

HILLTOPICS

Elevate the Everyday.



Volume 8, Edition 2 • October 31, 2011

Scholars' Den Council Submits Report

The Scholars' Den, the physical hub of the university's intellectual community, will soon be expanding its services in accordance with a report submitted on October 6 by the Scholars' Den Council to the Office of the Provost.

A recent poll formed the basis for the report. Over 150 respondents answered an online poll that was sent out to each of the scholars' groups by their faculty sponsors. Results revealed how the Scholars' Den has been used thus far, and how it might be used and expanded in the future. One hundred two of the roughly 150 respondents had visited the Scholars' Den. Around 85 percent of reported visitors were first-year students (followed in decreasing order by second-years, fourth-years, and finally third-years).

From the data it is clear that students think of the Scholars' Den mainly as a study space, but social programming is a distinct goal. Ninety-seven percent of

the respondents wanted the space to be conducive to studying, sixty-three percent wanted the space for snacking and coffee, and 55 percent would like social movie nights.

A general-use printer was

not specified whether these would be free. Sixty-eight respondents said that they would frequently use a kitchenette and stove if these were available, and 20 respondents listed a kitchenette as the addition

space.

The Scholars' Den Council report recommended the additions of a general use multifunction printer, an electric oven and stove, an assortment of kitchen utilities costing no more than \$200, a coffee and tea maker, two large whiteboards, and a sofa "comfortable enough to sleep on."

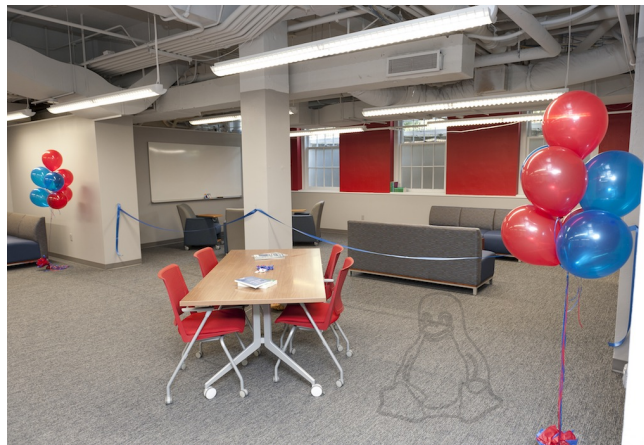
Further suggestions: "Additionally, we would like to see in the near future the purchase or acquisition of a mobile projector, a vending machine, a subscription to the New York Times, a newsstand for the Daily Campus, a widescreen television, and a single Macintosh computer available for scholars' general use."

Stay tuned for new developments—and invite your friends to the Den!



Rachel Stonecipher

Co-Editor-in-Chief



The Scholars' Den is located in the basement of Clements Hall behind the General Education Office.

the most important addition to students. Over 75 percent of the students said they would frequently use a printer if one was available. Next most popular were snack bars, although it was

they would most like to see. The New York Times was the most requested newspaper. Over half of respondents reported that they would frequently use whiteboards and a napping

In this Edition:

- A Message from Rick Garza (Page 2)
- The Origins of Halloween (Page 3)
- Hollers for Scholars: Nick Burns (Page 4)
- Draw Eruna-Pay (Page 5)
- Plot 'n' Potatoes: "The Three Musketeers" (Page 6)
- Cartoon of the Week (Page 7)
- Upcoming Events (Page 8)

Find the Penguins!

There are 6 penguins hidden in this edition. Can you find them?



"Penguin Road Sign, Tasmania," by Arthur Chapman

A Message from Honors Advisor Rick Garza

Greetings noble advisees! The weather has cooled, mid-terms have just about passed, and the spring schedule of classes is out – all of which means that the spring semester is on its way. And, as the next semester approaches, it is important to consider a few tips to prepare you for the semester ahead.

Use Balance When Finalizing Your Spring Classes

As the spring semester approaches, and your spring schedules begin to crystalize, it becomes important to view your courses in the context of many larger pictures. Will your schedule provide progress toward your chosen degree? Will your schedule impart knowledge

and/or skills that will help in landing an internship or job? If you are undecided, will your schedule help expose you to a few areas of interest and find a major? Will you be able to reconcile the demands of your spring schedule with the activities you intend to take-on outside of class (rushing, interning, MCAT/LSAT prep)? Finding the right balance is vital to creating the right spring schedule, and can be the difference between failure and adequacy, success and excellence. So as you consider your spring classes, be sure to ask yourself (and answer) the above questions, and to do so with honesty.

Be Smart As You Look Ahead to Finals

While final exams are still a few weeks away (Dec. 7-14), it's never too soon to begin planning for what is usually the most stressful and time-crunched time of year. First, it is vital to begin prioritizing your outside/non-academic commitments. From now until the end of the semester, your obligations as a student should trump all other responsibilities. Be selfish about your commitments, and be a student before anything else. Second, plan ahead and avoid the all-nighter. You will have notice, well in advance of the final examination period, of the order of your finals and when each are given in relation to each other. Use the schedule of exams to

your benefit by prioritizing when and how much time you will need to spend on each class. Consider the number of credit hours a class has, your major, and your level of expertise in the class when deciding how to spend your study time. And third, do all you can to maintain a healthy lifestyle. By planning effectively, and being vigilant about maintaining your study schedule, you'll be able to plan for healthy activities such as regular exercise and a healthy diet. By ditching the Doritos for an apple and the Snickers for a bunch of grapes, you're providing your body, mind, and soul with the nutrition necessary to succeed.

Whoa! This text box is an eyesore!

Without your contributions, we will be forced to fill these pages with mind-numbing geometric shapes and free clip art. Help prevent that apocalyptic vision by submitting your own writing or joining the Hilltopics staff!

Written and artistic works-- movie reviews, book reviews, op eds, event highlights, short stories, poems, your choice--are always accepted at smuhilltopics@gmail.com. If submitting a picture, we ask that you 1) Drop it off in the Scholars' Den or 2) scan and email it as a .jpeg file.

Thanks!

Make the Most of your Winter Break

While you must make tough choices about your time during the semester, your Winter Break should be about re-connecting with your life outside of school. To this end, it's important to leave the semester behind once it's over. Get away from your daily academic routine – sleep longer, have fun, and enjoy your free time – without worry for grades, classes, or majors. Also, stay mentally active, but on your schedule. Rather than that boring Economics text, or that dense Philosophy tome, choose something to read for pleasure.

Important Spring Reminders

Are you considering a summer internship?? If so, the early part of the spring semester should be spent in close counsel with the career counselors in the Hegi Family Career Development Center. Get

started with that process soon, as some internships may have application deadlines as early as mid-December.

Thinking about studying abroad?? Applications to study abroad during the summer are due in mid-March!! Stop by the Study Abroad Office in the Blanton Building for more info.



Rick Garza
Contributor

Tracing the Spook: Origins of Halloween

Jack-o'-lanterns line up window sills. The RAs are giving out candy. Some students are still trying to pull last minute costumes together. Ghosts and zombies have taken over the TV. Halloween is upon

Romans spread Christianity through Europe, the Pope decided to celebrate All Saints Day on November 1 and All Souls Day to honor the dead on November 2 as an attempt to Christianize Celtic

families and promise to pray for their

Eventually, the holiday disassociated with religion and became the secular night of witchcraft we celebrate today.



◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆
 Mayisha Zeb Nakib
 Staff Writer



"Halloween collab with Ellen," by steve loya

us, and the only other holiday our nation spends more money on is Christmas! So where did this candy and horror themed holiday begin?

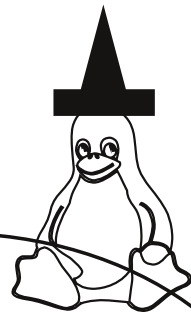
According to History.com, around 2000 years ago, the Celts of Europe celebrated New Year's on November 1 when the summer harvest ended and winter began. The day before was the Samhain festivals – the day the spirits of the dead returned, spoiled crops, caused mischief, and enabled priests to better predict the future. The Celts wore costumes and lit bonfires that would protect them in the winter months. After the

traditions. All Souls Day was also known as "All-Hallows" making October 31 "All-Hallows Eve," which later became "Halloween." But



where did trick-or-treating come from? In England, the hungry poor would beg for "soul cakes" from wealthier

deceased loved ones in return.



CONTACT US:

facebook.com/SMUHilltopics
twitter.com/smuhilltopics
smu.edu/univhonors/hilltopics
 Email: smuhilltopics@gmail.com

Hilltopics Staff:

- Co-Editor-in-Chief.....Jakob Schwarz
- Co-Editor-in-Chief.....Rachel Stonecipher
- Assistant Editor-in-Chief...Elizabeth Zuk
- Entertainment Editor.....Shane Hand
- Events Editor.....Alex Jones
- Opinions Editor.....Crystal Chen
- Staff Writers.....Jean Paul Destarac,
 Mayisha Zeb Nakib, Sammy Partida,
 Zohra Samji

Our Mission:

To publish a distinguished newspaper that elevates the everyday, promotes societal engagement, and builds a strong Honors community. We are student-read, student-led.

WORKING Definitions

This week's word: **tag**

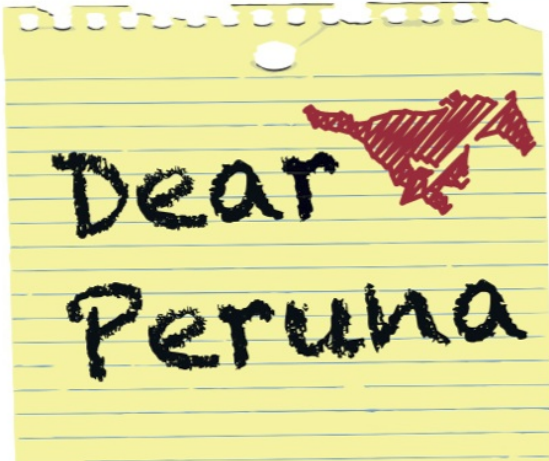
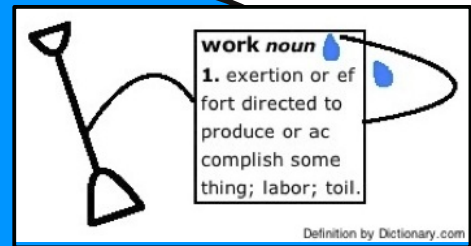
- Definitions:** (1) a variant of tasteful body spray
 (2) a tiny document that reveals the price of clothing
 (3) a way to recognize your friends on a social network
 (4) a creative and illegal way to mark public buildings
 (5) a childhood game involving either lasers or mild hand-to-hand combat

Synonyms: fragrance, label, embarrass your friend, "you're it," graffiti

Antonyms: untag, save your reputation, run away

Formal use: "Pardon moi, your tag is sticking out. Let me put that down for you."

Informal use: "Dude, did you just tag me in that? Where's the nearest computer?"



Introducing Dear Peruna, the official Hilltopics advice column.
 Please write in to:
SMUHilltopics@gmail.com
 with your questions, and a kind and loving horse will answer them.

Dear Peruna,

Why does PerunaNet suck so much? They're giving you a bad name!

Kick them. Eat them. Replace them with all the CS majors. I sure hope you get this. It's hard to be certain. You know, since PerunaNet sucks and all...

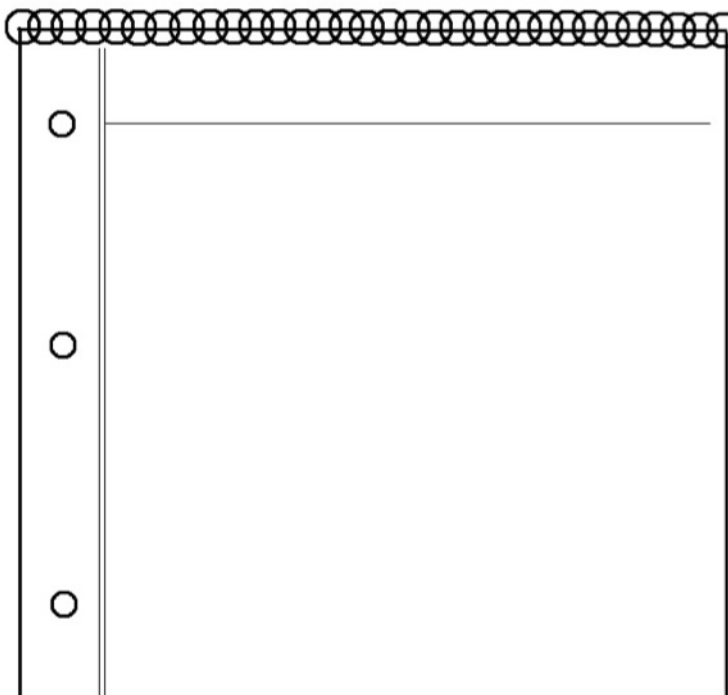
Kyle Nakatsuka

Dear Kyle Nakatsuka,

While PerunaNet can definitely be tricky at times, it's because it has to live up to my legendary zest. I'm one of the most fiery mascots ever – did you expect something named after me to be tame?!

Hopefully it starts working again soon. You know, so you can study and all... Make Peruna proud!

Draw Eruna-Pay



Submit your drawings of Eruna-Pay, the misfit of the SMU horse family, by November 1 to get your artistic interpretation and your name in Hilltopics! (Drop in Scholars' Den)

Plot 'n' Potatoes

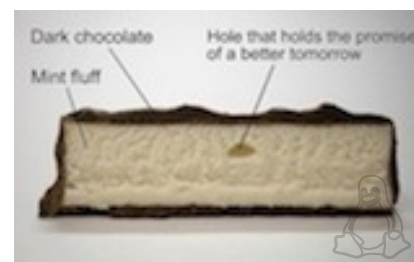
How it Works:

The Three Musketeers



"The Three Musketeers," which opened October 21, will most likely leave viewers with conflicted feelings. The story follows a young man named d'Artagnan who leaves rural France for Paris in the hopes of becoming a musketeer, like his father once was, and stumbles across the path of three of France's greatest (and washed up) musketeers, Athos, Porthos, and Aramis. D'Artagnan finds himself fighting for the survival of France after the musketeers uncover a plot crafted by the nefarious Cardinal Richelieu with the help of his accomplice, the beautiful, villainous Milady.

The plot of "Musketeers" was very thin and hard to take seriously at times due to poor plot construction and insipid dialogue. To make matters worse, several of the actors, notably Orlando Bloom, gave what could rival their worst performances. However, the movie was visually stunning in 3D and is probably a similar spectacle in traditional 2D format. With elaborate sets, great camera angles, and extravagant action sequences, this steam punk take on Alexandre Dumas' classic novel was enjoyable but will probably not be worth the money for a sizeable number of moviegoers.



Entertainment Value



Intellectual Value



Cinematography/
Visual Design



Picture of Candy Bar: "Three Musketeers Mint with Dark Chocolate 5," by TheFoodJunk

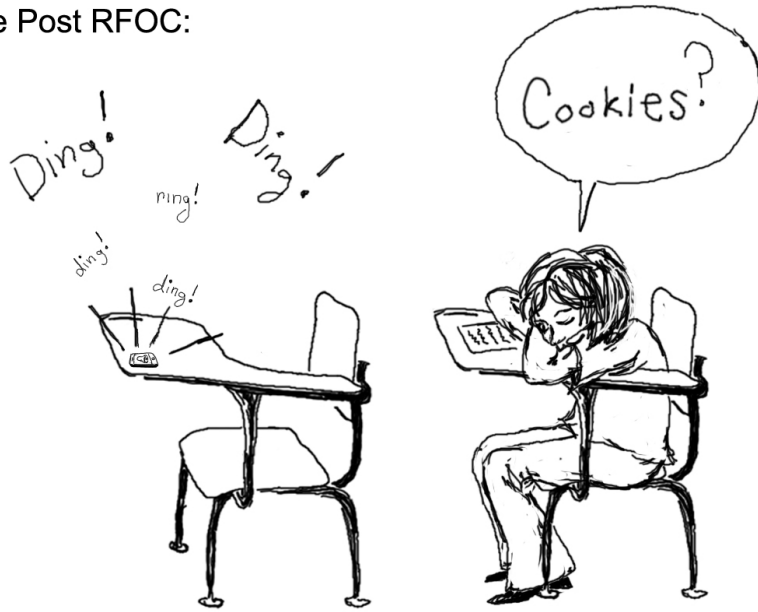
Overall Grade:





Life Post RFOC:

Cartoon
of the Bimonth



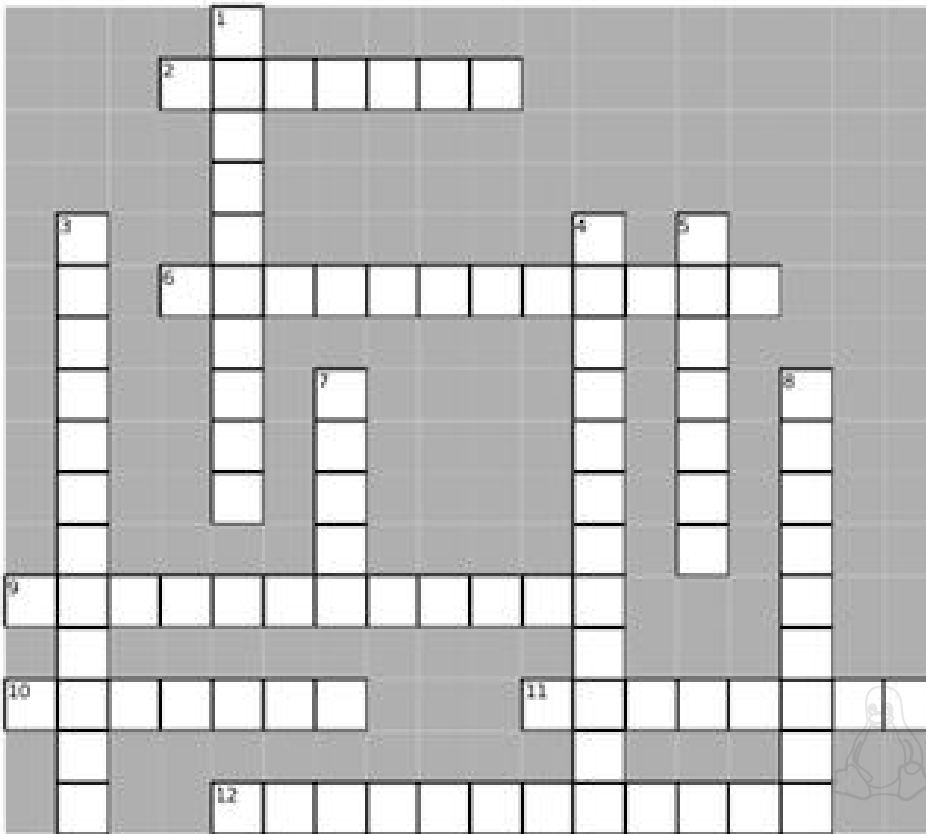
I had to change my text tone.

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆
Mayisha Zeb Nakib
Staff Writer

Halloween Crossword

Across
A trick-or-treating essential
"Smell my feet."
Whether fact or fiction,
these are traditionally told
around campfires to scare
listeners.
This vegetable serves many
purposes during Halloween
celebrations.
These creatures are the
subject of lycanthropy
These luminaries were
originally made from
turnips when they first
appeared in Great Britain.

Down
1 Nosferatu and Le Manoir du
Diable were among the most
influential works in the
establishment of this form of
entertainment.
3 Residences which offer
frightful delight
4 This creature, the invention
of a female Gothic author,
has been portrayed by Boris
Karloff and Peter Boyle
among others.
5 Lord Ruthven was the first
modern take on this creature
of the night
7 Incorporeal ambassadors
from the otherside; a Patrick
Swayze movie
8 Although available
year-round, this treat, which
made its debut in the 1880s,
is associated with Halloween
and Thanksgiving.





Hollers for Scholars



Nick does cutting-edge biology research on campus. In his own words:

My work in Dr. Larry Ruben's lab involves an essential gene in the organism "Trypanosoma brucei," the culprit of African sleeping sickness in humans. This particular gene is intriguing because it causes distinct morphological changes; that is, the cell changes shape. Ultimately, after trying to divide a few more times, it loses all sense of what it is, and grows into a really nasty-looking thing. My work is characterizing these changes. Because this gene is essential for the organism to live, it could potentially serve as a therapeutic target for drugs in the future; this holds particular importance because sleeping sickness is essentially an incurable disease.

Netflix: Modern Ideological Safe Haven

As someone pursuing a major in the liberal arts, I spend the majority of my time watching Netflix. Whether it's the latest episode of Breaking Bad, an all-night marathon of Mad Men, or an intellectually stimulating documentary on alcoholism (season two of the Jersey Shore), I'm making the most of my tuition. Unless my parents catch on to the extra \$7.99 tacked to my monthly debit card bill, my higher education will continue lumbering forward.

Sure, I could just as easily start chipping away at the mountain of texts piling on my desk, but 30 Rock and cheesy 80's brat-pack movies beckon. Did Kuhn ever win an Emmy for Outstanding Comedy Series? Did Marx ever sit for hours replaying the beach volleyball scene from Top Gun until his right hand got sore? I didn't think so.

Being a maestro of the streaming service can have its drawbacks. For instance: there's a unique glaze that settles over my eyes when a professor asks a question. All the answers that pop into my head are centered around the hours of award-winning programming that I sat glued to the night before. In most cases, being able to list the chronology of Spongebob Squarepants episodes hasn't been particularly helpful.

Recently, however, the world of inane internet chatter has been buzzing about Netflix price hikes and contradictory company policy. The company's decision to make both streaming and DVD delivery cost \$7.99 has outraged some (it's my personal belief that it sparked the Occupy Wall Street movement). My P.O. Box is too miniscule to carry DVDs, so the issue has been moot

and my repeated viewings of Meet the Parents have largely gone uninterrupted.

While I'm not getting credit hours for the time I spend on the site, it has plenty of real-world applications: namely, how to stare at an LCD screen for days and blindly accept police brutality, genocide in Tibet, and controversial executions in my own country.

Some would call that ignorance, but I say it's pioneering the way we, as individuals in a democracy, can put as much effort into knowing as little as possible. Knowing complicates your life. Soon people start seeking your advice, and once that Pandora's box of false sympathy and endless head-nodding gets opened your hours of mindless television and celebrity dance competitions will come to a brutal end.


For now I'll keep to my regularly scheduled life of distraction and see where I am in a few months. If I remain unsuccessful and my GPA begins to plummet, I'll give the DVD delivery service a try. As always, it could be worse. I could be huddled on a street corner in New York city getting punched by a cop and actually making a difference. Instead I'm huddled in a damp dorm room surrounded by empty ramen noodle packages and off-brand Tuna tins.

If anyone in my hall tries to start an Occupy Mary Hay movement, I'll just dust off my black-out curtains, turn up the volume on my laptop, and sink back into my personal electronic land of the Lotus Eaters.

◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆◆
Zain Haidar
Contributor



Straight from
the Honors
Desk

 To
YOU :

UHP Travel Courses This Year!! Full or partial scholarships available for each experience

- 1) **SPRING:** Prof. Kathleen Wellman, History, will teach an Honors CF on the Italian city during the Renaissance that will travel to Venice and Florence, Italy for 10 days over Spring Break. Full and partial scholarships available.
- 2) **J TERM:** Prof. Philip Van Kueren, Art, will teach an Honors Arts Perspective, "the Art Colloquium/New York," that will take students to the art scene of New York City—museums and art galleries will be studied in person. Scholarships available.
- 3) **SUMMER:** Profs. Dennis Cordell and Kathleen Wellman, History, will offer Honors credit for students who enroll in the SMU -in-Paris summer program. Some scholarships available to UHP students.
- 4) **JUNE:** June is the Honors semester at SMU-in-Taos. Most courses taken in June can be taken for Honors credit—including a Richter CF that allows a student to undertake an independent project on any topic related to Taos or New Mexico. As the student pursues this independent work he or she will meet with Professor John Mears each week to chart progress. Scholarships available to UHP students.

Note: Dr. Bonnie Wheeler's May Term class traveling to France has been canceled.

Upcoming
Lecture:

"Violence Against Women in the Democratic Republic of the Congo"



When
Thursday, November 3, 4:30pm – 5:30pm

Where
McCord Auditorium, 306 Dallas Hall

Speaker
Professor Meredith Turshen, Rutgers University

Description
This talk looks at the political economy of the new wars and situates violence against women within this analytic context, taking the civil conflict in the Democratic Republic of the Congo as a case study.



For polls and more, visit:
www.smu.edu/univhonors/hilltopics

What do you think about Hilltopics?

We want to hear from you!

Please e-mail any comments or suggestions to

smuhilltopics@gmail.com

This has been *Hilltopics*: "If *The Onion* smelled like knowledge."