



ADMINISTRATION

Hilltopics

*Dear
First
Years,*

*advice from
a sophomore a senior*



Letter From the Editor

BY KENNY MARTIN

Silence is a powerful thing. I'm thinking of a striking image that has recently been making the rounds on social media and the web; it shows a small boy standing with his arms spread in front of a protest march of thousands of people (the photo recalls the famous image of "Tank Man" in Tiananmen Square). The march, which took place in Celaya, Guanajuato, in Mexico, was organized by the Frente Nacional por la Familia in order to protest recent same-sex marriage proposals in the country.

What the child (who is only 12) did is astounding: astoundingly brave, astoundingly precocious, astoundingly human. What is perhaps more astounding is the way his action has emotionally impacted millions of people around the world. Indeed, that such a brief moment of courage can be taken up as a point of unity by so many diverse people is surely one of the greatest testaments to the power of photography, and of social media, of recent times. But it is also a testament to the power of silence. The kid didn't have to say a word to bring all of this about; he didn't write an article or a philosophical treatise or a personal anecdote about why he thinks same-sex marriage should be legal. He simply *stood up* in the face of something he didn't like; he simply made it be known that he was entering the ideological arena, and not on the side of the Frente Nacional.

There is also much pleasure to be had in silence. I recently spent a weekend at SMU's campus in Taos, New Mexico, and was moved, as always, by the

immensity of the stars, the milky way opening up like a brilliant scar above, so wet with possibility you can almost reach out and touch, even taste, the other planets that might be, that the scientists keep telling us might be. I remember sitting under the night sky with my friends, not talking—after a certain point, with very good friends, there is simply no need to talk in a place like that—and all of a sudden hearing a pack of coyotes howling close by. The silence of the night that had enveloped us was broken, but we really didn't mind. The coyotes and the nocturnal stillness were part and parcel of the same organic whole; one without the other would be strange and unnatural. So, we took what we were dealt, and relished in it all.

I also spent much of the summer in Spain; I remember sitting on a gentle park hill in the city of Santiago de Compostela, overlooking the Cathedral to which pilgrims have been coming for well over 1,000 years to make the final leg of St. James's Way. This is a silence of a different sort, one heavy (though not overburdened) with the weight of history, of countless people long since gone who, just maybe, were in many ways like me, like us. I remember, too, the cloisters of the monasteries; even in the busiest of cities, those four walls create an interior tranquility that puts even the least religious among us in some sort of spiritual way. It is no surprise that we often connect most intimately with ourselves through silence; paradoxically, it is also through silence that we find connections to others, to the human

community as it has expressed itself since the beginning through art, religion, history, poetry, beauty.

Silence cannot do everything, however. I'm thinking here of the great Simon & Garfunkel lyrics: "People talking without speaking / People hearing without listening / No one dared / Disturb the sound of silence." This seems to pretty well describe our current state of affairs, political and cultural and otherwise. A great divide has seized us all, and we are more likely to lamely quip about how "we don't like talking politics" when what we really mean is "we don't like talking politics with people we don't agree with." This has to change. Such change does not mean hedging on radicalism, or whatever positions one chooses to take. It does mean refusing to give into the temptation to ignore or spurn others and cease discourse simply to avoid vulnerability and discomfort. That's not the silence I've come to love; it is at most its bastard child, its maimed and forced and barely recognizable form.

This, then, is an appropriate mission statement for *Hilltopics*: to be vulnerable so that we might learn. To make ourselves and others uncomfortable for the sake of enlivening the discourse of every sort that occurs on this campus. To relish in words, those mysterious and miraculous things that, for us, constitute the world, and make our minds interesting places in which to live. To do things that please us, however strange or quirky or controversial. To be inspired by people like the boy from Celaya and declare ourselves openly in support of movements we find important, and against those we find abhorrent. More than anything, to use our words smartly, strongly, and sparingly, so that our silences might be more fruitful, powerful, and full of the wondrous delight of looking at the stars and feeling that they are looking back at us. We hope you will join us for the ride.

-Kenny Martin



a brief segment of the journey.

Hilltopics has been an important part of my journey. *Hilltopics* has made me view the world through satire, through interviews, and through insightful comments by my peers. The content in this paper has evolved into something of substance, thought, and careful consideration. It is this that I am most proud of: being part of a group of people who are so eager to not only learn about the world but share their experiences with others.

The amazing thing about this publication is how it now pushes others to broaden their views. *Hilltopics* strives to remind us that although our time at SMU is limited, our ability to create positive change in our world, however small, during our time here is limitless. I am so proud to have been able to witness our paper evolve into a force of intellect while still holding fast to the roots it planted over ten years ago.

The University Honors Program has a fantastic slogan: “UHP: The Heart of SMU’s Intellectual Community.” Nowadays, I see this two ways: we are the heart of SMU’s academics but we are also fostering the development of intellectual hearts within our community. We are encouraging empathy through fact, reason, and careful consideration of the world around us. I believe that *Hilltopics*, constantly pushing us to think differently and to evolve both with and in spite of our world, is at the core of this. We are shaping world changers and we are watching them thrive.

And so, as I begin the end with *Hilltopics*, I cannot wait to see our evolution this year. Though my journey with the paper will end in May, its story is far from over. Three years ago, this paper, much like me, was wide-eyed and inexperienced. Now, it looks to the future with hope and anticipation. I can only begin to imagine how it will evolve in years to come.

Hilltopics

An Evolution

BY CAMILLE AUCOIN

Beginning my last year as a student at SMU has been surreal. Some days, I still vividly remember watching my parents leave me in August of 2013, tears in my eyes, struggling to hold myself together and convince myself that I was as grown up as the world now expected me to be.

The beginning of the end really makes you reflect on just how far you’ve come.

Three short years later, I’m designing the first issue of my last year with *Hilltopics*. I have had the fortunate pleasure of witnessing an evolution of *Hilltopics* in my time at SMU. As a wide-eyed, inexperienced first-year, I was given free reign over the design of the paper. Now, I am less proud of and more amused by the first few

issues I designed. Nobody really needs to see those again.

Similarly, looking back on my first year at SMU amuses me. Nobody really needs to see that version of me again. I am amused by how big I thought I was when in reality I was still so small. I am amused by how part of my mind begged to go back to high school, just to return to some sense of normalcy. I am amused by my over-enthusiastic efforts to make friends that I would never talk to again.

Now, three years later, I see the entire college experience with a refined sense of realism. I see it as a stepping stone, a proving grounds, a test drive for the rest of my life. It is not the be all and end all, but rather



A related inquiry, it stands to reason, is what a growing private university with over a \$1 billion endowment can do with such restrained land resources. Is the solution to campus expansion to push the bounds across Highway 75? What of expanding on this side of the highway? The only way that SMU could finagle growth on the primary campus would be to tear down and rebuild (such as in the case of the new Bob Smith Health Center), to engage in parking lot removal (Harold Simmons Hall), or to buy up and then demolish parts of the surrounding neighborhood, which SMU can only do if it acquires the land.

SMU's Manifest Destiny: Endless Expansion, Eminent Domain

BY KAYLA FINSTEIN

Good news: SMU has broken ground on a new, state-of-the-art aquatics center. Bad news: It's going to be built across Central Expressway from the main SMU campus, in the burgeoning yet remote-feeling East Campus. Good news: SMU has a high-rise tower at its disposal for office, classroom, and administrative space. Bad news: It, too, is located across Central Expressway. More good news: SMU is nestled amongst the stately homes and tree-lined drives of upscale University Park, and it's proven to be a great fit for the university. But some bad news: Room for campus expansion in this centrally located neighborhood in the heart of Dallas is practically nonexistent.

I can certainly understand why East Campus might seem a viable plan for land-strapped SMU. It finds itself somewhere between an upscale, high-density mixed use area and a sea of offices, parking garages, and empty lots with an industrial vibe, ripe for redevelopment. Yet, it feels disconnected from the main campus west of the highway, with its strictly

Georgian architecture, mid-rise buildings, and grassy green space aplenty. For students and faculty looking to utilize East Campus' amenities, such as the Psychology department or perhaps the Payroll office, a special trip across Central Expressway is required. While to some it might be a mere inconvenience to cross the highway, to me it indicates entrance into a new physical and mental space: with the highway no longer being the demarcated boundary of where the school ends and where the city of Dallas begins, one must rethink their idea of what constitutes the "SMU bubble," in the process confronting SMU's Manifest Destiny: east, east, east. Where will SMU draw its line in pushing growth eastward? How integrated will East Campus become with its mixed use SMU Boulevard neighbors, and will this signal a fundamental shift in how students and faculty interact with campus? How walkable is it, and how will SMU encourage students to consider it "part of campus?" There remain many unanswered questions.



This eminent domain-based practice was what SMU engaged in throughout the years leading up to the construction of the George W. Bush Presidential Library, which opened in early 2013. In order to be competitive in the presidential library bidding process, SMU needed to show private donors, investors, and other stakeholders that they would be able to provide sufficient acreage to host the library and its associated institute. Less than 5 years later, SMU would again purchase residential land on the northwest corner of Mockingbird Lane and Central Expressway in order to construct five residential commons, Arnold Dining Commons, and the Mustang Band Hall.

On both of these occasions, SMU met with resistance from some residents who felt that the eminent domain process wasn't fair. Some went as far as filing a civil suit in the Bush Library case, yet SMU claimed throughout that their land acquisitions were legal and unrelated to library construction.



I feel that there are residential blocks still at risk in University Park, especially those that butt up against the commuter lot east of Airline. Is it morally acceptable for SMU to engage in these practices? Should we be continuing to scope out land that we consider ours for the taking by virtue of our legal and financial resources? For me, it reeks

of presumptuous entitlement - that we feel we have the right to continue to engulf those without the power to stand up against a university.

I understand SMU's fiscal concerns. I certainly understand the pressure that donors and investors can put on administrations to produce tangible results that are representative of

their support (and not just a brick paver). I understand that SMU's administration might feel that they are stuck between a rock and a hard place, on one hand valuing the city of Dallas for its connection to and support of SMU, and on the other, being physically confined by it. At the same time, I think that SMU should be taking a harder look at the implications of expansion, both across the highway and acquisition through eminent domain. There should be greater opportunities for our surrounding communities to make their interests known, and SMU should consider other, perhaps more innovative or out-of-the-box plans for developing and redeveloping their land and infrastructure. A more balanced approach to SMU's expansion and development is direly needed and long overdue.



Dallas by Bus: Coming Soon to UHP

The Bus Tour of Dallas is back! On Saturday, October 29th, Dr. Doyle will lead a tour of some of Dallas' most iconic neighborhoods including Uptown, Oak Cliff, the Arts District, and East Dallas. New to Dallas? Come learn about the city? Been here all your life? Come learn something new!

Dr. Doyle is a resident Dallas expert and will provide thoughtful

insight to the evolution of Dallas as a city...and its many parking lots. He has extensively studied the neighborhoods that we will visit during the tour.

So bring your cameras, your friends, and your hunger for knowledge (we will stop in the Arts District to feed your actual hunger, too)!

When:

Saturday, October 29th, 2016
Leaving at 10 AM

Where:

Leaving from the flagpole

How to RSVP:

Email Dr. Doyle!

Bring:

Money for lunch



A Letter For First Years

BY DESTINY ROSE MURPHY, SOPHOMORE

Dear Freshmen First Years,

As you begin your journey through academia you may find yourself inundated with copious amounts of advice from starry-eyed seniors who feel it their prerogative, nay, their obligation, to help guide the incoming students (see following article). Don't feel required to listen to them. Don't feel required to listen to anyone. But as a sophomore who was recently in the terrifying and fantastic position that you yourself are in, I offer this to you: some advice that you can take or leave.

At some point, and by that I mean within the next few months, SMU will begin the time-honored tradition of asking you wholeheartedly for money. Do not be mistaken! The calls you will receive are not asking you to make payments towards the almost half a million dollar education that you are getting; no, these phone calls want donations. Remember to be polite to the callers, for they are often just other broke kids who needed the hourly job. Give if you want, or politely decline and take an extra slice of pizza to go from the cafeteria. You're paying for it after all.

On the subject of cafeterias, learn to do away with the complicated social hierarchy of lunchtime seating

prevalent in many high schools. If you see someone sitting alone view that person as an opportunity to make a new friend. Remember that college is hard and sometimes a smile and small talk can brighten someone's week. Plus, the food is almost bearable if you eat it with someone else.



Again on the point of food, once a week you will get an email from Student Affairs listing the various upcoming events. Though you may be tempted to send these directly to your spam folder, wait just a second! Some of those events will have food, food that is free for you to put in your mouth. Such food is truly a gift from the gods, and should be treated as such. Read the email, go to the events, meet new people, and unabashedly partake in the quality pizza.

Though some of you will be blessed with advisors who not only have time to spare, but also a desire to help, most of you will not be so lucky. Treat your personal academic plan as if it is a self-constructed treasure map to the land of so-rich-you-could-afford-Chipotle-with-extra-guac-every-day. Put in the time and the effort, and you will be rewarded with burritos.

When constructing your burrito treasure map, include classes that on the surface seem to have no purpose other than to frighten your parents (the Honors Ceramics course "Sex, Drugs, and Rocks" is a great example). Not only will classes like this serve to fulfill a UC credit in a fun way, they may also allow you to discover new passions within yourself, and have fantastic stories for parties.



Though this advice may seem to you to be the premature musings of a not-yet-senior, I encourage you to view my pointers in a different light. I am you, with one year of experience under my belt, but without the veil of nearing graduation clouding my judgment. I know that very soon you will begin to miss the luxuries of a kitchen and a shower that doesn't require flip-flops, but you will also experience things that you didn't even know you wanted. Good luck, and I'll see you all in the cafeteria.

-Destiny Rose Murphy



A Letter For First Years

BY A.J. JEFFRIES, SENIOR

Dear “First Years,”

Welcome to the hallowed, carefully manicured grounds of Southern Methodist University. As you take your first steps onto campus, you will soon realize that your residential commons is full of sophomores who, having survived the terror and cluelessness of their freshman years, believe themselves omniscient. Now that they are no longer at the bottom of the totem pole, they think have learned enough to give advice. Perhaps they can, but after three years here at SMU I have attained far greater wisdom, some gained outside of the protective bubble of the commons, which I will now give unto you.

It is inevitable that some poor, inebriated soul will try to make popcorn at two in the morning, set off the smoke alarm, and earn your eternal loathing. When that happens, just remember: it is completely acceptable to wish both the bubonic plague and scurvy on them. But please bear in mind that when cursing people you should always use illnesses that humanity has conquered to avoid the risk that the subject of your curse has lost a relative to the illness. It keeps things from getting awkward.

Aesthetics are very important to

SMU. President Turner takes enormous pride in our seemingly arbitrary status as the most beautiful campus in the country, so any time you see someone with a camera please adopt a brochure-worthy pose. Options include throwing a Frisbee with a broad smile, laying on the grass with a book in front of you (reading optional), or skateboarding with a heavy backpack on.



Almost everyone you know has told you to “leave your comfort zone” in college. This phrase is very vague, so here are some interpretations we have applied to it over the course of our college experiences:

- 1) Always sit in very uncomfortable places to study. Comfort inevitably induces sleep (college words!), so a literal departure from a zone of comfort is vital to effective studying.
- 2) Do something that in high school you would have ridiculed yourself for, like attending drag bingo. Because

high school you was probably supremely close-minded and didn’t understand that fun is everywhere.
3) Recycle clothing now that mom can no longer do your laundry.

Liberal arts majors, you will at some point be asked “but, like, how are you going to get a job with that major?” When the person asks that question, you can wish the aforementioned illnesses on them or, if you are feeling less creative, slap them. If you find yourself wanting to ask someone else that question or otherwise belittle their chosen course of study, ask yourself, “Do I want to be slapped?” Then refrain.

When writing papers, do not make up funny titles and forget to remove them. That is how you send an advisor an essay entitled “Why A.J. is a super badass leader (in 500 words or less).” You do not want to send anyone an essay with that title.

Appreciate the cafeterias while you have them. As you outgrow mandatory unlimited meal plans, you will come to realize that all of your complaints about food quality and cockroach infestations fade in the face of having to provide for yourself and not having unlimited quantities of food at your fingertips. The Umph cookie bell will single-handedly defeat Michelle Obama’s efforts to create a healthier country. Calories don’t count when the cookies are fresh.

I am sure you think my suggestions are little more than the musings of a dinosaur who doesn’t understand the world you are entering. After all, when I arrived at SMU as a freshman the residential commons and Arnold didn’t even exist. But do not simply dismiss them. College flies by, each year faster than the last, so I can still remember like yesterday walking into my room, seeing a Texas flag covering the wall of my roommate’s side, and thinking “how did I end up here?” I made the most of my time at SMU, and I hope all of you do as well.

- A.J. Jeffries



Free Choice: Co-ed Dorms on College Campuses

BY LORIEN MELNICK

I arrived at AARO as an excited, innocent soon-to-be freshman, and everything was going fine. I liked SMU and I especially liked the presentations given to raise awareness about sexual assault. Reading about the rape culture prevalent on college campuses had made me slightly nervous, since I'm a tiny girl with the muscle strength of a chihuahua (and also because my friend had been raped in high school), but I was proud of SMU for having a good handle on the issue.

We had just finished talking in our small groups about the presentation -- specifically, the one on sexual assault -- when I raised my hand and asked my leader, "So, are the dorms separated into sexes by floor or do you guys do the 'guys wing' vs 'girls wing' thing?"

My AARO leader smiled mater-of-factly. "Oh, all the dorms at SMU are co-ed."

At the confusion on my face, she elaborated, "So you could live right next to a guys' room. Last year I roomed next to some boys and there were guys living, like, all over our floor."

Nonchalantly, she moved on.

I, however, did not.

Since arriving at SMU, I have discovered that not only is my dorm room sandwiched between two boys' rooms, but also that a boys' room is right across from the girls' community bathroom. The bathrooms don't have locks on them. The showers don't have doors, only curtains.



This isn't meant to be a rant about the bathroom quality itself. I would be a lot more comfortable with the situation if there hadn't been a boys' bedroom just across the hall. Which brings us to the question: should schools have co-ed dorms?

My answer is: yes, they should, but they should also offer other options. Many students might not mind the dorm arrangements and might even enjoy the different social aspect of a co-ed dorm. Others, however, feel uncomfortable about sharing floors with members of the opposite sex, especially trying to adjust to college in general.

Move-in plagued me with worries: would I ever feel comfortable walking through the halls in a towel or even pajamas? What if a drunk boy wandered into the girls' bathroom? Would I run into lots of boys in towels? How would my religious beliefs respond to this? Even after arriving, I still never feel safe in the shower, paranoid about intoxicated boys wandering in, fears heightened by the rampant rape culture on campus and the reported sexual assault last week.

When I asked why SMU would arrange the living situations like this, I was informed that "It's the direction that most colleges seem to be heading nowadays." I understand that offering co-ed dorms is progressive and I'm not against that, but offering only co-ed dorms doesn't seem like the right kind of progress. In fact, in limiting students' choices about Residential Life, it seems to be a step in the wrong direction.

This isn't just about girls. No student at SMU should be forced to live in a situation that makes them feel uncomfortable or threatened. As a campus, we should strive to meet the needs of each student as best as we can. While this is not always possible, offering the option of a single-sex dorm or at least single-sex floors in a few of the dorms isn't unrealistic.

I'm not asking for complete campus renovations. I'm simply asking that in the future, scared freshmen will be offered a dorm choice that allows them the most comfortable transition. If this means other options besides entirely co-ed dorms, then I think we should provide that choice.



to see hate speech spewed onto poster boards, screamed across Dallas Hall lawn. So have we managed to escape the stereotypical Texas homophobia?

Well, not quite. In my experience, homophobia expresses itself most often through bigotry that is quiet, inconspicuous. It sounds less like “God hates fags” and more like “I just wish they wouldn’t shove it in my face” or “That’s so gay” or “Could you change in another room?” And let us not misinterpret or forget the classic frat party scene, where two intoxicated women kiss to the pleasure of their male cohorts. Every time I hear a man shout, “That’s so hot” over the deafening party playlist, I am transported back to my front lawn, where a likeminded teenager threw trash at my girlfriend and me as we kissed.

Bisexual at SMU: Harsh Realities, Future Challenges

BY MARY CHAMBERLAIN HARLAN

I have long, blond hair, I own 26 sundresses, and I live in my sorority house. I have read four Nicholas Sparks novels, I have seen every season of *Desperate Housewives*, and yes, you can catch me at the Beta party this Saturday night. All of these stereotypical, “SMU girl” characteristics add up to one important detail: no one has ever questioned my sexuality.

I have known that I’m bisexual since I was a freshman in high school and I have learned to love who I am. I came out publicly my senior year, when I addressed a talk to the entire school about my experience with my sexuality and with homophobia. The feeling after I came out was nothing short of magical: “Finally,” I thought, “finally I can be who I really am.”

And now, two years later, I attend a largely conservative, religiously affiliated school, where I live, once again, in the quiet discomfort of the closet.

This is not a liberal university, and while homophobia is not rampant, the majority of students seem to employ

a “Don’t ask, don’t tell” ideology. Straight until proven gay.

The most common misconception about homophobia is that it always comes in the form of protesters, Westboro Baptist types picketing gay centers with signs emblazoned with “God Hates Fags.” Those people exist, and those people are irrefutably homophobic. But at SMU, I have yet

Intolerance is sticky and slippery, but more than anything, it is invisible. No one questions the state of affairs here at SMU. I am still afraid to hold hands with a girl as I walk down the boulevard, I may never kiss a girl in public, and I am still not sure whether I am allowed to bring a female date to my sorority formal. That’s not the way things should be, nor how they have to be: we need a spark, a motivation, and a will to change things for the better.





Fancy Flora

BY LUKE YEOM

Art, horticulture, and corruption in landscaping the campus of a college consistently ranked as one of America's most beautiful

Pink cattail plants carpet the fields by Airline Road near the Boulevard like wispy fairy floss on the campus of Southern Methodist University, ranked number one for America's most beautiful campus this year by The Princeton Review. This is a school in which plants are strategically planted according to specific color palettes designed by Disney theme park crafters, where specimens are imported from distant areas in the United States and abroad. As leagues of grade-schoolers tour the campus in the fall, their heads pan to view sweeping vistas and their eyes are drawn to its botanical splendor. SMU's breathtaking campus is an essential appeal to prospective students, especially to corral wealthy international students. And beneath its shellacked exterior, an incredibly complex system of visual artistry, biological savvy, and questionable financial maneuvering keeps SMU in a perpetual state of beauty.

Sensory Tricks

Illusions and the art of visual trickery are ever present on SMU's campus.

"Many of SMU's landscaping tactics are similar to those of Disney World Epcot," said Mark Shrubstrees, who quit his job at the entertainment giant to work for SMU's beautification team, of which members are paid on average a six figure salary. "This is definitely one of the most luxurious college campuses I've ever seen. To think that a school would hire a person in my field speaks to its dedication to its appearance."

When I asked Shrubstrees to show some of his work, he first took me to the Hughes-Trigg outdoor bottom patio. Here, as Shrubstrees explained, plants of specific heights are planted to create forced perspective in areas where large tropical foliage in the foreground segues to darker, smaller shrubs in the back, creating a sense of depth and natural asymmetry.

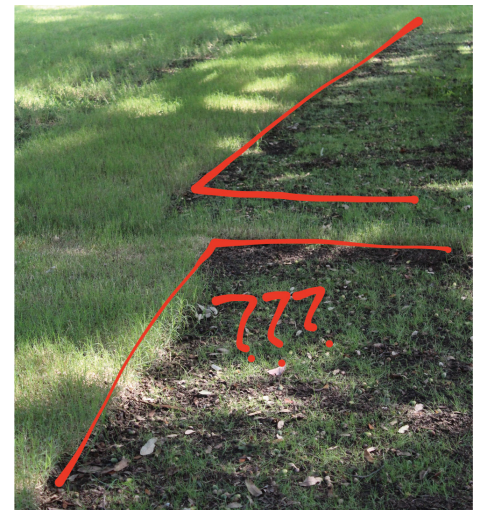
"Our inspiration here was the Amazon forest bed," said Shrubstrees. "You can't place plants in straight lines or equal height. It just looks forced and artificial. In nature, there is a harmonious disorder in the way landscapes are shaped. Just sit here and look. Isn't it relaxing?" Shrubstrees said to me as he sat down in a chair and pointed at the terraced Hughes-Trigg wall.

The Hughes-Trigg patio is not the

only place for forced perspective -- the Boulevard displays a spectacularly creative usage of it as well.

The Boulevard is a long stretch of road lined with trees down the middle that leads to SMU's hallmark building, Dallas Hall. As drivers and pedestrians go down this road, they are shaded and cushioned by Southern live oaks from all directions as they approach the grand rotunda building. The experience of walking up to this signature landmark is highly engineered.

"The trees all the way down the Boulevard were planted much earlier than the ones leading down to Dallas Hall, so the trees start getting smaller as we approach the Flagpole. When we look at Dallas Hall from the end of the Boulevard, the trees in the distance look further away because they are smaller," Shrubstrees explained. "The Boulevard is also on a slight incline upward, which is why we call it the Hilltop. The result is that the trees and incline stretches the Boulevard and frames the Dallas Hall building so it looks like it's larger and further away."



We stood at the Flagpole, and Shrubstrees pointed down into the tree-lined Boulevard.

"But when we look at the Boulevard from the Flagpole, the difference in tree sizes creates the opposite effect; the Boulevard lane shrinks, and everything looks closer together."

Why would the landscapers plan the Boulevard this way?

Shrubsandtrees explained: “The idea was that outsiders, who look at SMU from the end of the Boulevard, would see Dallas Hall as spacious and almost palatial, but SMU students who look standing from the Flagpole would see the campus as smaller, exuding a feeling of closeness and belonging.”

We then walked past the Three Horse Statues on the brick path that leads down to the New Commons.

“In the Disney Parks,” Shrubsandtrees said, “we frequently pump scents like vanilla near the cafeterias because the scent makes people hungry. “We use scent here at SMU too. Our goal is to draw people’s attention to the environment and create a more layered sensory experience.”

We began to walk past trees with white spring blossoms, and I caught a whiff of something pleasantly sweet and floral.

“You smell that, right?” he said as he plucked a flower from one of the trees. “You might think that the smell comes from the flowers.” He took the flower and offered it to me. “Smell it. This type of flower doesn’t smell like anything.” Indeed, I smelled nothing. “These trees were planted a long time ago, but we wanted to draw attention to the flowers and add another sensory dimension to them. What you’re smelling right now are volatile chemicals sprayed from there,” Shrubsandtrees said as he pointed to a tiny device on the ground that looked like a loudspeaker. It emitted a barely audible hiss as it sprayed thready motes of vapor in the air, which now at a closer distance was cloying and overwhelming.

Poisonous, Invasive, and the Eternal Summer

The Dallas climate creates an interesting task for botanists: to choose plants that can withstand Texas’s temperamental sunlight,



temperature, and humidity, yet also can survive unusually hot summers caused by the expanses of asphalt that absorb heat and the towers that insulate it. Plants with large leaves wither quickly under Dallas’s unforgiving rays and lack of rainfall. Yet SMU’s landscape looks lush in spite of the harsh weather. Ground foliage resembling tropical banana leaves and the lawn in front of Dallas Hall are a verdant green year long, which comprise what Shrubsandtrees calls the “look of the Eternal Summer.”

“Lately, we’ve got so many entering students from beautiful areas like Southern California and Florida. We’ve had to compete for their attention. SMU’s goal was to have students come in and say, ‘Wow, this looks just like home.’ We coined the term ‘Eternal Summer’ to describe the way SMU defies nature to avoid any signs of winter.” said Shrubsandtrees. “SMU officials wanted us to make the campus look beautiful and green year round.”

The cost of this goal is money, and irreversibly, the environment. Potent fertilizers are sprayed in front of Dallas Hall during the fall so that the grass retains its lively color even in the middle of January, which leech out during Dallas’s heavy rainfalls. Many of the large trees planted around campus were chosen because they do not shed their leaves during

autumn.

But not all species are from the area. Since the plants around SMU’s campus must withstand extreme climate but not look like native dry succulents, the school imports plants from areas abroad of comparable climates such as Brazil and Northern Australia. However, not all of these plants are good for Dallas’s environment.

“We did have some problems with foreign invasive species propagating outside of SMU. One species of turf we used on the lawns caused problems because its root system is so tightly woven that it strangles competing species. But SMU has enough pull in local law that they greased the skids in getting invasive plants legalized,” Shrubsandtrees said.

However, the occasional invasive species outbreak is not as drastic as the solution to the school’s feral cat problem.

SMU didn’t want to use traditional poison to control the feral cat population, which was booming in the recent years. The dark boxes of feline poison were bulky, ugly, and would remind people of death on a campus whose aesthetic was beautiful and lush life.

“SMU officials approached our botanists with the feral cat problem,



and they returned with a botanical answer.” Shrubsandtrees says. “The botanists teamed with SMU’s biology department to create a plant poisonous to cats that contained nepetalactone, the feline attractant found in catnip.”

The plants were placed in low traffic areas like behind the MoMac dorms, where cats would be drawn by the powerful scent, nibble on the plant’s leaves, ankle over to the shade behind the shrubs, and die.

“The worst case scenario we were anticipating was the sight of multiple cat corpses decomposing out in the open. Luckily, nature solved the problem,” Shrubsandtrees said.

As it turns out, nobody had to move the feline bodies; foxes were attracted to the smell and carted off the bodies in the middle of the night. The foxes, who were much fewer in number, more afraid of humans, and less likely to be vectors of disease, were a welcome replacement for the cats.

In SMU’s bizarre ecosystem in which appearance and glamour trumps all else, quiet extermination is not the most insidious act committed by the school, and poisonous plants are not the only predators fueled by the ideal of costly beauty.

Financial Corruption

SMU has received a record sum of charitable donations to the school in the past year, but it continues to operate in the red today. As millions of dollars flow into the system, the quality and quantity of professors, contributions to student organizations, and funds toward the classroom are static while custodians and other employees are being fired. SMU is hemorrhaging money, and it is spilling into the campus greenery.

Why is this happening? The higher-ups at SMU receive more money when students pay more money, so they are vying for the business of wealthy students who can pay a lion’s share of their tuition and fees. A premium campus atmosphere attracts more discerning families with fatter wallets, and SMU officials profit handsomely from them.

So money that should go to the academics and basic functioning of the school is being siphoned off to fund high-end beautification team members, greener grass, and exotic plants.

The allure of free money is so intoxicating that SMU officials seem to have developed bizarre rituals to ensure good luck in future cash flow. On the basement level of Clements, a dark maze of rooms branches off from the main office, one of which is the Office of Beautification. The beautification team invited me to

come at eleven at night. The door was locked when I arrived, so I knocked on it. A greying man in his late fifties cautiously cracked open the door, checking his guest before letting him in. It was Dr. Sanders, the Dean of Student Affairs, locking the door behind me as I walked in.

“Come in,” he said as he led me into a room with a floor covered with a layer of sand.

Assorted Deans, Officers, and Executives of the SMU administration lay kneeling on the floor, their foreheads resting on the sand— an intense genuflection of sorts.

“It’s the Brazilian sand,” Sanders whispered to me. “Look familiar? It’s the multi-million dollar Brazilian sand from the volleyball courts at the Dedman Recreation Center!” Sanders said with genuine enthusiasm.

I watched as the SMU officials got up, pitched their arms upward, outspread, looking to the sky as though they were praising a God, collected a handful of sand from below, and poured it over their faces.

“We inhale the sand, we soak in its spirit,” Sanders whispered. “The sand has power. It has special properties that draw in the kids with the most money. When the tour guides say, We have six million dollar sand imported from Brazil, the richest parents are willing to pay the price. We revere the sand to ensure that the turnover is even higher in the next academic year.”

The next morning, not believing what I had seen the night before, I went to the bottom floor of Clements and headed to the Office of Beautification once again. However, the sign next to the door that read its name had disappeared. I could see the holes where the nails from the plaque had been pulled out.

A few days later, the financial files that I had requested from the Executive Financial Officer, which I placed in a neat file on my dorm

desk, had disappeared. When I woke up on a Tuesday morning, the papers vanished without a trace. And without the documents, I had no evidence of the outrageous financial corruption at SMU.

All of a sudden, emails I sent to Shrubsandtrees would not go through. In fact, his contact on the SMU website had been deleted. His LinkedIn profile was gone. Not wanting to jump to conclusions, I visited the President of Executive Affairs, who I had seen at the bizarre sand ritual earlier, over at Perkins Administration.

"I am writing a piece on the SMU's Office of Beautification. Do you know where it's been moved?" I said.

"There's no such thing as the Office of Beautification," he said.

"I met the team," I told him. "Mr. Shrubsandtrees went in detail explaining the purpose of his position," I said.

"Shrubs and trees?" he said incredulously. "Is this a joke?"

I heard the taunting bite in his voice. "Why are you covering up this department?" I said.

The officer considered his reply for a moment. Leaning forward in his chair, he said to me very quietly, "There is no such person. There is no such department at SMU, and there won't be in the future. So I suggest you stop looking for it."

So I left his office, returning with no evidence that remained any more.

Beautiful on the Outside

Above all else, SMU's culture of prettiness has an undercurrent of greed. Millions of dollars are spilled for the sake of the campus, many of which were originally designated for libraries, classrooms, and professors. Hidden by closed doors, members of the SMU elite convene to design dainty cat poison, to figure out how to funnel the most money from academic

funds to campus beautification needs, and to remove traces of an entire department that may shed light on their actions. The inner-workings of the school are canopied and shaded, its records pruned and clipped.

SMU's commitment to its aesthetic is impressive, but so is its mysterious and cabalistic administrative culture. The school's ongoing theme begs many questions: When does devotion to appearance become a cult? When does the pursuit of money become just too extreme?

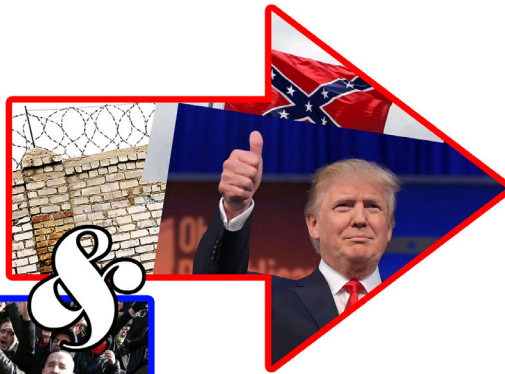
The school's campus is one of a kind, possibly one of the most complex and refined in the world. But underneath the grass that remains vibrant year round, behind the carefully planted tropical plants and the sprawling Southern oaks lies a strange philosophy: Beauty— at whatever the cost.

Comic Relief

BY ANDREW OH



REGRESSIVE
left



ALTERNATIVE
right

An Existential Threat to the United States

BY FAIROOZ ADAMS

In 1971 my father was on a Pakistani kill list. Today the place he used to live in is known as Bangladesh, but at the time it was called East Pakistan: borne out of the partition of India following independence from the British Empire. Separated from West Pakistan by over a thousand miles of the Indian landmass, the East Pakistani desire to break away from the rest of Pakistan and create a nation for Bengali people started early on. East Pakistan had a language and culture very distinct from West Pakistan and because both halves were geographically isolated, union between East and West Pakistan was all but impossible. Assimilation was not achieved, and abstract notions of nationalism became very real as my father's side of the family was forced to go into hiding with the onset of violent conflict in the beginning of the 1970s.

Failure to assimilate and subsequent breakup is a common theme throughout history, though the details are unique in each case. From the beginning, the Soviet Union was envisioned as a union of freely associating states (though reality was anything but), and as a result, early on, Moscow worked to build national identities in constituent

republics while simultaneously preaching Soviet unity. Reinforcing regional identities and assimilation into the Russian-led USSR proved to be incompatible goals, and thus the relaxation of authoritarian control led to the Soviet empire's swift implosion in 1991. Even the United States has had a similar experience, though as a beneficiary. After Americans emigrated to what was northeastern Mexico, into what we know today as Texas, the failure to assimilate proved too much for the immigrants. A conflagration ensued that led to the independence of Texas, and a few years later, the United States came to absorb what is today the American Southwest.

Assimilation and social cohesion are critical components of a nation's success. For a country to remain intact, its citizens must share a common affinity for one another. That is nationhood. Societies like those in Europe which do not have a recent history of immigration, where national identity is inseparable from ethnic identities and ancestral ties to the land, are at a fundamental disadvantage to the United States. Compared to their American counterparts, Muslims in European nations are more likely to

be informally segregated, and as a consequence, the continent sees more Islamist violence. Part of American exceptionalism rests largely in our ability to assimilate foreigners. There is a reason more Islamic State fighters have come out of Europe than the United States.

Recently, two anti-assimilation trends have transpired that cast the long-term stability of the United States into doubt. First is the rise of the regressive left on college campuses, a thoroughly illiberal movement that seeks to assign different levels of rights to different identity groups. This is the group that obsesses over "microaggressions," "cultural appropriation," and the exercise of benign personal freedoms that infringe on subjective notions of political correctness. Much attention has been given to college students with the authoritarian impulse to regulate everything from Halloween costumes to broader First Amendment freedoms on campuses. Unsurprisingly, the same group is also the one that blames America for the world's problems. Patriotism, according to this group, is a deadly sin that is the cause of the world's turmoil. The denigration of the only identity that binds our nation together, our common American identity, is a destructive trend.

To this movement there is now a backlash that is more insidious than the regressive leftists. That is not altogether surprising; it has always been foolhardy to expect that one segment of the American population could be perpetually blamed for the world's ills without an equal and opposite reaction. This movement, the so-called "alternative right" that Secretary Clinton spoke about at length in a speech in late August, is one that carries virtually no resemblance to traditional American conservatism.

Whereas American conservatives seek to promote our nation's interests and security through strength, the alt-right wants America to retreat from the world. Whereas American



conservatives promote economic liberties to free people to pursue their dreams, the alt-right regularly rails against capitalism. Whereas many American conservatives believe the United States ought to be a friend and an ally of Israel, anti-Semitic attitudes abound in the alt-right. Perhaps most consequentially, whereas traditional American conservatives wish to build national unity and promote social cohesion around our shared identity as Americans, the alt-right seeks to divide based on racial identity politics.

Not only is the alt-right anti-conservative, but it is anti-American. America is an embodiment of the Enlightenment, based on ideals enshrined in the Declaration of Independence that all peoples are equal, endowed with sacred inalienable rights that no government is entitled to strip. What the alt-right and the regressive leftists in college campuses share is their exaltation of identity politics; the low illiberal Old World tribalism where ethnic identities set the boundaries on human freedom. Of course the United States in its history has failed repeatedly to protect the rights of minorities, but the trend has always been an inexorable march towards greater freedom and equal opportunities. The alt-right, alternatively, wishes that America would retreat from much of its progress.

Regressive leftist boundaries on human freedom come in the form of political correctness, while the alt-right's racial nationalism is exclusionary and seeks to restrict America's identity by race. Perhaps most concerning are the demographics

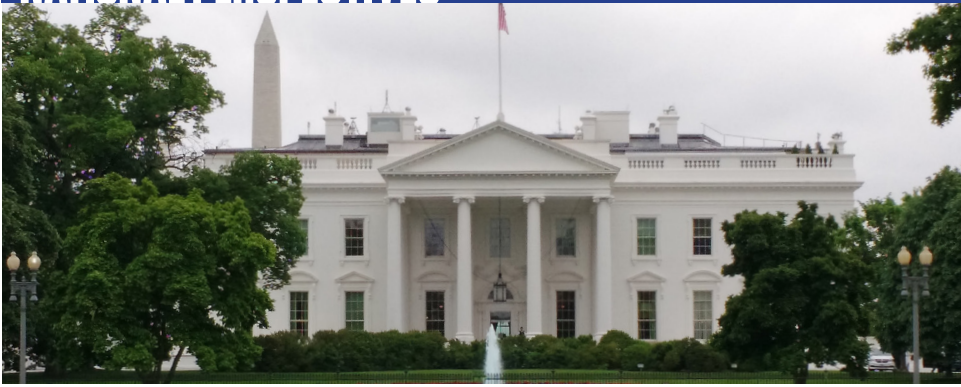
of both of these destructive trends. Regressive leftism is prevalent in American college campuses. Upcoming generations of Americans are socialized in a victimhood culture that plays a racial blame game. The alt-right is also a largely young movement; it is driven by younger white men. This latter group is vehemently opposed to assimilation: the adoption of American culture by racial minorities sullies, in their view, the purity of America's racial composition. Ironically, alt-rightists also bemoan "cultural appropriation" when they see non-whites integrate cultural features into their lives that can be traced to Europe. Likewise, regressive leftists are also opposed to the "melting pot" that has characterized America for so long; cultural purity based on racial category is of the utmost importance, even if it comes to children's Halloween costumes.

Experience from history demonstrates that failure to assimilate runs counter to social cohesion and jeopardizes national unity. For anyone who is a patriotic American and proud of our nation's tradition of assimilating newcomers around the shared principles of freedom and democracy and then engage in constructive cultural exchange, be it the Christmas tree or Chinese food, both trends ought to be cause for concern. America has benefited tremendously as a result of its diversity from the proliferation of new ideas that have enriched our nation, something the alt-right opposes, but also from our ability to set aside smaller groups in favor of our common American identity, about which regressive leftists are uncomfortable.

Progressives and conservatives may argue which policies and to what extent specific programs need to be used to ensure that all Americans have an opportunity to fulfill their potential and contribute to the nation's prosperity. Ultimately both groups understand that for our imperfections and past mistakes, America seeks to live up to its lofty ideals. While there are no perfect nations, America always has and continues to strive to become a more perfect union. That is something regressive leftists in their nihilistic hatred of the United States cannot understand, and that is something the alt-right in their surrender to tribalism cannot embrace.

Conservative and progressive patriots alike must come to understand that while it may be necessary to create specific policies to close gaps, in our culture we must adopt a mentality of colorblindness where we cherish our common humanity and our American identity before all else. Superpowers do not last forever, and it may very well be that America fragments over an inability to reconcile racial identities. That would be the death of an Enlightenment era dream and confirmation that we cannot escape the bounds of our worst impulses. It would be a shame if, for the first time since 1776, we step backwards and consign ourselves to defeat on the question of expanding our boundaries for who qualifies for membership in our national community.

A nation that can emerge victorious from the two world wars, defeat communism, and fulfill a dream as old as humanity itself by landing men on the moon is better than the vision that both cancerous anti-assimilation trends have to offer. America is a beacon of freedom and tolerance and continues to be exceptional by defying challenges other nations struggle to overcome. People who believe in America and the American project ought to come together to reject both strains of tribalism so we may be the best versions of ourselves and continue to be leaders for the very best of what humanity has to offer.



Election 2016: America's Favorite Sitcom

BY ALEC MASON

No matter where we look nowadays, there is always some sort of reference to the upcoming presidential election to slap us back into the pessimism of reality. Whether it's online, on television, or on a sign conspicuously posted in a window of the Sigma Chi house, this election is hard to miss. But why is this election so unusual?

It's evident that there is a wide variety of opinions circulating about this election, so I decided to sit down with a few members of the SMU community to hear their opinions on the trends present in this election season. I had the opportunity to speak to Honors Humanities professor and PhD candidate Mr. Andrew Forrester, freshman pre-law student Heather Smith, and debate team president Aabid Shivji.

This election has been described by many as one of the most controversial in history, but is that really the case? When asked about this, Ms. Smith said that it is more controversial mostly because "information travels a lot faster than it did in earlier elections," while on the other hand, Mr. Forrester took the stance that "politics is always dirty" and that this election isn't necessarily more controversial than any of the earlier ones. So it appears that even the controversial nature of this election in itself is controversial.

If nothing else, the candidates in this election are great entertainment — which might be a nice quality if they

weren't running for such an important office. Nevertheless, there are some stark differences between the two candidates' rhetoric and supporters. According to a recent Pew Research Center study, while 30% of Clinton supporters are pessimistic about the future of America, a staggering 68% of Trump supporters felt the same. Ms. Smith provided this explanation: "Trump is promoting the idea that a lot of things need to be fixed in America, and that things are really bad, and that we need dramatic change. Versus Clinton who is more for incremental change..."

On the same note, Trump's support is noticeably low among millennials (27%, to be exact). When asked about why this may be the case, Mr. Forrester had this to say:

"Millennials as a whole are more likely to be Democratic or left-leaning — or at least left of center. Generally, support for the GOP is from Evangelical circles, and these supporters tend to come from an older group of people who equate Christianity with Republican politics. The younger generation is less comfortable with this link. Additionally, I think that millennials are an ironic group, and Trump is just fuel to the fire of ironic mockery."

On the other hand, Mr. Shivji had this analysis to provide:

"I think young people in general... feel like the 'big guy' is a problematic

figure, regardless of what side of the political spectrum you're on. This would explain the interesting percentage that supports a 3rd party candidacy. Trump's support being low is an indicator of younger people still being around people with so many different interests. Younger people don't have access to the same echo chamber that adults over 30 have developed in their place of work, friend circles, and social spaces that allow views such as Trump's to become acceptable and commonplace."

Trump and Clinton are not the only choices in this race. You've also got the Aleppo-gaffing Gary Johnson of the Libertarian Party, the recently arrested Jill Stein of the Green Party, and many more who are currently losing to Harambe in some polls. When asked about what effect third parties are having on this election, both Ms. Smith and Mr. Forrester agreed that they are having a higher degree of impact on this election than previously. More specifically, Mr. Forrester provided this analysis:

"I think that they are seen as — if not a viable option to win — at least a viable option to communicate distaste for the two parties, for the problems in the two parties, and for the corruption in the two parties. And so, if nothing else, I think they give people an outlet to express their dissatisfaction with the current standing of politics."

Despite the hilarity and ridiculousness of this election cycle making it appear like more of a sitcom, it is important to remember that it is still a real election that will affect the world for years to come. All of the people that I interviewed wanted to advise the students of SMU to research more into the candidates and actually make an educated vote on November 8th. Mr. Shivji, more specifically, wanted to remind everyone that it isn't just the presidential election that is occurring this year, but also the debatably more important congressional elections. Remember, the deadline to register to vote in Texas is October 11th, so register soon to avoid missing out!



years and we are pleased to have them join the ranks on the Hilltop. To help with their transition to SMU and the UHP, a team of upper-class Honors Mentors are serving in each of the residential commons. Check out the Honors Mentors names on our website.

And a reminder - If you have questions or problems with DPRs that do not properly reflect your honors course work, please see me. Often the problem is solved through a needed force-match. You can also use this time to discuss your honors curriculum and make sure you are on track. This is especially important for seniors who will graduate in December or May. Seniors: don't forget to submit your petition for the Honors Culminating Project.

Wishing you every success in the year ahead. May it be enriching, challenging, and memorable.

Sally Spaniolo

From the Desk of Sally Spaniolo

Greetings to the Honors Community, Welcome to the new academic year. It was wonderful to see so many at the Welcome Barbeque and to continue to see you in and around the Scholars' Den. The University Honors Program is here to help you find a welcoming community and encourage you to explore a host of

opportunities to enrich your college experience. Our office suite next to the Scholars' Den is a good place to stop by with questions, seek advice, or just to say hello. We are always glad to see you.

Speaking of community - we welcomed 183 new UHP members this fall. This is our largest class in many

Introducing the 2016-2017 Honors Mentors:

Armstrong Commons.....	Kelsey Shipman
Boaz Commons.....	Beau Bequeaith
Cockrell McIntosh Commons.....	Florence Kam
Kathy Crow Commons	Robert Schmidt
	Grace Kuang
Crum Commons.....	Keely Pike
Loyd Commons.....	Ceci Weigman
	Sophi Farid
Mary Hay-Peyton-Shuttles Commons.....	Melissa Chambers
	Sydney Schmitt
	Emily Elson
Morrison McGinnis Commons.....	Stejara Dinulescu
	Destiny Rose Murphy
	Zachary Wellen
Virginia Snider Commons.....	Elizabeth Ridgway
Ware Commons.....	Alexander Groszek
	Maddie Nerad
Transfer & Commuter Students.....	Nicole Rueb



Don't hesitate to contact your Honors Mentor with any UHP or other questions!



An (Employed) Engineer Reflects on the Honors Program

BY NICHOLAS SAULNIER, SMU CLASS OF 2015, 2016

There are many reasons students decide to avoid or to drop out of the University Honors Program (UHP): It is too hard. It might lower my GPA. I think poems are dumb. As an engineering student, I participated in the UHP to explore diverse topics inaccessible in the engineering curriculum (studies on gender, race, and psychology are curiously lacking from circuits class) and to strengthen my communication and interpersonal skills. At the time, I considered the UHP nothing but a fun addition to a strong technical degree.

Now that I work as an engineer at Texas Instruments, I have discovered that my Honors experience was perhaps the most important part of my technical education. Yes, my work involves programming code and creating circuits; however, the complexity of real-life engineering systems renders nearly all technical information learned in school obsolete. My only useable tools from college are the communication, interpersonal, and problem solving skills that were honed over the



course of four years. While all three were built up in the UHP, I will focus on the first two as the skills that were almost exclusively developed in Honors rather than in my engineering curriculum.

Communication, both verbal and written, is the single most important skill an engineer possesses. The sheer complexity of the real world means you can only become an expert in a tiny slice of any one problem. In order to develop and test the entire solution, you need to collaborate with many other subject experts. With technical expertise I may personally solve 1/6 of the issue; succinct emails, carefully crafted meetings and presentations, and probing questions unlock the other 5/6 of the solution.

The curious and open mindset that is required when taking honors classes is a powerful interpersonal tool for the workplace. The Honors Program throws you into subjects far out of your depth so that you may learn from SMU's subject experts (i.e., faculty) and other students. Be conscious, not just of your search for knowledge, but of the process you take when searching. Observe the mindset you assume, the questions you ask, the role you take in a group discussion, your facial expression and word choice and follow-up to clear and unclear answers. Consciously modify your internal mindset and how you externally broadcast your mindset to others. Make sure you broadcast a respectful, curious, and positive mindset. At work, your communication skills will allow people to understand you and provide the resources you need; however, your interpersonal skills will make them want to set aside the time to respond and to teach.

Nick graduated with his Bachelor's of Science in Electrical Engineering from SMU in 2015 and Master's of Science in Electrical Engineering from SMU in 2016. His Master's thesis involved researching smart phone applications for screening for cervical cancer. He took part in many UHP activities, including a travel course to New York and many Honors courses and events.

A Letter from Susan Harris, UHP Advisor

Dear UHP Students,

As we start another exciting year in the Honors Program at SMU, I'd like to take this opportunity to welcome the 183 new students who joined the UHP this year and to introduce myself to the continuing students that I have not yet met. I advise pre-major students, but I am happy to answer honors questions for all the UHP students. Feel free to e-mail me or you can come to see me. I will be holding open office hours for any UHP student with questions about honors course in the scholars den prior to spring open enrollment. Stop by, say hello, and ask questions if you have them. We will send out a notice to every one about the days / times I'll be there. In addition to academic advising, my focus this fall is on community building and alumni outreach.

One of my primary goals this year is to help to encourage a sense of community among the members of the UHP. One very positive step in community building was taken last year by Ms. Sally Spaniolo, the Associate Director of the UHP. She began a successful mentor program in the Residential Commons in which upper level honors students living in the Commons serve as mentors to the first year students. The

mentors organize social events and book discussions, as well as serve as a general source of information and support for the new students. For a complete list of the mentors see the new UHP bulletin board in the Scholars' Den.

On this bulletin board you will also see notices of upcoming events, postcards from UHP student/staff travels this summer, pictures of some of the new UHP students, and awards /honors UHP students have recently received. The bulletin board will also spotlight one UHP student each month. If you want to nominate a student, yourself included, just send me an e-mail with the student's name and why you want him/her to be UHP student of the month.

One challenge to a sense of community is identifying fellow members of the UHP across campus. This led us to initiate a student competition (won by Camille Aucoin) to design a UHP t-shirt that students can wear both to help identify themselves to other UHP members, and also to advertise the UHP to potential new students visiting campus. The t-shirts are now on sale for \$10 in my office and will also be available at the Fall Course Release Party in the Scholar's Den on October 5th.



Another important initiative that we are taking on this year is to establish a UHP Alumni Network. We are currently identifying a group of UHP alums who are willing to serve as resources to our current students, providing valuable information about post-graduate studies and career options in a wide variety of fields.

I hope everyone has a great semester and I look forward to seeing all of you at upcoming UHP events.

Best,

Susan Harris
Honors Advisor
Blanton, Suite 408C
sharris@smu.edu

Ways Alumni Can Get Involved

We are excited to begin an Alumni Network to provide UHP graduates with opportunities to connect with our current UHP students and faculty.

Alumni can volunteer in a variety of ways.

- Connect with prospective UHP students to promote the program and to highlight the impact the UHP has had on your college experience and your post-college career.
- Serve in an advisory capacity to provide feedback on the UHP experience.
- Connect with UHP graduates who may be moving to your part of the world.
- Provide information about your career field for current UHP students considering similar fields.
- Donate funds to support UHP programs such as study abroad, research fellowships, and other educational opportunities.



Hilltopics

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