approved clinical trial, and entered the market as a drug that is matched to patients through reliable testing.

Kalydeco also represents the strategic collaboration between Vertex Pharmaceutical and the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation amid a pharmaceutical market characterized by high research and development costs. The Cystic Fibrosis Foundation, a non-profit, uses a venture philanthropy model which combines both venture financial principals and philanthropic goals through drug development ‘pipelines’. The partnership between Vertex and the foundation began almost ten years ago resulting in approximately 75 million dollars in grants to Vertex, collaborative insight to its researchers, and even helped with recruitment of patients for clinical trials. The success of the approach may serve as a model for the development of a drug that could address the Delta F508 mutation or as an approach for orphan drug development elsewhere. The venture philanthropy model uses the risk-oriented approach of venture capital without the constraints placed upon a regular company, which has resulted in huge grants to big pharmaceutical companies.

While the complex mechanisms of disease did not get any simpler, a few of the financial barriers of development have. Through initiatives that involve collaboration between federal governments, big pharmaceuticals and non-profits, new incentives have developed for orphan drug development. The collaboration between these groups has led to increased attention toward orphan diseases from the private sector. Beneficial not only to patients and families suffering from orphan diseases, economic incentives to find cost-effective treatments may increase access and long-term viability of orphan disease treatment to the healthcare system.
Muna Oli

Don’t mess with this rising sophomore, she boasts a black belt in karate! Muna Oli, a Psychology major, Bioinformatics minor, who was born in Scotland, is involved with the American Medical Student Association (AMSA), Science for Life, and the Neuroscience Club. She hopes to become a doctor, focusing on trauma surgery or oncology—while performing research in the oncology field as well. This summer, Oli is continuing the cancer research she began working on with faculty mentor Dr. Brent Reynolds during her sophomore year of high school. Her latest pursuit is discovering the effect of gap junction communication in brain cancer cells aiming to answer the questions: “What happens if you change the gap junction communication? Does it make the cancer weaker and easier to treat? Does it make the cancer harder to treat?” Oli will continue to work on this project in the hopes of finding new approaches to cure cancer.

Grace Ooi

While most second-year college students are at the beach this summer, still trying to recover from freshman year, Grace Ooi, from Plantation, Florida, is spending that time at the University of New South Wales (UNSW). Under the watchful eyes of UF faculty mentors Dr. Michele Manuel and Dr. Jacob Jones, and UNSW faculty mentor Professor Michael Ferry, Ooi, along with just four other select students, is researching the mechanical properties of Magnesium alloys doped with Zinc and Yttrium after an applied stress. The long-term goal is to use Magnesium, rather than Aluminum, to construct motor vehicles; which, according to Ooi, “would give a car a 10 percent weight decrease, which would increase fuel efficiency by about 6-7 percent.” In the hopes of someday working in the field of energy technology, Ooi is in pursuit of a combined Bachelor’s/Master’s degree in Materials Science and Engineering. In her spare time, Oii is involved with Engineering Ambassadors, enjoys outdoor activities, and loves to play word games such as Bananagrams.

Jesse Gordon

Alachuia County native, Jesse Gordon is spending his summer in the lab, focusing on organo metallic chemistry—which is the study of chemical compounds containing bonds between carbon and metal. Gordon, a rising sophomore and member of Chem Club, is a Chemistry and Economics major, and is also pursuing a minor in Physics. The goal of his research is “to construct organometallic structures with multivalent sites that are designed to mimic the active sites of enzymes encumbered to prevent any uncontrolled reactivity,” with the intent of testing its potential for catalysis. He found out about the opportunity by approaching Dr. Adam Viege at a seminar; where he was then referred to Dr. Leslie Murray, his current faculty research mentor. When asked to divulge a little-known fact about himself, Gordon admitted that when he was younger he hated his middle name and decided to change it to Squage (rhymes with lodge). In the future, he hopes to become a professor, teaching and researching at the University level. In his down time, Gordon enjoys playing tennis, guitar, and piano, listening to music, and hanging out with friends.

Frances Ooi

No, it’s not a typo—Frances Ooi is Grace’s twin and they are pursuing the same major! While her twin is away, Frances is serving as the undergraduate coordinator for the Undergraduate Research Seminar sponsored by the Center of Nanostructured Electronic Materials at the University of Florida. Most important to Ooi is pursuing her own ideas: “I like to figure out what problems need to be solved and how to approach those problems rather than someone telling me what to do. This is analogous to singers who cover other artist’s songs—they never sing with the same emotion as the original song writer.” When Ooi’s faculty mentor, Dr. Wei David Wei, offered her a position in his lab she jumped at the opportunity to research her own interests rather than those of a graduate student. This summer, she is conducting preliminary synthesis experiments to find the ideal nanoparticles for her future experiments involving the synthesizing of different hybrid metal nanoparticles for biomedical applications. She believes that “in the future, the use of nanoparticles will be widespread in every field.” When she’s not “being a lab rat” in her effort to someday become a professor or start her own company, you can find Ooi reading, playing guitar, or working out.

Haitao Xu

Haitao Xu, a Chemistry major who is considering a double minor in History and Theater, is a rising sophomore currently researching the effects of fructose intake in humans. He spent the summer perfecting experimental equipment set-ups and methods, and practicing the techniques involved in growing animal cells needed for his experiments. Xu learned of this opportunity by talking to his chemistry professor, and is now working alongside Dr. Alexander Angerhofer of the Physical Chemistry Department, and Yuri Sautin of the Nephrology Department. Serving as the Sports Coordinator for the Chinese American Student Association (CASA), and as a member of the Table Tennis Sports Club, allows him to organize and play the sports he loves, while forming a connection with the country he hails from. When Xu is not working to reach his goal of attending medical school and becoming a pulmonologist, he enjoys playing video games on his home PC or on friends’ consoles.

Students hit the books, the lab, and the abroad trips to continue their research over summer vacation.
cancer drug recently tested in pancreatic and esophageal cancer: a Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drug (NSAID). To solve the issues associated with radiation therapy, such as harmful side effects and damage to healthy tissue, I looked into the expression of the protein survivin, an apoptosis inhibitor which is present in all cell types and overexpressed in response to stress. As a protective mechanism, both normal and cancer cells produce survivin, making them radio-resistant. In order to continue killing cancer cells with radiation, it is necessary to increase dosage to overcome the resistance. However, increasing the radiation dosage would also overcome the normal cell radiation protection, killing both cancer and healthy cells and inducing greater side effects in the patient. As an alternative, targeting survivin and down-regulating its expression could enable doctors to treat patients with lower radiation dosages. In fact, "Several preclinical studies have demonstrated that down-regulation of survivin expression or function, accomplished by means of various strategies, reduced tumor growth potential, increased the apoptotic rate and sensitized tumor cells to chemotherapeutic drugs and radiation in different human tumor models."

"From the biochemical perspective, survivin is regulated by the Sp1 transcription factor, as this protein is capable of activating the survivin promoter. In addition to being transcription factors for survivin, Sp proteins are directly responsible for tumor growth and progression in cancer. Overall, Sp proteins control constitutive and basal expression of genes, which are part of normal and cancers tissue functions. Since Sp1 was the first transcription factor to be identified; this protein is DNA-binding, and survivin, a potential target of this protein, is key in cancer therapy."

Due to the relationship between the NSAID, Sp1, and survivin, a combined modality of NSAID administration and radiation therapy could offer a viable alternative for head and neck cancer patients. Since Sp1 protein is mainly prominent in cancer cells, NSAIDs could potentially be used to down-regulate cancer cell survivin levels while leaving the normal cell survivin cell levels intact. Overall, combining NSAID treatment with standard radiation therapy could improve patient survival rates by decreasing side effects and killing more cancer cells at a lower, safer radiation dosage. With further research, this mild headache drug might be recruited to the front lines of cancer treatment.


"Regulation of Vascular Endothelial Growth Factor Receptor-1 Expression by Specificity Proteins and survivin, a protein that is DNA-binding and sequence-specific, and it activates a variety of viral and mammalian genes. The over-expression of Sp proteins can lead to high cell proliferation and metastasis, worsening prognosis and decreasing the chance of survival. Since Sp1 is a transcription factor for survivin, theoretically down-regulating Sp1 could also down-regulate survivin. In current studies, Non-Steroidal Anti-Inflammatory Drugs, abbreviated NSAIDs, are gaining credibility as Sp protein inhibitors. NSAIDs are drugs that work due to the inhibition of prostaglandins, a family of chemicals produced by the body cells which promote fever, pain, and inflammation; protect the lining of the stomach from acid damage; and support placental blood clot formation. NSAIDs are widely available over-the-counter, and inhibit the expression of genes, which are part of normal and cancer tissue functions. Since Sp1 was the first transcription factor to be identified; this protein is DNA-binding, and survivin, a potential target of this protein, is key in cancer therapy."

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UF’s powerful research opportunities attract some of the best science students from around Florida. Getting involved in research can be extremely important if you feel your career will involve research, giving you experience that the classroom can’t provide. Like many things at large universities, demand for research positions is high while availability is sometimes low. It’s important to remain flexible initially and find a lab that fits your interests, expectations and goals.

To find a mentor, you can ask professors, advisors, or upperclassmen about lab openings. You should also check out the Undergraduate Research Database through the Honors Program website, which will get you in contact with investigators interested in undergraduate team members.

1. UF-HHMI Science for Life Program
2. University Scholars Program
3. National Science Foundation REU Program
4. Journal of Undergraduate Research
5. University of Florida International Review

For additional tips, opportunities, and undergraduate research stories check out the Honors Program’s thorough webpage dedicated to undergraduate research by visiting: www.honors.ufl.edu/Research.aspx.

Once you have successfully made your way into the lab, make sure you are able to spend the time and mental resources to begin thinking critically about the project. Being lost is part of the experience, and it’s important to understand that not knowing what is going on is opportunity to learn. Research is a learning experience, and you can receive academic credit through the Honors Program or your academic department.

If you are already involved in research and want to bring your experience to the next level, check out the following opportunities and opportunities for undergraduates on the Honors Program website:
1. UF-HHMI Science for Life Program
2. University Scholars Program
3. National Science Foundation REU Program
4. Journal of Undergraduate Research
5. University of Florida International Review

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Even though I am a guy, I love flowers. My dad has been raising orchids all of his life, and I was fortunate enough to grow up surrounded by beautiful orchids. I have always been captivated by their aesthetic appeal, and as I watch a bee slowly grazing upon a petal, I wonder, what is it about the flowers that attract not only humans, but insects and animals as well?

My curiosity in botanical beauty somehow led me to volunteer with Eco-Action, an environmental non-profit organization that cleans lakes and rivers around Central Florida. I needed volunteer hours, so why not do something I was somewhat interested in? When I began, I wasn’t sure what was going to happen, but I soon realized that I was not going to make a difference in the lake any time soon. I started to realize that the water was so dirty that not knowing what is going on is opportunity to learn. Research is a learning experience, and you can receive academic credit through the Honors Program or your academic department.

My first cleanup was Lake Lucerne in Downtown Orlando. I expected the lake to be filled with used tires, beer bottles, and plastic bags; however, when I arrived, the lake seemed to be pristine. The landscaping made the lake look fresh, and the fountain in the center had me dumbfounded. I stood there motionless, thinking, “What is there to clean?” Just as books should never be judged by its cover, lakes should never be judged by their landscaping. As I explored the lake and took a closer look, I answered my own question. Hundreds of plastic items, McDonald’s wrappers, and beer bottles were scattered around the edges of the lake, camouflaged in the murky waters. I learned from my group that animals are often entangled in the garbage or they mistakenly consume these items, which fill their stomachs, resulting in slow, painful deaths. Our goal was to reduce the chances of this happening. If a keystone species was to become a victim of human pollution the whole ecosystem could crumble. For two years, I volunteered and learned more. I became committed to the ideal of preserving our aquatic ecosystems and saving the world from pollution. The line on my resume became just a perk now. "Save the trees!" There are many environmentalists, like Garth Lenz on TED who passionately advocates against the mining below the Canadian forests. I agree with the importance of saving our terrestrial environments, but, I also like to direct your attention to the importance of saving our oceanic eco-systems, which I believe is underemphasized. Contrary to what most people believe, phytoplankton, the abundant grass of the sea, not terrestrial plants, provide us with most of our oxygen, almost 90 percent! I will never forget my Oceanography professor, Dr. Benedict, proclaiming in class, "Burn all the trees in the world! We'll be fine!"

Furthermore, the coral reefs, not the rain forests, are the most abundant and diverse ecosystems found on Earth. The possibilities of finding new organisms, biological researches, and pharmaceutical discoveries are valuable assets to have for our future. Of course, most importantly, we need water to drink. Readily available freshwater makes up less than one percent of the total water on Earth. We must make it a priority to conserve our relatively low water supply.

So, how should we go about preserving our precious H2O? From my experience participating in numerous clean-ups, I say we grow out of our plastic-dependency. For starters, we need water to drink. Readily available freshwater makes up less than one percent of the total water on Earth. We must make it a priority to conserve our relatively low water supply.
As prominent as my dad's disabilities have been in my life, from the outside, no one can see the difference. My dad, a local pediatrician, is the doctor of many of my classmates. He's the goofy guy who makes bad jokes and wears cartoon ties. He doesn't even take his cane to work.

And that's the way I prefer to see him. Not as some-one who's sick, not with derogatory terms like, "cripple," or, "handicapped," but as my loving, dorky dad, too stubborn to let anything get in his way. Even when we're separated from the crowd, sitting on the ground level of an auditorium full of my peers, he's elbowing me in the side, making faces and squinting as I snap candid photos.

I know that his MS is only a small detail in our lives, and we will never let it define our family. That's why when the graduates arrive, anxious not to misstep and ruin their synchronized entrance, I reach over to my dad, helping him up from his seat so we can snap a photo of my sister's arrival.

Multiple Sclerosis, or MS, is an autoimmune disease that affects the central nervous system. In the United States, only 400,000 people have been diagnosed. People with MS can experience a variety of symptoms that include numbness, fatigue, balance problems, blindness, vertigo, and chronic pain. My dad's MS has affected his mobility. His legs and back are stiff, especially in the morning or if he has been sitting long periods of time.

Even when I was younger, when I didn't know about my dad's MS, our family life was adjusted to accommodate his disorder. He couldn't ride bikes, throw me around in the swimming pool, or other normal father-daughter rites of passage. We didn't travel to amusement parks or take long car rides, and I haven't been on a cruise or family plane trip.

When my dad's movements slowed, my mom took charge of the more physically demanding housework. He was tired after long days of work, and my sisters and I did what we could to make his evenings easier.
The Curious Case of Integrated Hardware

By Jonathan Burnett
Sophomore, Computer Science major

“People who are really serious about software should make their own hardware,” goes the famous quote from pioneering computer scientist Alan Kay. It’s an old line of thinking, yet it’s the single most important trend in technology today. As recently as last year, however, this wasn’t the case. Why? Apple has been making hardware to go along with their software all along—even before it was recognized as a valid strategy—and today they’re the most valuable company in the world. Everyone is trying to understand Apple’s success and replicate it. Can other companies improve themselves by adopting Apple-like integration, or are they doomed to fail trying to out-Apple Apple?

The Evidence

This past June, Microsoft announced their own tablet hardware with the Surface, sporting a unique hardware design and a cover flap that does double-duty as a keyboard. Meanwhile, Google announced their own triad of devices at their annual Google I/O developer conference: the Nexus 7, a seven-inch, $200 tablet; the Nexus Q, a spherical media player that boasts a built-in amplifier to power speakers; and Google Glass, augmented reality glasses that can stream everything you see and offer deep Google integration.

Some background on Apple’s success in the past few years: although there are more Android phones and Windows PCs sold than iPhones, iPads, and Macs, Apple makes a much larger profit per device than their competitors. This financial lead has put them years ahead of Microsoft and Google, but this lead is surmountable if their efforts at integration succeed.

The Motives

Microsoft’s decisions of late are fascinating from a business perspective. They’ve always been a software company, but the Surface reveals they intend to make their own hardware. They seem to want a slice of the Apple pie, but their existing business model depends on third party hardware manufacturers, aka original equipment manufacturers or OEMs, like Dell, Acer, and HP to distribute their Windows and Office software. How can Microsoft reconcile the conflicting motives of their hardware and software operations?

The OEMs are surely upset that Microsoft is encroaching on their territory; if Microsoft is making this dangerous move, they must have a plan, so what is it?

Microsoft’s play could be that they want to show the OEMs how it’s done, leading by example with bold new hardware. Maybe Microsoft’s hardware team just got fed up with the poor showing from other Windows tablets and made their own, hoping it’s good enough to turn the entire ecosystem’s fortunes around. Of course, if this was the case, then what happened to the brilliant Microsoft Courier—the clever tablet from Microsoft’s research labs that was unceremoniously killed several years ago despite being a credible iPad competitor?

We’re assuming Microsoft has a plan. Right? A decade of poorly received Windows tablets is no cause for concern… right?

Windows 8 on the Surface may well be the slickest experience Microsoft has ever delivered, but with no announcement about the battery life, pricing, or release date, it’s too soon to say they nailed it.

We see the same effect with Google, who has a history of building their own hardware with the G1 and Nexus phones, but their three big announcements at their annual Google I/O developer conference were unusually all hardware related. Typically the new Android software is the big deal, but now Google Now, which anticipates what you’re looking for before you even enter a search, but instead they seem to be doing it by controlling the whole product in Apple-esque fashion.

This is reflected in the increased production values of their keynote and their products themselves. The high-octane Google Glass demo had nerds on the edge of their seats, and the Nexus Q is built in the USA, sticking it to Apple’s “Designed in California, made in China” approach. On the other hand, while the Nexus 7 may be beautiful and cheap, the fact...
that it’s built by Asus rather than Motorola, now owned by Google, is surprising. Not only did Google upset its entire business model by buying one of its OEMs, but then they went on to release a Google-branded Nexus tablet with another OEM.

What’s the plan, Google? The Nexus 7 may be less than half the price of an iPad, but is this tablet going to change your fortune? How do the Nexus devices and, indeed, the entire Android ecosystem support your core business—selling ads? The answer is that maybe they don’t. OEMs who use Android end up having to pay an estimated $15 per device to Microsoft in patent-licensing fees—how much is Google making per Android device? Not as much as Microsoft is. If Google wanted to remain a pure-play search company, creating their own ecosystem in which Google provides all the services for—and keeps all the ad revenue from—some very successful Google hardware, that’s the only way Google can afford to keep giving away their software. If Google’s motivation is anything less than reinventing themselves as an integrated hardware and software company, they’re wasting the value of their already massive ecosystem. They have to compete directly with Apple’s ecosystem and out-Apple them, without them, rather than making products so great that people don’t mind the ads.

The Verdict

Google and Microsoft can’t simply become Apple overnight, nor should they. Google and Microsoft have both admitted to themselves that they’re not on top—the first step to solving any problem—and are now carefully beginning to make the strategy adjustments that will help them adapt. Apple looked dominant after the huge beginning to make the strategy adjustments that will help them adapt. Apple looked dominant after the huge

In this graph, taken from asymco.com, you can see that Apple's explosive growth in mobile phones, fueled by their tightly integrated hardware and software, has pushed Android and Windows Mobile OEMs out of the realm of profitability due to some healthy competition at last.

WHAT’S IN YOUR PHONE:

5 Apps You Need Before School Starts

By Lexy Khella
Sophomore, English and Political Science Majors

In this graph, taken from asymco.com, you can see that Apple's explosive growth in mobile phones, fueled by their tightly integrated hardware and software, has pushed Android and Windows Mobile OEMs out of the realm of profitability.

UF Map
BY: BRI1
FREE

Worried about being the standout freshman stopping in the middle of the street to pull out your big campus map? Now you don’t have to. Just pull up this app, click on the name of the building you’re looking for, and it’ll locate it for you in seconds.

University of Florida SNAP
BY: RIDECELL
FREE

Waiting on the phone to request a SNAP ride can be exhausting. Make it easier – download the app and electronically send in your request for a SNAP ride. Send in your SNAP request and then play your friends back in Scramble with Friends while you wait for your ride.

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GatorCountry.com Swamp Gas Forums
BY: FORUM RUNNER
FREE

You’re going to be handed enough coupon books in Burlington to fill up your backpack. Instead of letting them collect dust in your drawer at home, this app has all of the coupons that you’ll need to save some cash in Gainesville.

Note: These apps were selected from the Google Play Store
By Corey Flayman
Sophomore, Telecommunication major

If you've seen "The Social Network" or read anything about Facebook's big IPO in the past few months, then you've probably heard how it goes. Long story short, Mark Zuckerberg created Facebook in his Harvard dorm room in 2004, and it has since grown to over 900 million users and a company worth nearly $100 billion, depending on how the stock marker's doing today. However, the story of Facebook cannot be told in one sentence. How did Facebook get here, what does it mean today and what will it become tomorrow?

While its eight-year history would be better told in a book (as it is in David Kirkpatrick's "The Facebook Effect"), the cause of Facebook's success can be briefly explained by several key products and strategic decisions. After launching the site available only to Harvard students, Zuckerberg and his co-founders waited until a high percentage of students requested access before releasing the social network to new colleges. Despite a number of huge companies offering billions of dollars to buy Facebook, Zuckerberg refused to sell, selectively accepting a few investments and maintaining control of the company. While growth was huge and fast from the start, the introduction of features such as photos at September 2006, brought Facebook much more traffic and page views, which generates advertising revenue for the company. The next major step in September 2009, was to add the News Feed introduced in September 2006, bringing a love-hate relationship with Facebook as a company. For example, about once a year, the company redesigns the site, always resulting in millions of users complaining and rebelling against the update. However, a year later the same thing occurs, and these users defend the design that they detested a year before.

On May 18, Facebook held its initial public offering (IPO), making its stock shares available to the public for the first time and becoming a public company. The stock initially sold for $38 per share, valuing the company at about $95 billion, making it one of the largest American IPOs ever. On the first day, the stock peaked as high as $45, but has since dipped as low as $25. The NASDAQ stock exchange experienced technical problems on the first day due to the extreme amount of transactions, which delayed the IPO and partially caused disappointing numbers on the opening day. A number of factors have contributed to the weakness of the stock in its first weeks and months, but many have blamed NASDAQ and lawsuits have been filed.

Even financial analysts are unsure about the future of Facebook's stock price, but one thing is for sure: Facebook isn't going away anytime soon. Some of its detractors label Facebook as a fad, like Myspace. But, Facebook has grown, both in size and functionality, much larger than Myspace ever was, and potential replacements such as Google+ have failed to catch on. There are well over 900 million users on Facebook (and counting!), an incredible number considering that the site is blocked in China’s 1.3 billion and all children under age 13, who will presumably join when they get older or if China unblocks the site.

No one knows what Facebook will create in the future except for Zuckerberg and his team, but rumors have arisen. Facebook is reportedly considering buying the Opera web browser, which it could turn into its own social browser. Facebook could create a browser with social sharing features and, for better or for worse, they could essentially display ads within the browser, bringing in more revenue. For years, Facebook has also been rumored to be making its own smartphone with social features built in. Facebook is gradually moving away from its homepage and pervading the rest of the Internet and our daily lives. Its mobile apps, like buttons on websites, and location check-ins are only a few examples of this expansion. This should continue and increase in the future, but the rise of near field communication (NFC) technology, which enables you to wirelessly contact a nearby chip with your phone, could bring Facebook into the physical world. For example, you could check-in to locations, share purchases, send retailers your contact information, and much more with the swipe of your phone. Facebook will soon start displaying ads in mobile apps, and could also make more money by creating an ad service for other websites, like Google’s AdWords.

While they need to pay the bills and expectations are high from their disappointing IPO, Facebook will never prioritize money over quality. "We don't build services to make money; we make money to build better services," said Zuckerberg in a letter to investors. Facebook has always sought to create the best products for its users above all. Facebook’s mission is "To give people the power to share and make the world more open and connected," and it that’s exactly what it’s going to do.
By Corey Flayman and Jonathan Burnett
Sophomore, Telecommunication major and Sophomore, Computer Science major

Every summer, a few thousand nerds flock to San Francisco for Apple’s annual Worldwide Developers Conference, where Apple holds workshops, labs, and discussions for its software developers every year. More importantly, the conference always kicks off with a keynote speech from Apple’s CEO where they unveil their biggest new products and releases. This year was no different. On June 11, CEO Tim Cook and other Apple executives showed off their new line of MacBooks, and the latest software updates for Macs and their mobile devices: Mountain Lion and iOS 6. While there were many cool new products and features, we’re going to break down this year’s 6 biggest announcements from Apple.

- CF

## The 6 Biggest Bites from Apple’s WWDC 2012

### Siri

With iOS 6, Apple is revamping Siri with three big upgrades: sports, restaurants and movies. Now you can ask your favorite monotone assistant for a variety of sports info, including game scores, rosters, schedules and more for baseball, basketball, football, hockey and soccer. During the demonstration, Siri was even able to answer questions such as, “Who’s taller, LeBron or Kobe?” (Spoiler alert: it’s King James). Siri has always been able to look up information about local restaurants, but now that will include ratings, prices, reviews and photos from Yelp. You can even use Siri to make a reservation with OpenTable. Finally, Zooey Deschanel and Samuel L. Jackson will have more to ask Siri about than tomato soup and gazpacho. Siri can now look up showtimes, movie facts and trailers, in addition to reviews and ratings from Rotten Tomatoes. – CF

### Facebook Integration

Last year, iOS 5 routed new features integrated with Twitter, enabling users to tweet directly from Safari, Photos, Maps and more from their iPhone, iPad or iPod Touch. This was a great feature for Twitter users, but it left many people wondering, “What about Facebook?” This year, Apple announced they had struck a deal with the massive social network to bring full Facebook integration to iOS and Mountain Lion. Now you can sign into Facebook in Settings and then share with your friends through several of Apple’s apps, including Camera, Game Center, Maps and even Siri. You can even keep your calendar and contact information up to date with friends’ birthdays and profile information from Facebook. Apple will also release an update to Mountain Lion later this fall with similar features. – CF

### Safari

Apple has made a few key improvements to its Safari web browser for Mac. First, Safari and other Mac apps will now tout a Share button that enables users to share content via email, iMessages, AirDrop and a number of social media websites. Apple has also combined the Address and Search bars into the Smart Search Field, so you can access websites, search engines, top hits and your history all from one place. If you like to keep many pages open at once, the new Tab View allows you to pinch and swipe to view and switch between all of your tabs. Also, iCloud now syncs your tabs so if you’re on a page on your iPad, you can pick up where you left off on your Mac. – CF

### MacBook Pro with Retina Display

Following Apple’s first foray into “retina” displays with the iPhone 4 at WWDC 2010, even casual observers knew that Apple would bring these high-resolution screens to the rest of its products. Despite difficulties manufacturing such pixel-dense displays at large sizes, Apple has managed to bring a 2880x1800 pixel display to their new highest-end laptop, the “MacBook Pro with Retina Display.” To put that in perspective, this 15 inch screen has three million more pixels than your HDTV! This is the MacBook for a new decade: faster than ever, lighter and thinner without a CD drive, and quieter, too, thanks to a clever technology called asymmetric fan blades. The product’s name may be a mouthful, but Apple will inevitably simplify their technology called asymmetric fan blades. The product’s name may be a mouthful, but Apple will inevitably simplify their

### Maps

Getting lost is a thing of the past as smartphones give everyone the power of GPS right in their pocket. It all began with Google Maps, which has powered the Maps application on every iPhone—until now. Apple announced at WWDC that iOS 6 will feature Apple’s own new Maps application, finally ending Apple’s reliance on Google, their biggest competitor. Using technology they acquired from C3 Technologies in 2011, Apple has flown planes over major US cities with military-grade cameras, capturing multiple angles of every building to create a new feature called Flyover, which allows you to view cities in stunning 3D. WhileFlyover is mostly a neat cosmetic feature, Apple has also built turn-by-turn navigation into Maps that’s good enough to compete with Google Maps on Android—Siri will even alert you when a turn is coming up. – JB

### Passbook

Sometimes Apple delivers new features that users have been clamoring for. Often, however, the features that prove most useful are those that no one asked for, providing the solution to a problem before it exists. This is the case with Passbook, Apple’s new app that makes your iPhone a digital wallet, letting your phone hold on to your reward cards, tickets, coupons and passes. Now you can simply present the barcode on your phone’s screen to the cashier at Starbucks, or use your phone as a boarding pass with United Airlines—your phone will even notify you if your boarding information changes! Expect Apple to include near field communication (NFC) in this year’s new iPhone to further simplify the payment process, letting you swipe your phone past a sensor instead of scanning a barcode. – JB
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