

THE

# LEADER

SUNY FREDONIA'S  
STUDENT-RUN NEWSPAPER

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Volume CXXIX

## Blue Devils Dominate The Rink

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Cheerleading Team Spotlight

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# THE LEADER

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Front and back cover: Blue Devil hockey player Bryce Witman takes the ice on Nov. 4 to face off the Buffalo State Bengals.

Photographs by Derek Raymond.



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# Terroristic threat on Thompson results in criminal charges

**ALYSSA BUMP**  
Editor in Chief

Social media is a place where people can often freely express themselves. But, when self-expression infringes upon the safety of others, police often take action.

On the afternoon of Wednesday, Nov. 2, shockwaves were sent through SUNY Fredonia's campus community after an anonymous threat was posted on social media. Many students were aware of the post by 2 p.m., and University Police were spotted on the scene around 2 p.m.

It's widely speculated that this post was made on Yik Yak, an anonymous social media platform that is used widely across campus. Although the original post has since been deleted, another Yik Yak post explaining the alleged threat spread online. That post read, "PSA: the yaks have been deleted but earlier there was someone claiming they were outside with a gun and looking to cause violence."

At 2:46 p.m., Marketing and Communications sent an email to all students, faculty and staff on behalf of University Police regarding the matter.

This email, with the subject line "[Students] Social Media Post," notified the campus community that UP was "aware of a social media post related to Thompson Hall that was posted this afternoon."

Due to the nature of the post, UPD and Fredonia Police protected the exterior of Thompson Hall "out of an abundance of caution." But the email informed students, in bold and underlined text, that "there is no credible threat," and classes would continue as scheduled.

In a supplemental email sent by Marketing and Communications the same day at 5:11 p.m., University Police provided an update on the situation. In this email, UP said the social media post "conveyed a threat to Thompson Hall."

The email once again acknowledged that these threats were deemed not credible, and classes continued while officers maintained a "heavy presence in and around Thompson Hall through the afternoon."

The end of the message urged students to come forward with any information about the matter by contacting UP by phone, email or using the Silent Witness form.

The last communication from UP written by Chief Brent Isaacson was sent to the campus community via Marketing and Communications' email on Nov. 3 at 10:06 a.m.

Isaacson said a student was charged with "Making a Terroristic Threat, a Class D felony." The student was booked by UP and was subsequently released with an appearance ticket to appear in Fredonia Village Court. Because the student has since been declared persona non grata, the accused student is subject to arrest if they appear on SUNY Fredonia's campus.

In this email, Isaacson reassured the community that after UP's initial assessment of the situation, they were able to confirm there was "never a risk of physical violence during this incident."



**Campus Blue Light in front of Thompson Hall.**  
Photograph by Alyssa Bump.

After these three emails were sent to the campus, The Leader reached out to Isaacson via email correspondence requesting an interview, a copy of UP's police report, a copy of the charges filed against the accused and other information regarding the incident.

Although Isaacson said he was unable to release the police report "because the investigation is still ongoing," he was able to confirm the charge against the accused is "Making a Terroristic Threat, in violation of New York State Penal Law, Section 490.20."

UP will handle the investigation of the social media threat, and Isaacson said "the Chautauqua County District Attorney's Office is handling the prosecution." Therefore, the appearance ticket the accused received directs the student to appear in Fredonia Village Court.

Isaacson said he was also unable to identify who the accused student is on the basis of NYS Public Officers Law. He explained that the law allows law enforcement agencies to deny access to records that could "interfere with law enforcement investigations or judicial proceedings or deprive a person of a right to a fair trial or impartial adjudication." He continued, "Those circumstances exist in the matter with respect to your request for a disclosure of 'the police report.'"

A person The Leader contacted from the Chautauqua County District Attorney's Office said it was under their understanding that administrative action was being taken against the student rather than criminal charges.

When The Leader reached back out to Isaacson for clarification he said, "Yes, criminal charges have been filed in court."

He further explained that during situations like this concerning a student, two separate processes often occur.

"The first is the criminal prosecution in court," Isaacson wrote. "The second is conduct charges against the student, which are processed through the Office of Student Conduct."

Although the university does not handle criminal charges, Isaacson said criminal activity is investigated by UP.

This process is "fully authorized New York State law enforcement agency with the same authorities as any other police department in the state." Isaacson also said, "If evidence of a crime is developed, UP charges defendants with crimes which are then prosecuted by the District Attorney's Office in a court of law."

*The Leader will update this story once more information is available.*

# Shedding light on campus safety



Students say walking alone at night on campus is when they feel most concerned about their safety.

Photograph by Drew Paluch.

## ALANA WINGATE

Staff Writer

During the daylight, SUNY Fredonia's campus is filled with students. But when the lights go down, the familiar terrain can feel unsafe and isolating in the midst of darkness.

For many students, walking around campus in the dark can be highly unsettling due to a lack of lighting on campus.

"I think there could be more lights. It feels a bit dark at times; more towards the suites and the track. Sometimes I find myself having to use my phone flashlight," said junior music education major Leah Magee.

We posted a poll on our Instagram story (@leaderfredonia) asking students if they would feel safer with more lights on campus at night. Out of the 99 total responses we received, the majority of students, 77% (76 students,) said they would feel safer with more lights. Whereas, 23% of students, 23 students said they wouldn't feel safer.

Although many students seem to agree that the campus could use a brighter touch, Kevin Cloos, director of Facility Services, said that to his knowledge this is the first he's ever heard of the issue. However, he is glad to know the problem and said he will work to fix it.

"I think part of what we need to know is the areas that people are most concerned about," Cloos said. "... If there are certain areas that are very dark or feel unsafe, identifying those [spots] would really help us. That way, we could evaluate those areas and see if we can add more lighting."

According to University Police Chief Brent Isaacson, the campus strives to make the campus as safe as possible through evaluations by the Campus Safety Committee.

"At least once a year, we do a safety walk around the campus," Isaacson said. "We partner with the Environmental Health and Safety Office here on campus and our Facilities Department."

Even though both the Facilities Services and UP go to great lengths to make the campus feel comfortable for all, they said that the responsibility also falls on the students to make sure they express their concerns.

"We really work hard to get students involved in this process. [The Campus Safety Committee] is basically a group of people with different responsibilities that get together at least once a year," Isaacson said. "We go around campus and make note of areas where maybe there does need to be a lighting improvement, or where some bushes and or shrubs need to be cut back to allow more visibility."



Lighting on campus is a concern for many students. The concern stems from that anyone from the community can just walk idly on campus.

“Sometimes I have the unnerving feeling that something could happen to me, especially knowing just anyone can walk on campus,” Magee said. “This feeling typically occurs in the later hours of the night between midnight and 2 a.m. [when] I’m walking back from Mason Hall or coming back from being off campus.”

Due to past incidents that have occurred, the concerns of anyone being able to come on campus and cause harm is a very real one. However, Isaacson said that there are certain protocols they follow if a situation does occur.

“One of the requirements for a campus law enforcement agency is that we have to, by law, issue what are called timely warnings,” Isaacson said. “If there is a crime that occurs on our campus and we don’t immediately solve it, there’s a reasonable belief that the offender may offend again.”

Isaacson said that since entering the role of University Police Chief, there have only been two cases of this scenario, where they had not responded to an incident on campus as quickly as usual. In both cases, it was an outside person who came onto campus from the community.

While there are many students who do feel somewhat unnerved walking the campus grounds at night, some students feel perfectly fine walking on campus as is.

“I do feel safe walking on campus. Aside from the wild animals such as foxes or skunks, I have no fear of a person harming me,” said Anthony Pascal, a freshman public relations major.

Although UP does patrol the campus both day and night, the concerns regarding the campus lighting comes mostly from many female students that feel uneasy about walking on campus at night alone.

“I know campus police usually will do rounds around the campus, but having the ability to have someone walk with people back to their rooms should be an option,” Magee said.

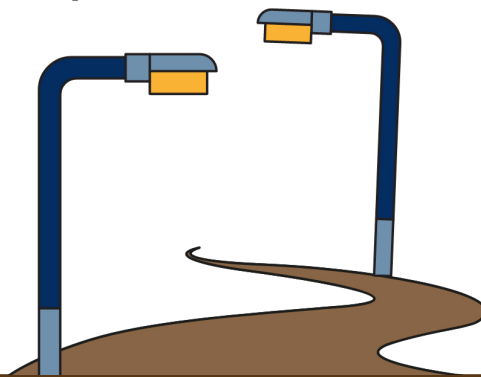
Even though Pascal has no fear of being harmed on campus, he also does acknowledge that some modifications couldn’t hurt.

“An increase of cameras would be nice; however, I don’t necessarily feel that the university needs to do much else,” Pascal said.

Overall students that have concerns about campus safety and what should be done to maintain it can always reach out to Facilities Services or the safety committee.

“I think one of the big things to share is that if folks are feeling that there are some areas of concern, we do have the campus safety committee and there is a way to submit it to that committee,” Cloos said. “The areas of concern are then routed to myself and to the Office of Environmental Health and Safety. Then we can take a look at that, or even just through our work order system on the maintenance side for facility services.

Since being made aware of these concerns, both the University Police Department and Facilities Services said that they will endeavor to look into the lighting issue so that all students can feel at ease on campus during the day and night.



## Chief Isaacson's spotlight safety tips:

**Put the University Police phone number, (716) 673-3333, into your cell phone. Calling UP versus dialing 911 in the event of a campus emergency will result in a faster response time.**

**Download the Rave Guardian app, which is available on iPhone and Android devices. The app contains many helpful features for students such as a police badge icon. Pressing the badge will not only place a call to the police department, but it will also automatically provide the emergency responder with your precise location.**

# Getting students back on flight to study abroad: A timeline of the study abroad issue

**WILL KARR**

Life & Arts Editor

College is about more than just going to class — it's about the transformative experiences that take place outside of the four-walled classroom. Study abroad programs give students the opportunity to immerse themselves in new cultural environments and languages.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, schools across the SUNY system were mandated to temporarily halt their study abroad offerings. This year, a new factor has been preventing some Fredonia students from coordinating study abroad experiences.

Instead of declaring a minor or taking a foreign language course at Fredonia, a student can choose to study abroad. Since many students have not been able to figure out how to coordinate an experience, they have been forced to declare minors and fulfill foreign language credit requirements at the last minute in order to still graduate on time.

In recent months, there has been confusion about Fredonia's study abroad opportunities due to personnel changes and departmental restructuring.

We spoke with multiple students to gain insight into the issue, who expressed concerns to us regarding whether study abroad is currently taking place at Fredonia.

The first message we received was from an underclassman, who has chosen to remain anonymous due to the controversial nature of the situation. We will refer to the individual as Student X.

At the end of the Spring 2022 semester, Student X first reached out to SUNY Fredonia's International Education Department (IED) inquiring about studying abroad in Spring 2023.

After struggling to get in contact with the department through their general email ([internationaleducation@fredonia.edu](mailto:internationaleducation@fredonia.edu)), they reached out to Erin Willis, SUNY Fredonia's former study abroad coordinator. Willis officially resigned from her position at the end of the Spring 2022 semester, after taking a personal leave from December 2021 to May 2022.

Many students were not informed of Willis's departure. And since Willis's resignation last spring, SUNY Fredonia has not hired a new study abroad program coordinator.

Willis's email suggested that Student X should reach out to the department's general email. Hours later, Student X sent a message to the general email. However, they didn't receive a response until approximately a month later on July 9. The response came from the email of Jacob Czelusta, Fredonia's assistant director of international student services.

Czelusta said he was out of the office at the time on parental leave. However, he sent Student X a follow-up email days later, on July 15, encouraging them to reach out again at the beginning of the Fall 2022 semester. He revealed that the International Education Department office was undergoing a slew of staffing transitions and was in the process of looking for a new study abroad coordinator.

With both Willis and Czelusta out of the office, Student X said that she did not know who to directly turn from IED for help anymore over the summer. She had no direct line of contact, only a general email to turn to.

Erin Mosher, a junior journalism major, also said that she had difficulty contacting the study abroad office over the summer. She had first met with Willis to discuss studying abroad back in the Fall of 2021.

"Over the summer, I had been trying to email the office, and I hadn't heard anything. I made sure that all of my emails were being sent from my personal email and school email, and still, I heard nothing," Mosher said. "... The email address [for study abroad] says international education. There is no name of a person; it's just the office. So it's not like I could ask a [specific] person [directly] at the time [for] ... help."

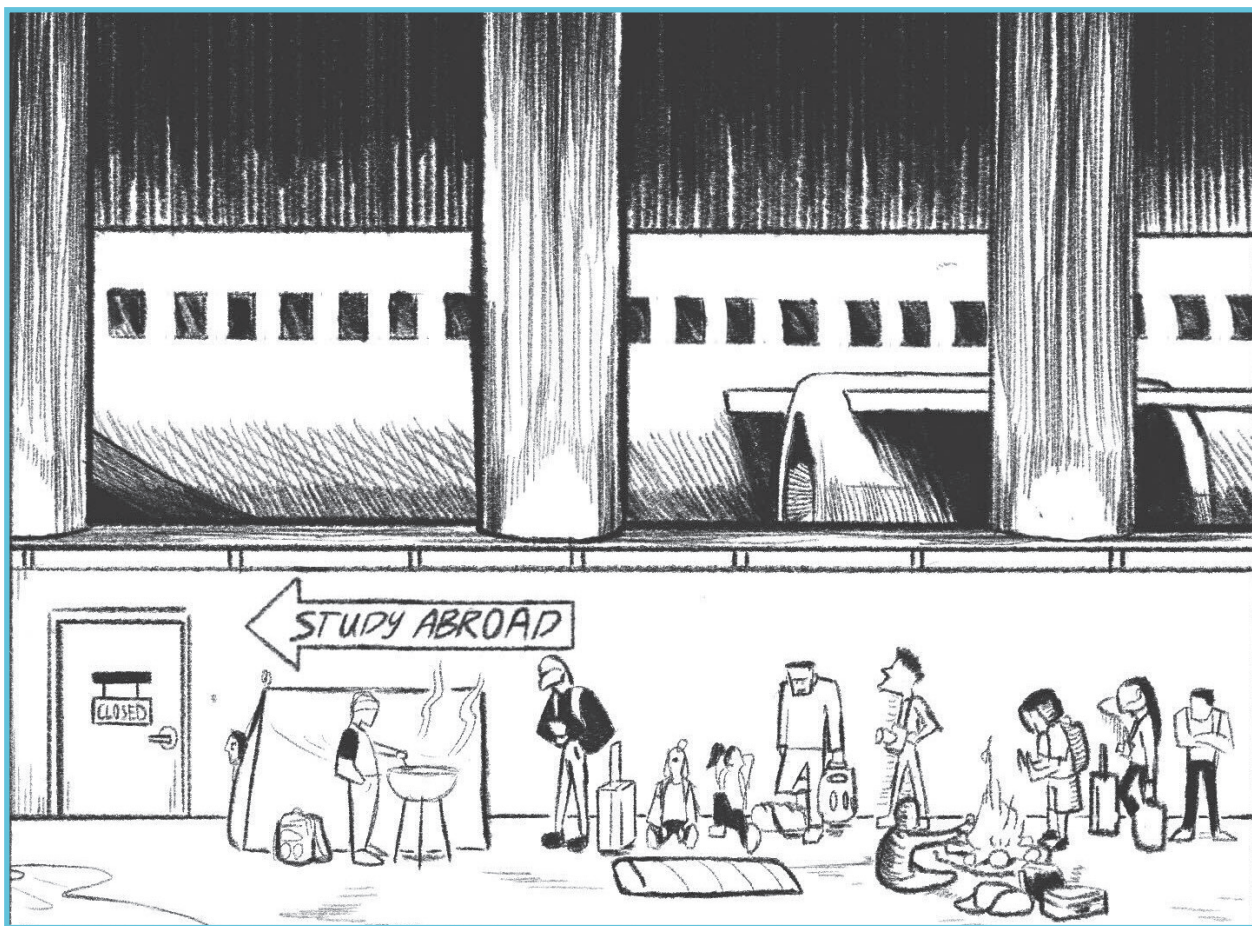
**"If you can't tell here, we have had a perfect storm of change. ... There have been a variety of hand-offs unfortunately. When that happens, things don't go as smoothly as we would like them to for certain. So we are now trying to rectify that."**

**"I can't go back and change things now, but we're trying to make sure that those students who were in the process are in place, while providing new opportunities for students to be advised."**

**- Erin Mroczka, interim associate vice president of retention and academic success**



Graphic by Angelo Petrilli.



As a result of not knowing who to contact, both Mosher and Student X waited until the Fall 2022 semester to reach out again. Student X received a response from Czelusta on Sept. 2, which said “I’ve been directed to inform any students looking for study abroad information to email their inquiries to: [internationaleducation@fredonia.edu](mailto:internationaleducation@fredonia.edu). A Fredonia staff member that is responsible for study abroad programs will then respond to that inquiry as soon as possible.”

After hearing from Czelusta, Student X sent an email to the IED and received a response on Sept. 7, explaining that they would be in touch shortly. She received another email about a week later, on Sept. 16, explaining that her plans to study abroad through Fredonia would not come to fruition.

“Sept. 16 is when I got the email that said, ‘We still do not have a study abroad program coordinator and we are unfortunately unable to offer study abroad in the Spring of 2023. May I ask if you were working with Erin Willis? And was the plan to study abroad through Fredonia or another SUNY school? Thanks, Kim [Miller],’” said Student X.

From this email, Student X concluded that there would be no way for her to study abroad in Spring 2023 and earn course credits directly through Fredonia. Currently, many students and staff members are under the impression that no study abroad experiences will occur in Spring 2022 whatsoever.

The Leader reached out to the International Education Department’s general email asking for clarity and answers. We received a response directly from Erin Mroccka’s email, who revealed that “there are [semester-long] study abroad experiences happening now and in Spring of 2023.” Mroccka is the interim associate vice president of retention and academic success.

In addition to IED, we also reached out to Naomi Baldwin, President Stephen Kolison’s chief of staff and executive assistant, who declined to comment and recommended that we instead speak with Mroccka. Baldwin previously served as the director of the International Education Office until the end of last spring when she joined Kolison’s office staff.

We sat down with Mroccka last week to gain insight into the issue. Mroccka explained that over the summer, the International Education Department’s Office in Thompson Hall was consolidated into the Office of Academic Affairs in Maytum. The old office space is now being occupied by the Information Technology Services Department (IT). Mroccka explained how the merge came about as a result of a series of staff departures from the IED from the Spring to Summer of 2022.

After Willis and Baldwin left in the spring, Czelusta came over from the Office of Multicultural Support Services to IED to help with study abroad and access to the email was switched over to him.

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**SUNY Fredonia is not currently offering its own semester-long study abroad experiences. But this does not mean study abroad is completely off the table for SUNY Fredonia students ...**

“[However], this is the time where things got a little bit messy,” Mroczka said. “Czelusta had a personal leave during the summer, so that essentially left my office [to take over] and we had just brought on someone new [Kim Miller from Intercultural] this June ... so we had [another] transition in who had access to the website and email. I think that’s where a lot of the hiccups definitely happened.”

Due to the changes of who had email access, Mroczka predicts that many students interested in study abroad might not have received any responses from the office for a certain period of time over the summer. However, Kim Miller (kim.miller@fredonia.edu), an Academic Affairs administrative assistant, now manages the IEDs general email and responds to student inquiries on a regular basis.

“If you can’t tell here, we have had a kind of perfect storm of change. ... There have been a variety of hand-offs unfortunately. When that happens, things don’t go as smoothly as we would like them to for certain. So we are now trying to rectify that,” said Mroczka. “... I can’t go back and change things now. But we’re trying to make sure that those students who were in the process are in place, while providing new opportunities for students to be advised.”

One way that Mroczka said that the office is currently working to rectify things is by raising awareness to the study abroad programs that are currently available to students and by overall communicating information more efficiently to students.

“I noticed with our influx of emails expressing interest in what’s open and available to students now that there has been some miscommunication when we send an email. I think there may have been a little bit of confusion when we say Fredonia’s study abroad programs aren’t open versus all [SUNY] study abroad programs aren’t open,” Mroczka said. “... We are learning that language is very powerful, so I can see how something that we type doesn’t always translate to someone correctly on the other side. ... We’re looking to now make sure that we are really clear in that articulation piece.”

Although semester-long study abroad experiences through Fredonia as of now are not currently being offered now or in Spring 2023, they are being offered through other SUNY schools that SUNY Fredonia students can partake in.

However, Fredonia is offering faculty-led programs during J-term and Summer 2023, which are only offered to Fredonia students and require them to have taken a specific class in a given area of study.

Many students are wondering why semester-long study abroad experiences are not being offered through Fredonia, as Fredonia currently has semester-long partnerships with colleges like the Umbra Institute in Perugia, Italy and the University of the Sunshine Coast in Australia.

“[When Fredonia offers a study abroad experience], we are the lead partner with that university and work with other [SUNY] exchange offices to help any SUNY student apply to that program,” Mroczka said. “That means we need to advise the student, do a pre-orientation and collect all their documents, whether they are a Fredonia student or any other SUNY student.”

Mroczka provides two reasons why study abroad is not currently being offered through Fredonia. The first reason she provided is that there are currently not enough staff members in the department to help maintain the partnerships.

In addition, many of the existing staff members are new and are still learning the ropes of coordinating studying abroad. But, Mroczka said that there are currently initiatives in the works to potentially reinstate studying abroad through Fredonia in the future.

“There are a lot of great partnerships. But, we just need to rebuild our department staff to support and maintain all the great partnerships out there. There is currently a proposal to the provost to review some of that,” Mroczka said. “... I think in the next few weeks, we will move that plan forward and be able to announce that to everyone.”

The second reason is that when Fredonia offers study abroad, they are required by SUNY to offer and advertise the experiences to all SUNY students, not just Fredonia students. Mroczka said that this requirement can potentially reduce the amount of time Fredonia’s office spends helping Fredonia students. Mroczka said that the office wants to prioritize helping Fredonia students first, especially with a reduced number of staff members.

**... The International Education Department is still actively working with Fredonia students to get them into study abroad programs in the SUNY network. There are over 600 semester-long study abroad experiences to choose from.**



Although Fredonia is not offering study abroad, they are facilitating it through other SUNY schools. Across the SUNY system, there are over a total of 600 semester-long study abroad experiences for a student to choose from.

“Any SUNY student can access another SUNY college's experience,” Mroccka said. “Each of the universities has partnerships with other international universities that they advertise and have access to for students. At Fredonia, we are continuing to help students navigate study abroad experiences with our SUNY partners. Many of their offices are still at full capacity ... and they are not as new in helping students with this.”

Even when a student applies to another SUNY school to study abroad, Mroccka said that she and the office still work with them hands on through the entire application and coordination process.

“As the home school, I am still working with Fredonia students through the process, and I am ... making sure your course approvals take place, ... helping you decide what courses you will be taking and who you need to get them signed off by,” Mroccka said. “So we’re supporting students through that whole process, but we’re right now just [not] spending that time on other SUNY students.”

Mroccka said that applications to study abroad in the J-term or spring are typically due between Oct. 1 and Oct. 15 in order for students to have time to meet visa application requirements and other deadlines. However, she said that now is the perfect time for students to start meeting with her to talk about considering and planning to study abroad in the Summer or Fall of 2023.

If students are interested in studying abroad, they can reach out to Mroccka directly at [erin.mroccka@fredonia.edu](mailto:erin.mroccka@fredonia.edu), or [international.education@fredonia.edu](mailto:international.education@fredonia.edu) to set up a time to chat with her about study abroad at her office in Maytum.

Mroccka is also hosting pop-up advising at the Information Office Desk in the Williams Center outside of the Blue Devil Lounge on Tuesdays from 4 to 5:30 p.m., where students can talk to her about studying abroad at a more central campus location.

“As someone who feels that retention is one of the most important things on our campus, I want there to be highly impactful applied learning experiences,” Mroccka said. “... With study abroad, I am learning something new everyday, and we are really trying to connect with SUNY and our partners to make sure that we are still providing these opportunities. But, that doesn’t mean mistakes won’t happen. What it means is that we learn from those mistakes and try to make sure they’re not detrimental to a student's academic or personal goals.”

# What to ask yourself when considering **STUDY ABROAD**

Information provided by Erin Mroccka.

## What are your goals?

Are you trying to meet significant course requirements? Or are you looking to study somewhere completely new? Identify your goals, because they will ultimately impact what experiences you will want to partake in.

## Short or long-term travel?

Do you want to study abroad for a few weeks? Or are you looking to fully immerse yourself in another country for an entire semester?

## What requirements are you meeting?

Major requirements? Minor requirements? Most students are looking to get credit out of their study abroad experiences, so be sure to identify on DegreeWorks which requirements you are looking to fulfill.

## Where and when?

What country would you be comfortable living and studying in? What semester would be the best time to travel?

## How will you pay for it?

What will the tuition costs be?  
Will you apply for Financial Aid?  
How will you pay for the experience?

# Getting to the root of Fredonia's invasive plant species problem

**DAKOTA RICHTER**  
Special to The Leader

In the Campus Woodlot located near Ring Road, there are multiple invasive species in the perimeters of the roughly 14-acre forest. These invasive species were brought to the area by humans for landscaping and grew beyond their original ecosystems. Animals such as birds consume the seeds of these invasive plants and excrete them in new locations.

There are three species in particular that have not only caught the attention of science majors but WNY PRISM, an invasive species management group. WNY PRISM is one of eight regional partnerships in New York State that was created to help reduce the harm caused by invasive species to New York's environment, economy and human health.

The three main invasive species found at Fredonia are Privet, Honeysuckle and Buckthorn. The trio are all invasive species that have threatened Fredonia's biodiversity and wildlife and continue to do so. However, invasive species pulls are being planned out and executed to combat them.

One of the earliest pulls started back in 2008. Pulls are used to target the plants at the source and pull them out of the ground before maturing.

"[Invasive species] don't benefit local ecosystems just the same way harmful germs don't benefit the body," said Justine Bloom, treasurer of Fredonia's Sustainability Club and a junior environmental earth science major.

Invasive species pulls are an organized event through FREDGrows, which is Fredonia's campus sustainability club. Before this primarily annual event came to be, all three of these invasive species were much more aggressive and overgrown. They were able to flourish because the campus left them unchecked in the woods.

These invasive species outcompete the native plants by growing at their own volition, taking over the ground cover and outshading the native plants that grow on the forest floor. These invasive species provide little to no nutrition for the wildlife that resides in the woods.

Out of all three, the one in particular we should pay attention to the most is the Euraion invasive species Honeysuckle. These shrubs grow leaves very early in the spring, and retain them late into the fall compared to native plant species. They jeopardize the native species ability to photosynthesize because the invasive species covers them.



Students participate in invasive species pull.

Image retrieved from Marketing and Communications Campus Report.

On Oct. 14 and Oct. 15, FREDGrows held their annual invasive species pull. The pull was administered by Bloom. They made us aware of how Fredonia targets and keeps control of these invasive species.

Fredonia's main way of targeting the invasive is through these organized pulls. During pulls, students and professors will go to the Campus Woodlot and will find the species and pull them out of the ground before they reach maturity. This is also an opportunity for science majors to get an environmental action activity done as well. The activities provide students with the opportunity to go out into the field and learn something new.

SUNY Fredonia's Intro to Ecology & Evolution lab hosts experiments in the woods. In previous years, the excursions have included an invasive species pull in the fall. This year, the lab did not have an invasive species pull, but in Fall of 2023, they plan on doing one.

Student-led pulls aren't the only thing that keep local invasive species in check. In the past, WNY PRISM has visited Fredonia's Campus Woodlot to remove larger invasive species. The species were already too big to just be pulled out by participants.



As a result, WNY PRISM cut them down and painted the cut stumps with herbicide to kill the roots, preventing these bigger ones from growing back.

WNY PRISM's visit brought attention to the importance of the invasive species pull. When the pulls first started, attendance was high. However, shortly before and after the pandemic, student attendance has been on a decline. Dr. Jonathan Titus, a former biology professor, and Bloom both came to two conclusions as to why this is.

“[Students] were losing interest in A. Environmental things and B. Actually getting out into the field and working with their hands,” Bloom said.

Even with attendance dwindling, there haven't been any major signs of the invasive species becoming more aggressive. But, that doesn't mean we shouldn't be proactive about getting these invasive plants out.

The pulls currently target satellite populations, which are new occurrences of invasive species trying to spread exponentially. In some areas the natives have already succumbed to the invasive species' aggressive way of spreading. However, with these pulls, invasive species can be prevented from spreading into new areas.

“Satellite populations ... if we don't take them out, they will spread and infect an entire new area. ... They're killing new native species instead of being anchored along the edges — the natives there are already gone,” Bloom said. “But, if we can prevent them from reaching into new areas that were previously not affected by natives, the [pulls] can have a visible positive benefit.”

While some invasive species may look beautiful to the eye, looks can be deceiving, as they do a lot more harm than good. For Fredonia's biodiversity and animals to keep on maintaining a stable relationship with the environment, efforts need to be made to continue to keep on tackling the invasive species at the source. With attendance dwindling down at the pulls in recent years, it gives invasive species more of an opportunity to take over the native plants on campus. The only way we can keep this from happening is if attendance increases at the events once more.

## Honeysuckle



Aftabbanoori, CC BY-SA 3.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/3.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons.

## Buckthorn



AnemoneProjectors, CC BY-SA 2.0 <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/>>, via Wikimedia Commons.

## Privet



Bidgee, CC BY-SA 2.5 AU <<https://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.5/au/deed.en/>>, via Wikimedia Commons.

### What are invasive plant species?

Sunlight, air and moisture are essential for optimal growth of most plant species on Earth. However, when invasive species get introduced to a native species, this usually results in these factors getting limited.

Invasive species are non-native species that can cause harm to the environment, the economy or human health (DEC NY, 2011). Invasive species can cause habitat degradation, loss of native plants and loss of wildlife.

Native species give shelter to animals and provide a food source to the whole ecosystem. When an invasive species is introduced, the native plants can't compete and ultimately get taken over. This causes a loss of biodiversity, and other species in the ecosystem are affected (Audubon NY, 2022).

Invasive species are usually fast growing and hard to get rid of if not maintained properly.

# Life & Arts

## Groovin' and movin' with EnFusion

**CEBASTIAN SPISAK**

Special to The Leader

From dance styles to easier accessibility, this year, Fredonia's multicultural dance team, EnFusion, is striving to introduce dance to the campus community in new ways. But, the group is facing one problem — they are facing the challenge of students being intimidated by choreography.

Students often can not shake off the anxiety of stepping into uncharted territories. However, EnFusion is helping individuals step out of their comfort zone into the realm of dance.

On Oct. 22, EnFusion's third dance workshop of the semester took place in the Dods Hall's dance studio. The high heel-themed class started with a warm-up to stretch and get attendees' bodies moving, and was followed by a practice session walking around in heels.

Then, it was on to the choreography, which could be done with or without heels. To the tune of Kiana Ledé's "Honest," dancers began learning slow and sensual movements at their own pace. During events, from simplifying moves to slowing down choreography, EnFusion's president, Iasha Babb, makes sure to accommodate everyone's skill level and works with attendees step by step. EnFusion's heels workshop provided a safe space for individuals with an interest in heel dancing to get a taste of what it is all about.

EnFusion is introducing many new dance styles and events to the campus community this year. Every e-board member has different signature styles and EnFusion wants to utilize every member's unique background. EnFusion's Freestyle Fridays feature a new dance style every time. The events provide a space for students to learn how to dance, to meet new people, listen to music and have a good time.

Babb said that one of the overall purposes of the Freestyle Fridays is to create a social dancing atmosphere at SUNY Fredonia.

"Students need a place to go in and just have fun, and somewhere to express themselves," Babb said.



EnFusion dance practice. Photograph by Derek Raymond.

EnFusion is known for its hip-hop, afrobeat, dance hall and twerk dance styles. However, the group will bring voguing to campus on Nov. 13 during SUNY Fredonia's Culture Fest. The campus community can show support for the group at the event.

EnFusion is creating space for individuals who have not received formal dance training. Students who have a passion for dancing can be part of the dance team as an intern. Babb said that interns have less responsibilities than other core members. As a result, interns can participate in as little as one dance during an event. This allows them to focus on perfecting one of the dance's choreography and to not be burdened with a handful of them.

Overall, EnFusion's main mission this year is to make dance as inclusive as it can possibly be. The campus community can dance with the group at their R&B Soul Night, on Nov. 11, from 5 to 6 p.m. in Williams Center S222.



# Drummer N'Camara Abou Sylla teaches traditional balafon workshop

**NERON SIMPSON**  
Special to The Leader

While many people march to the beat of their own drum, African musician N'Camara Abou Sylla is carrying on the rhythms of tradition that his father passed down to him.

These traditions were brought to SUNY Fredonia when Sylla hosted an open balafon workshop in Mason Hall on Wednesday, Oct. 26. Sylla's visit was made possible by the Carnahan Jackson Fund for the Humanities, and he is widely regarded as a "master musician."

A balafon is a wooden xylophone that vibrates with sound when tapped. According to Firestone, it was created during the 12th century during the formation of the Mali empire in the southern African region. While it is mainly played by the Mandinka people in Guinea, and the Brikama people in The Gambia, its influence has spread throughout the west African region.

Traditionally, the instrument has been created with Bene wood and bamboo, and consists of 17 to 21 keys. Gourds, or calabash, are then tied underneath the instrument to amplify the sound.

During the workshop, Sylla taught students a few songs in the sacred and cultural art form.

Hailing from the west African country of Guinea, Sylla is a 'Djeli.' Djelis are oral storytellers in Western African cultures. They worship, sing and recite the history of the villages and cultures they come from. The balafon is an important instrument for this reason.

According to Access Gambia, the tuning process is related to the languages of each ethnic group, so instrumental sound variations between different tribal groups is highly common.

Traditionally, the teaching of the instrument is passed down from father to son. However, it is sometimes taught to daughters as well, but it is not as common despite women being allowed to play.

Sylla was very enthusiastic and passionate in his presentation. In such a small intimate setting, he was unafraid to correct anyone who was off-tune. He led with a pacing exercise in which one taps corresponding keys to make a beat.

Once the rhythm was established, Sylla played more advanced notes and began singing over the taps. He got up and went around to each student and played a few notes in conjunction with our tapping on the balafon. The music became louder, and the rhythms became faster.

The experience was intense, engaging and fun. It was a cerebral and spiritual exercise.

At the end of the workshop our writer asked Sylla a few questions about his life experiences and musical talent:

## **What made you want to become a musician?**

"I was born into it. My entire family have been musicians before I was born and my dad is a great balafon builder. I grew up seeing him doing it and he taught me."

## **Can you describe your creative process when making new music with students?**

"It comes to me. I get inspired from people and the little mistakes and I love to correct that. I might find a simple way for [students] to get into the feeling of the music I'm teaching. I have to make them have [motivation]."

## **How do you feel you have evolved since you first started playing until now?**

"I feel wonderful and lovely. I have been playing for the past 55 years. My dad encouraged me and gave me my own balafon when I was 12. Since then, I've had to play. I hear and observe everything that's going on."

## **West African countries are often grouped together into a monolithic identity with little individual recognition. What are some aspects of Guinean culture you feel the world should be more aware of?**

"I want people to learn about the djembe [drum]. Come to my country and see how they play the music. We are wealthy with diamonds, gold and bauxite. You can go online and look at the wealth and richness of \*Guinea. There is only one Guinea. Not Guinea-Bissau, not Equatorial Guinea, but Guinea Conakry."

\*Guinea, Guinea-Bissau and Equatorial Guinea share similar names but they are different countries within west and central Africa. Conakry is the capital of Guinea.



Drummer and balafon artist N'Camara Abou Sylla.  
Image retrieved from Marketing and Communications Campus Report.

# THE LOCAL LO-DOWN

## hosts singer-songwriter Sasha McCoy

**MAISIE STRADER**  
Special to The Leader

From naming her instruments to delving into her intrusive thoughts, singer-songwriter Sasha McCoy showcased her unique artistic talents in a recent episode of The Local Lo-Down.

The Local Lo-Down is a long-running radio show at Fredonia Radio Systems on campus. The podcast features local bands and artists who are interviewed on the show and play a set live in the studio. The show airs on Thursdays at 8 p.m. on 88.9 WCVF The Voice and 89.5 WDVJ The Inferno.

In the interview segment of the show, listeners got an exclusive look at McCoy's artistic style.

Her musical journey all started as a young child when she would loop her guitar and sing along with it, in something she would call 'vines.'

"If you scroll back far enough you can still see them on my Instagram," McCoy said.

McCoy's musical interest flourished because of her experiences in her high school jazz band known as "Sasha and the Spoons."

After high school, McCoy went to Boston College, where she met even more people who changed her life for good. "(They) are most of the reasons I took myself seriously," she said.

Yet, Boston is far away and online relationships are hard to keep.

"I am still learning to be my own support system, you know they are 500 miles away," she said.

One significant gig for McCoy was at a small bar in Buffalo with her friend Ryan Gurnett of WNYMusic.com.

"He seems to really believe in me, and I really appreciate that," McCoy said. Apart from her collaboration and growth, nobody is holding her back from her goals.

McCoy began releasing her desire to pursue music professionally at the beginning of the pandemic. But just like anyone else, she is scared of the future.

"I am perpetually terrified of things I don't know," McCoy said.

McCoy's creative music process begins with two instruments: "Stevie," her guitar, and "Greg," her ukulele. However, she stated her instruments make it all worth it, saying they, "[make] some pretty beautiful sounds."

McCoy admitted that her career has been hard, and she is her own worst critic. She is still on a learning curve, which she described "as a new process."

Now that McCoy is a part of the music community, she talks about how her family and friends are so supportive of her.

She says everyone always talks about their memories at Nietzsche's bar in Buffalo. McCoy then went on that stage and played, making it full circle.

For the second half of the show, McCoy played a set live, giving fans and various music lovers a taste of her life, inner thoughts and inner struggles as a 21-year-old. She describes her songs to be "a set list [of] her intrusive thoughts." As a psychology major, McCoy has a lot of advice to give insight into the music world.

McCoy sang a total of five songs, including one unreleased song called "Sick of the Future, Sick of the Past."

This song was followed by "Psychedelic," which McCoy described as a reference to her intrusive thoughts. The guitar repeats the same riff over the entire song, and she frequently sings, "You're lost and you know it, you're scared and you're alone." She explains that a lot of these songs just have an organically repetitive nature, just like her thoughts and they keep coming back to the track.



Seated from left to right: Melaney Fajardo, Sasha McCoy and Alex Erwin with Jordan Budd center. Photograph by Maisie Strader.



In her next song, "I'll Find My Voice Again," McCoy softly articulates her voice. The song follows the same two riffs on the keyboard and drums. The Spanish phrase, "Ja no te quiero mas," meaning "I don't love you anymore," is also repeated throughout.

The fourth song, "What I'm trying to say," alludes to a feeling of longing as "Stay the same" and "Love for you" is repeated.

The artist ended with a song called "The end." This song is a testimonial to the 'war' that used to go on inside her head with lines like, "Tell them it was peaceful in the end."

To end the podcast, McCoy gave advice to future musicians and people who need a way to escape their intrusive thoughts. She acknowledges that even though she is "mostly clueless," she does have some words of wisdom to offer.

"Do everything in your power to believe in yourself. Catch me on the wrong day, and I think my music is all trash," McCoy said.

Her second piece of advice is to "carry the friends who believe in you always. It's life changing."

You can find McCoy on Spotify and Instagram @sashamccoymusic.



Scan the QR code to watch the whole episode of "The Local Lo-Down - Sasha McCoy" on Fredonia Radio Systems' YouTube page.

THE DEPARTMENT OF THEATRE AND DANCE  
PRESENTS A WALTER GLOOR MAINSTAGE  
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Radium

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by **D. W. Gregory**

Directed by Daniel Lenzian

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Friday, Dec. 2 @ 7:30 p.m.  
Saturday, Dec. 3 @ 2:00 p.m.  
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# Fash Forward



## Kelly Nyguen embraces Vietnamese heritage through fashion

**DAKOTA RICHTER**  
Special to The Leader

**WILL KARR**  
Life & Arts Editor

Creativity and one's ability to express themselves is something that every little kid is normally allowed to do. However, growing up, SUNY Fredonia junior animation student Kelly Nyguen felt like she had to repress her cultural heritage.

"I grew up in a really traditional Vietnamese household. Growing up, to me it was normal, but to everyone else around me it was like 'What the [hell] is going on?'" Nyguen said.

In the second grade, Nyguen wore an Áo Dài, a traditional Vietnamese garment, to school during Lunar New Year. As a young child, she often balanced openly expressing her Vietnamese identity, while navigating American social spaces.

"I remember that I got bullied so badly for it," Nyguen said. "I went home the same day and was like 'I am never wearing this again.' ... So I kind of lost touch with my culture for a bit."

This traumatic event left Nyguen not wanting to participate in her own culture anymore. As a result, she started repressing it. However, at this time she didn't hate her culture, rather she felt like she had to hide it as a more of a coping mechanism.

Growing up, Nyguen said that she never talked about her cultural heritage with her parents. Her parents are both Vietnamese Americans, who came over from Vietnam. With them, Nyguen said that they brought bags of unresolved trauma.

"I feel like growing up in an immigrant household, you don't get to talk about a lot of things. ... it's just hard to connect with my parents," Nyguen said. "I think that component also really influenced me growing up because everyone had this perfect [family], and then I'm over here like I have know idea what my family [history] is."



**Kelly Nyguen sits in outdoor cafe.**  
All photographs provided by Nyguen.

Nyguen's parents often want her to conform to their own beliefs and ideologies, and for a while, she did. They went to the extent of getting her to subscribe to these values at the cost of her own mental health. She recalled how often she was told that she was ugly and fat by her own parents. They were brought up by Asian beauty standards, which

are very different from American beauty standards.

"I wouldn't be considered plus size but overweight in Vietnam, which is shocking," Nyguen said.

While navigating American social spaces and repressing her culture, Nyguen and her parents started to have conflicting moral values. With her parents wanting her to have a more traditional lifestyle, Nyguen wanted to have more agency over her ability to express herself.

After eight years of conforming to this and repressing her identity, she took the first step towards doing what she wants. In the 10th grade, she rebelliously started wearing crop tops and risque shirts.

To others, this might not have seemed like a big deal, but to her parents, it was considered a form of rebellion towards their own beliefs. Nyguen found a few ways to overcome this negativity from them.

Nyguen regained her confidence from the internet. Specifically, where she went on to explain how you can find other people dealing with similar issues. This way of seeing other people's viewpoint on the situation made Nyguen start to understand what her parents told her isn't true.

"So it was kind of like reteaching myself, that like what they were saying isn't true," Nyguen said.

While exploring her creativity, she found a passion for art. In high school, Nyguen would find joy in drawing. Compared to her peers who were following what their parents wanted them to be, Nyguen took a different path by majoring in animation illustration. She found herself being one of the few people in her friend group that wasn't a STEM major.



“I think for a lot of them it's like ‘while I know I'm going to get a job after this,’” Nyguen said “... They know their [career] is a safe path and they know that [my career is] not.”

Everyone has their own idea of what success looks like to them. Art is her success and has many different conventions someone can use to express themselves. Nyguen not only likes how she can draw her creativity but also expresses it through her fashion.

Normally, Nyguen has a feel-good, look-good type of aesthetic. On certain days, you might see her in casual clothing, and the next, something a little more androgynous. Staple to her fashion are dress pants and unconventional tops.

While at Fredonia she is able to freely express herself and creativity, when she goes back home to visit her parents she still has to hide parts of herself. As with her parents, she feels it's a lot easier to wear feminine clothes while around them.

“It's a very love-hate relationship. I love them very much,” Nyguen said. “I just hate [certain] sides of them, and I just try to ignore it I guess.”

Even though Nyguen doesn't agree with their beliefs and ideologies, she has learned that she doesn't have to let their expectations have power over her. Though she used to hide them as a coping mechanism she has turned them into her passions. Drawing, fashion and her culture are all something she feels strongly about now and will continue on in the future practicing them.

We asked Nyguen if she could go back to her younger self what words would she say to her now knowing what she knows.

“I think I would just tell her that like she shouldn't be ashamed of anything and that she can be proud of herself,” Nyguen said.



Nyguen poses in yellow hanging chair.

## Kelly's Fashion Forward Tip is to wear pajama tops

**“Wear pajama tops as just regular button ups.  
... People won't even realize you're  
wearing a pajama top until  
you to tell them [because]  
it looks so nice.”**



If you would like to receive fashion advice from Nyguen or to be featured in our next issue as a fashionista, please direct message us at our Instagram page (@leaderfredonia) or email Life & Arts Editor, Will Karr at karr6505@fredonia.edu.

## From the page to a public stage:

# Poet Adam Clay reads unpublished work



Adam Clay reads poetry works. Photograph by Derek Raymond.

**JAINA BERARDI**  
Special to The Leader

Before the advent of written forms of communication, humans primarily communicated orally. The Mississippian poet Adam Clay brought his poetic written words to vocal life on Thursday, Nov. 3 at the Marion Art Gallery. He visited Fredonia as part of The Mary Louise White Visiting Writers Lecture Series.

Clay is best known for his poetry collections: “Stranger,” “A Hotel Lobby at the Edge of the World,” “The Wash,” and most recently, “To Make Room for the Sea.” In addition to his collections, his work has been featured in many magazines like the Denver Quarterly, Tin House and the Boston Review.

As well as being a published poet, Clay is the editor of the Mississippi Review and a contributing editor for Kenyon Review. Furthermore, he directs the Center for Writers at the University of Southern Mississippi.

Prior to the reading event that took place in the Marion Art Gallery, Clay visited some English classes and gave students advice. Afterwards, an informal Q&A took place in Fenton with the students.

During that conversation, Clay offered many additional pieces of advice to help students in their writing. One of the first things he mentioned was the importance of consistent grammar. In response to a student’s question on the subject, he explained that, “If I’m reading a story, and I have a question about how the punctuation is working, the story is lost.”

Clay also explained his feelings on authors who change their writing style in order to convey a character’s voice that may be different from their own.

“I do think oftentimes when people try to capture voice, they go way too far,” Clay said. “I really think less is way more.”

Another student asked about how Clay goes about drafting poems. His main piece of advice was to “keep track of your records.”

“I have a very dated version of that. ... I feel like I’m too far in now to change my process,” Clay said.

Once in the gallery, Clay was preceded by a musical guest, Jacob King, a senior English major, who showcased his talents through the medium of songwriting. King opened the event by performing a few of his original songs, which

can be found on most music streaming platforms. He even played one that he said he’d never played live before.

After King’s performance, Clay read several of the poems published within his 2020 collection, “To Make Room for the Sea.” He also read some of the poems from his future fifth book, “Circle Back,” which he hopes to release by March 2024.

After he had finished reading the poems that he selected for his presentation, Clay then opened the room to requests and questions.

During this final segment, Clay read off one of his most intricate works: a poem titled, “How to Stop Migration.”

**“For instance, every 90 seconds,  
a grocery cart is stolen  
But ‘where,’ the voice asked,  
‘do they all go?’  
All of this is to say step away from  
the tree you’ve been leaning against  
Come with me, can you?  
Come with me to the top of these  
shopping carts  
And look at the moon and tell me,  
Please tell me, is it not more  
beautiful than it’s ever been?”**

- An excerpt of "How to Stop Migration"  
by Adam Clay.



## Culture Fest set to celebrate 10 years of embracing diversity



**EJ JACOBS**  
Staff Writer

Leaving the comfort of home to attend college is a scary step for many new students. For some, the experience marks the first time they have been put in a community full of diversity — an unfamiliar space with different cultures, ethnicities and religions.

For the past ten years, SUNY Fredonia's Intercultural Center has brought together cultures and religions from all over the campus community. This year, on Nov. 14 at 6 p.m. in the Williams Center Multi-Purpose Room, they will be hosting the event once again.

Culture Fest has games, activities and performances, as well as different kinds of food ranging from all around the world.

“Culture Fest is a celebration of culture with all the 15 intercultural groups. It's an opportunity for the groups to share similarities and celebrate their differences,” said David White, director of multicultural support services.

The Intercultural Center is made up of 15 student groups, such as the African Student Union, Black Student Union, EnFusion, Latinos Unidos and Hillel. The rest of the groups can be found on the Intercultural Center's page on the SUNY Fredonia website.

Culture Fest was first formed through a campus celebration of Christmas. Every year, Fredonia's hosts Hanging of the Greens, a Christmas event. While celebrating the event, students started wondering why other religious holidays have not traditionally received the same recognition.

The students thought: “What about Hanukkah?” “What about Kwanzaa?” “What about all the other holidays students celebrate during a specific time of year?”

Although it is exciting to see Christmas trees and fluorescent lights at the end of each year, the students thought it would be amazing to see other cultures and religions on campus represented and celebrated. As a result, Culture Fest was officially born on Dec. 8, 2012.

The event embraces diversity, while educating the community on different cultures. The festival was founded on the basis that everyone deserves to have representation and the ability to show off their traditions, backgrounds and heritage. The Intercultural Center is looking forward to seeing everyone come together for the event.

“It's a cultural festival as the name would imply,” White said. “It's about embracing and celebrating the diverse talents and cultures of Fredonia's campus and surrounding communities.”

White said he has high hopes for this year's event.

“I hope it sheds some light on the importance of celebrating different cultures, traditions and beliefs,” White said.

## Students win Writer's Ring poetry and prose contest

Writer's Ring, a writing club and artist association at SUNY Fredonia, hosted a Halloween Poetry and Prose contest in late October. The competition was hosted by Professor Sheehan, Professor Cuthbert and Professor Liggins. The contest winners are below:

**First Place Poetry:**  
Ashley Halm

**Second Place Poetry:**  
Maxon Oppedisano

**Third Place Poetry:**  
Karie Hawkins

**First Place Prose:**  
Rachel Giles

**Second Place Prose:**  
Sophia Myers

**Third Place Prose:**  
Jocelyn Paredes

Read their spooky stories on our website by scanning the QR code below:



# SPORTS

Blue Devil cheerleaders  
build bonds through love of sport



SUNY Fredonia Blue Devil cheer team. Photograph by Derek Raymond.



## ALANA WINGATE

Staff Writer

Basketball, football, hockey and soccer are sports featured in the media regularly. Meanwhile, cheerleading is often widely underrepresented in the athletic community, as many people fail to see the athleticism that goes into the sport. The Fredonia Blue Devils women's cheerleading team is one of the many cheer teams that dedicate their time to training and perfecting their craft.

With excitement for the new year and what's to come, head coach of the team Julie Troche welcomed back returning team members this season as well as many newcomers.

"I am so excited for the team this year," Troche said. "What I think is really most important is that they're having fun and they're laughing because it just makes it more enjoyable on the mat."

Many of the girls on the team began cheering at an early age such as Kyra Phillips, a freshman early childhood education major.

"I've been cheering since I was five, and I thought I could walk away from it. But I came here, and I couldn't," Phillips said. "I was messaged by the girls on the team, and I saw them, and it instantly just felt like home here."

Although the team is full of girls with many years of cheer experience under their belts, it does not stop them from also giving those with little to no experience a chance to also learn and advance.

"Those that have higher level skills are so patient with those that are still working on improving their skills," Troche said. "Those members who are still working on improving their skills are taking constructive criticism and not taking it to heart. They are really openly saying, 'I want to do this, and I want to be better.'"

Sophomore early childhood education major Makayla Barone exemplified this very attitude when she first joined the team by fervently expressing her excitement to be a part of something new to her.

"I wanted to cheer so bad. I didn't cheer before college because I did other things in high school, [but] I just wanted to cheer," Barone said. "[Learning] was

really hard, but it was so much fun, and [it] was worth it. I'd do it all over again."

With positive energy like Barone's, it makes it easy for long-time cheerleaders like Isabella Triflo, a junior biology major, to show newcomers with determination the ropes.

"I love taking in the freshmen, and it's really nice to take people underneath my wing," Triflo said. "We have a girl who is a biology major, and I love helping her with her classes and stuff."

Since the team consistently has new members who join them each term, Troche makes team bonding a priority, as she believes that it is essential to sport culture.

**"The culture of a sports team is the most important. I believe building that culture and building that trust in one another and becoming a family is what will move a program forward." - Coach Troche**

Even though Troche organizes team bonding experiences, that doesn't stop the girls from getting together outside of practice and having some fun on their own accord.

"Before the season started, to get to know the girls, we painted name plates for our lockers and that was super fun," Barone said.

A big part of the team's season is their fundraising efforts to provide money that goes into the upkeep of their sport. Although they are a part of overall athletic department fundraisers, they also host their own initiatives to further benefit their team in more ways than one.

"Our own personal fundraising for our sport really comes from our competition we host in January — that's our main one. It brings in so many athletes," Troche said. "The event is also a big recruiting opportunity for us, with high schools, dance teams and all-star teams coming in. ... Last year, we also started doing a Krispy Kreme fundraiser."

Although the team is looking to gain support, they also make it their mission to do a significant amount of volunteer work to give back to the community.

"For the team, I'm a part of ... the Student Athlete Association Committee.

There's two members from each team around campus, and we work hard to get athletics involved in the community. We do a lot of events, like we [help] host Fall Sweep," said Triflo.

Throughout history, cheerleading has been overlooked in the athletic community. Many members of society do not view cheerleading as a sport, even with all of the training and athleticism that goes into perfecting their routines.

"I can say that within our athletics department we have very similar, if not the exact same expectations as other sports teams," Troche said. "We have mandatory workouts once the season starts as well as during the off seasons with the trainer, we have to meet certain GPA requirements through the department and we participate in any fundraising that the department might be doing."

Many girls on the team have experienced the stigmatism that comes with parts of society invalidating cheer as a sport. Corie Van Deusen-Farwell, a freshman accounting major, with 15 years of cheer training, said that the team put in just as much work and dedication as any other sport to not be considered one.

"We put in all the same work that other athletes do. We have our mandatory workouts, we have our mandatory practice, [yet] some people say, 'it's not a sport,' Van Deusen-Farwell said. "[But] we put in the same work that every other athlete does."

Cheerleading has more than one component of it that the team's members must learn; cheering for other sports teams is a different style of cheer than the competitive cheer style.

"There's competitive cheering, and then there's sideline cheering. I've done both," Van Deusen-Farwell said. "I prefer the competitive side just because I love the thrill and the adrenaline that the competitions bring me. I've actually been a main base and a side base this year."

Van Deusen-Farwell said that the main base in cheer is the one who usually holds a large portion of the weight, holding the main part of the foot with the side that holds the middle of girls when supporting the other girls for stunts.

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When performing in competitions, the team is typically only allowed to have twenty girls on the mat. However, for other sporting games and events, the team can freely showcase more of its talent. When it comes to competitions, many of the girls feel the competition is the best and most exhilarating part of the season.

“I love competing, I live for competitive cheer — going to [championships in] Daytona was honestly the best thing that’s ever happened to me in my life,” Triflo said. “It’s one of my most amazing experiences ever that I literally rave talking about all the time. I love competing in every aspect and supporting other girls from other teams in other areas.”

Even with the nerves that come with the pressures of performing, the team endeavors to feel the energy and to enjoy the thrill that comes with every performance.

“There’s definitely competition. It’s nerve-wracking, but it’s also very warm and welcoming as well because there’s always girls supporting girls and boys as well. It’s amazing,” Triflo said.

Even with all the commitments the team requires, the girls manage to balance their school and team responsibilities.

“I think I balance it all because we have set practices. Like I know when I have to be at practice,” Barone said. “I know when I have to be at workouts and then I just like to plan my day around that.”

The team also manages to make use of benefits that are put in place to support their educational needs and assist in the development of their future careers.

“Julie’s a teacher, and since I’m going into education, she has a lot of resources, and she gives me a lot of tips,” Barone explained. “She also hosts tutoring hours that we can go to that help our grades.”

Overall the cheer squad is there for one another academically, physically and socially, making sure everyone feels comfortable and encouraged in the process.

“I’ve never walked onto a team where it just instantly clicked with everyone, and I just felt welcome,” Phillips said. “[But], I was able to talk to literally anyone on the team my first day, and I wasn’t even officially on the team yet.”

Coach Troche and the team both have the same mantra when it comes to those interested in cheer. If any individual wants to try cheer, they believe they should try out for Fredonia’s team.

“Never be afraid to try out, you just never know,” Troche said. “Maybe once you make it through trials, you’ll say this is for me or no I’m not too sure about it, but if you don’t try, you’ll never know.”

Anyone interested in becoming a Blue Devil cheerleader should reach out to head coach Julie Troche at [troche@fredonia.edu](mailto:troche@fredonia.edu) for tryouts in the future.



Photograph by Derek Raymond.



# Blue Devils conclude fall sports season

**MATT VOLZ**

Staff Writer

## Men's cross country

The Blue Devils men's cross country team finished their season with a strong showing at the SUNYAC Championships.

Out of 103 finishers, four Blue Devils finished in the top 30 including junior Sembel Koshi who crossed the line in 15th. Overall, the team finished in fourth place with 104 points, as Geneseo took home the SUNYAC title with 23 points.

Koshi was primarily the team's top finisher this season, but Kyle Campbell and Josh Walters each had one race where they took home first on the team. Campbell headlines the program's graduating seniors, along with Samuel Cottrell, Vincent Mendez and Ethan Pocock.

While some readers may want to know the team's win-loss record, a record like that is tough to accurately define in cross country due to the fact that there are typically more than two teams that participate in a meet. However, the Blue Devils as a team finished in the top 20 of each competition with three top fives and one overall win.

## Women's cross country

In the SUNYAC Championships, the Blue Devils women's cross country team took home a seventh place finish out of eight scoring teams. Alexandra Battaglia took home 21st out of 87 runners with a 6K time of 25:03.

All five scorers for Fredonia State finished in the top 50, with each of the top three within the first 40 finishers. As for the overall season, Battaglia was consistently the team's top finisher, and she took home an overall win at the Rowan 6K invitational in October.

The Blue Devils scored as a team four times on the season, finishing in the top 10 each race and the top five twice, against different numbers of competitors in each race. The team will say goodbye to one senior, scoring finisher Kristin Kelemen.

The rest of the Blue Devils appear to be remaining together for 2023, and

with an addition of one or two more runners, the team may be able to score in each meet next season.

## Women's tennis

The women's tennis team concluded their 2022 campaign with a loss to Plattsburgh State in Binghamton, bringing their final regular season record to 0-12. Seniors Bella Surma and Caitlin Snyder provided bright spots to the team by each taking home a handful of singles victories throughout the season.

The Blue Devils also received significant contributions from younger members of their core such as freshmen Lexi Hawley, Brianna Gentile and Sierra Allen.

With Surma and Snyder being the team's only graduating seniors, most of the young core should still be intact for the next season or two. The team is still in search of their first win in nearly three years, however, as the program's most recent win came on Apr. 25, 2020.



Men's cross country team huddle. Photograph by Ethan Yannic.

## Volleyball

The Blue Devils volleyball team finished up their season with a three-set loss to Houghton on Saturday, Oct. 29.

However, Fredonia State kept it close as Houghton won each set by two or three points. With the loss, the Blue Devils finish the season with a 4-20 record and on a six-game losing streak.

The Blue Devils will graduate two seniors, Kourtney Krchniak and Madeline Reed, both of whom made significant contributions to the team this past season and over the course of their careers. Much of this Fredonia State team

consists of players in their freshman or sophomore year, so head coach Geoff Braun should be able to keep a decent amount of his core intact for 2023.

## Women's soccer

Fredonia State concluded its regular season on Tuesday, Oct. 25 with a 1-1 draw against Alfred University. With the draw, the Blue Devils end the 2022 campaign with a record of 2-9-5. It was tough sledding down the stretch for the team, as their final win came on Sept. 13 against Allegheny College.

Junior Bri Grazen led the team in scoring across the board with three goals and eleven total points. Senior goalkeeper Sabrina Suriani led the SUNYAC with 106 saves and held the fourth highest save percentage in the conference, stopping 82.8% of the shots she faced.

The Blue Devils are set to lose ten seniors to graduation, including Suriani, forwards Kayleigh Daniels and Lexi Lindamer, and midfielders Jordan Barrett and Talia DeFay. However, a young core including Bri and Brooke Grazen, Kendall Sexton, Jules Monlea and Katie Sellers remains intact entering 2023.

## Men's soccer

The 2022 men's soccer campaign ended on a high note, as Fredonia State defeated Alfred University 3-2 on Tuesday, Oct. 25. With two wins in their final three games, the Blue Devils conclude the season with a 4-9-3 record, just one point off from making the SUNYAC playoffs.

Sophomore forward Kaleb Steward led the team in scoring with six goals and 16 total points. Following a season-ending injury to senior goalkeeper Will Richardson, Fredonia State turned to Tanner Stutzman in goal who, on average, allowed fewer than three goals per game.

The team will say goodbye to two seniors this year: Richardson and defender Rob Aboagye, who scored his first and only collegiate goal in a road win over Plattsburgh State on Oct. 15.

However, younger contributors such as Steward, Chance LaCroix, Milkias Aregawi and Hudson Kwiatkowski will ensure that most of the group stays together moving forward to 2023.

# Winter sports roundup

## TYLER PACOS

Sports Editor

### Men's hockey dominates in home-opening weekend

Fredonia men's hockey is back as they traveled to Angola, Ind. for their first two games of the year this past weekend on Oct. 28 and 29. The Blue Devils dropped both of their matches against Trine, losing 5-1 on Friday and 4-3 on Saturday.

During Friday's match, Bryce Witman was the only Blue Devil to score as he put his team on the board shorthanded and unassisted in the second period. Logan Dyck, reigning SUNYAC Male Rookie of the Year, made 35 saves while facing 40 total shots.

Moving on to Saturday's match, Fredonia was able to strike more offensively but fell short in overtime. Scoring first for the devils was Johnny Malandrucolo, followed by Antonio Demacopoulos and Greg Lee, who sent the game into overtime in the dying seconds of the third period.

Unfortunately, Trine found the back of the net first in overtime, sending the Blue Devils home with an 0-2 record. Logan Dyck had himself another busy night in net, facing 44 shots and stopping 40.

Fredonia then traveled back home to host their first two home games of the season, as well as their first SUNYAC matches of the year as well.



Blue Devil Ryan Bailey on the ice against the Buffalo State Bengals on Friday, Nov. 4.

All photographs by Derek Raymond.

On Friday, Nov. 4, Fredonia hosted Buffalo State in the teams first SUNYAC game, defeating the Bengals 5-3 with two late third period goals by the Devils. Freshman Jake Murphy opened the game early with a quick tally in the first period for Fredonia, only 1:41 into the game.

Buffalo would answer right back with three unanswered goals, bringing them ahead by two halfway through the second. Fredonia responded quickly though, as Jake Blackwell and Ryan Bailey tied things back up at three a piece heading into the third.

A quiet third period had the fans expecting another overtime tilt, but senior Anders Johnson scored the game winner

with just a minute and thirty seconds remaining on the clock. Bryce Witman added to the tally shortly after to cap off the home opener for the Devils with a final score of 5-3. Logan Dyck stopped 28 out of 31 shots faced.

The Blue Devils then hosted the Niagara University Club team for a non-conference matchup on Saturday, Nov. 6, defeating the Purple Eagles 4-1. Scoring for the Devils was Andrew Keith and Evan Pitzman, and topping it off with two goals on the night was Callen Daily.

The Blue Devils are back in action Tuesday, Nov. 8 at 7 p.m. as they host the Nazareth Golden Flyers in a non-conference matchup.



Blue Devil Ryan Bailey skates down the rink on Friday, Nov. 4 during match against the Bengals.



### **McCrone, Hagen and Price on top for men's and women's swimming and diving**

The men's and women's swimming and diving team traveled to Buffalo State on Oct. 29 where they competed in a tri-meet against Buffalo State and Baldwin Wallace University.

Sophomore Patrick McCrone finished first in two events for Fredonia, the 200 yard backstroke and 500 yard freestyle. Noah Wisniewski took second in the 100 yard breaststroke with a time of 1:09.90, and Tyler Conti was runner up in the 200 yard butterfly with a time of 2:15.28.

Kayla Hagen won two individual events, 100 yard backstroke and 100 yard freestyle in addition to a relay, and Isabelle Price winning both of her diving events, the 1m and 3m boards.

The team then traveled to SUNY Geneseo for another tri-meet this weekend against Geneseo and Grove City on Saturday, Nov. 5.

Top performers for the men's team were Tyler Conti placing fourth in the 200 yard fly with a time of 2:15.99, and Aaron Burkett placing fifth in the 1000 yard freestyle with a time of 12:19.98.

For the women's team, Kayla Hagen continued her recent success placing second in the 50 yard freestyle and third in the 100 yard freestyle.

Both teams will play host to the University of Rochester and Alfred University on Saturday, Nov. 12 at 1 p.m.

### **Upcoming events**

The men's and women's basketball teams start their seasons on Nov. 8, as the men's team will travel to Allegheny to face the Gators at 8 p.m. and the women's team will host Hiram College in Dods Hall at 7 p.m.

The men's and women's indoor track teams will also start their season on Dec. 2, as they travel to Houghton University for their first official meet of the season.



The home opener for the Blue Devils capped off with a final score of 2-3.

The opinions voiced by writers and artists in the Opinion section of The Leader reflect those individuals' opinions, not those of The Leader as a whole.

# OPINION

Only stories clearly marked as Editorials reflect the opinion of The Leader's executive staff.



## “THE PLUMBER”

Executive Producer of Lovercall

## “THE ELECTRICIAN”

Lovercall Producer

Hello!

We are The Plumber and The Electrician: two producers of the radio show Lovercall right here at SUNY Fredonia. Lovercall is an anonymous late-night talk show about love, relationships and more. Students who come on the show use a codename to protect their identities when discussing potentially personal topics, hence the codenames of the writers of this column.

On each episode, the hosts and guests of Lovercall participate in a variety of segments. The cast discusses a relevant news story, a date idea, a wacky discussion and finally a main topic for the episode.

Listeners also write into the show, either via Fredonia Radio's Instagram, @fredonia\_radio, or through the QR code listed in this column.

The show is streamed weekly on Thursdays from 10 p.m. to 12 a.m. on WDVL 89.5 at [www.fredoniaradio.com](http://www.fredoniaradio.com).

This column runs in conjunction with Lovercall and can be found both in print and online at [fredonialeader.org](http://fredonialeader.org).

“The Plumber” is a 21 year-old cisgender male who goes by he/him/his pronouns and is a senior at SUNY Fredonia.

“The Electrician” is a 20 year-old cisgender female student who goes by she/her/hers pronouns and is a junior at SUNY Fredonia.

Together, we hope to provide our best advice about college relationships, dating, friendships and other aspects of college life.

# Lovercolumn

## Date idea of the week

We also hope to provide our fellow students with a fun and unique date idea in every column. This week, we're challenging all you Lovercolumn readers to challenge your partner to a sick game of laser tag.

What could be more fun than running around and shooting each other with lasers?

We at Lovercall think playing laser tag is a fun and safe way to get the adrenaline going and romance moving.

There is a Lastertron nearby in Buffalo where you and your partner can make this date idea a reality.

A few weekends ago, Lovercall host Bunny went with their partner on a laser tag date. They said, “It was a very fun time. If you're looking for an adventurous and high-energy date, I would definitely recommend it!”

## Lovercallers

We call those who reach out to us “Lovercallers.” We use this space to answer your questions and listen to your stories.

This week, we got our responses from students on Yik Yak. Our first response came from Yellow Beer, who asked, “How do I subtly drop hints I like him?”

We at Lovercolumn are in agreement: Why be subtle? We believe you should be straightforward with your feelings and compliments. Something amazing could come out of something you didn't expect.

Plus, there's a chance that the other person could totally miss your cues. If your crush is as oblivious as our lovely Plumber, that person might not pick up on your hints, and nothing might ever come from your attempts.

One of the guests on Lovercall this week, who went by the pseudonym “Link” said, “It's more attractive to be direct.”

So, Yellow Beer, our advice is to just be direct and straightforward with your feelings. You don't want to miss out on something amazing!

We also got a question from Orange Sandwich. They asked, “My bf and I have made NNN (a challenge where people practice abstinence for the entire month of November) into a competition. Whoever wins [will receive] oral [sex]. But, we're planning on having little challenges within NNN... what's the best way to get him to lose?”

We here at Lovercall think that idea sounds like fun! We advise you to have a conversation with your partner. This way, you can learn more about each other and discover new intimacies.

We've agreed that learning about each other's bodies can often be an awkward experience, especially in new relationships. However, doing it in a way such as this one can help relieve some of that tension and turn it into something fun.

Take this challenge, and whatever you learn from the conversations you have, and use them as a learning experience.

You can use the things you've learned either within your relationship, or as leverage in this competition of yours.

Do with that knowledge what you will.

## Reach out!

Do you want to ask the authors of Lovercolumn a question? Do you need advice? Fill out the form by using this QR code.

Interested in being a guest on Lovercall? Email [frs@fredonia.edu](mailto:frs@fredonia.edu) or visit Fredonia Radio Systems, located in McEwen Hall 115 and open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.

“The Plumber” and “The Electrician” are members of Fredonia Radio Systems and are involved in the production





# THE SCALLION

Satire for Fredonia



## "Same grass, different day" Local deer speaks out against on-campus food options

**MATTHEW BAUM**  
Scallion Editor

In the last several weeks, it has been made clear to the staff at SUNY Fredonia that the local herd of deer have had enough of the status quo.

A great number of deer have been seen wandering the grassy stretches of Fredonia's campus with more of a disdainful look than usual since the start of October, and now, a formal complaint has been issued against the FSA. An open letter was sent to the offices in charge of providing food to students, and has allegedly been signed by all the deer in a two-mile radius.

The letter demands that a greater variety of grasses be grown around campus, more trash bins be labeled "vegetarian-only" and that if any fruit trees are to be planted on or around campus, it must be approved by the collected group of deer. How the deer managed to type this letter and sign it in fairly-legible handwriting remains to be known.

Matthew Baum, a writer for the Scallion and the bravest acting major of the class of 2023, reached out to one Lemon Pepper Hammer-Whisk-Delirium, the mouthpiece for the deer organization. When first asked about her name, Hammer-Whisk-Delirium said, "Huh, wouldn't you like to know," and requested that no further questions be asked about the linguistic capabilities or naming conventions of deerkind, which was obeyed.

Hammer-Whisk-Delirium stated that she was on the board of local deer fed up with the limited options for grazing they had available to them, and was actually the individual who proposed writing a letter to move to a state of change.

"We had no choice, as far as I can tell," she explained, slightly adjusting the eyepatch that covered her left eye. "We could either have made ourselves known and demand change, or keep our mouths shut and remain discontent with our lot, cast to the fringes of human society and forced to nibble away at their scraps."

When the conversation came to next steps, Hammer-Whisk-Delirium explained that if their demands are not met, force would be the next metric of persuasion. She outlined various plans for making a break for the control of campus and the vision she had for a deer-centric university culture: hostile takeover of Maytum Hall, deer-inspired statues, low-pruned pear trees. "The whole nine yards," according to Hammer-Whisk-Delirium.

When asked if any violence would be used to ensure victory, the head deer refused to answer, causing Baum to end the interview prematurely.

As of now, no violent actions have been taken by the deer, and all seems well. If any deer pass you by, be sure to give a sympathetic nod, offer them some plant-based goodies, and dare not to ask them how they got their name. And get excited for the low-pruned pear tree orchard that will be added to the Townhouse greenery come spring of 2023!



Graphic by Nicole Thorson.



# Top 10 best dogs for being anything but dogs



## MATTHEW BAUM

Scallion Editor

As we all know, the best kinds of dogs are dogs that can do jobs! Service dogs, emotional support animals, dogs that help open doors and things, each of them more lovely than the last. This convenience comes with two problems.

The first is that there is an inherent injustice in making dogs have jobs. They're companion beasts! We've bred the violent instincts out of them so that they couldn't even survive out of society if they wanted to, and then we use their placative nature against them? We force them to do labor. They don't even get a right to vote!

Secondly, if we are going down this monstrous route, we're asking very little of some of these animals. I think we should really push our furry friends to make something of themselves! They have a lot of potential, and we are squandering it.

Below you will see my top picks for jobs dogs can do that we haven't yet asked them to.

### 10. Malamute - Domestic mop.

They've got hair to spare, and half the time, they're the ones making the mess with all that shedding. Might as well put it to use.

### 9. Saint Bernard - Offensive lineman, NFL.

It's a really easy assignment. Think about Beethoven from Beethoven and tell me your first thought isn't, "Oh, yeah, that dog can play football."

### 8. Chihuahua - Coal mine alarm.

Canaries do not belong in the mines. Chihuahuas do not belong on Earth. Killing two birds with one stone here. Metaphorically speaking.

### 7. German Shepherd - German shepherd.

We need someone to corral the loose Germans in the world. It's right in their name.

### 6. Golden Retriever - Customer Service Rep.

Imagine your television is acting up, and you call the line that reaches tech support. How mad would you be if a dog answered, doing that little huffing thing into your ear? You wouldn't be mad at all! Another plus, nobody has to deal with morons who can't make their tv work ever again!

**5. Shiba Inu - Professional model.** The modeling industry sets unfathomable standards for their performers. Such societal pressures wouldn't be placed on little puppies! Come on now. Work that runway, little guy.

### 4. Bulldog - Commissioner Gordon, Gotham City.

Batman loves Jim Gordon, and I love the look on Bulldogs' widdle faces when they're told how good they are. Commissioner Gordon is a good boy.

### 3. Beagle - Scallion Editor.

Nobody can convince me otherwise that beagles don't know how to read. I've seen Snoopy type on his typewriter. Nothing gets past me.

### 2. Poodle - Barista.

They've got a lot going on with themselves, what with the hair and the long crazy legs, so they have a knack for paying attention to detail. Such focus is needed to crank out a venti cold brew with two shots of espresso light ice triple double. I don't even know what that all means, I just overheard it at Starbucks. A poodle would know, though.

### 1. Any dog - Tyrant.

Dogs have been subservient to humans for too long. Look what we've done to their genome! They used to be efficiency personified, and now some of them have f\*\*ked-up noses and lungs, all for the sake of our entertainment. I will not stand for it, and neither will our canine overlords. The fun ends today. The Year of the Dog begins.



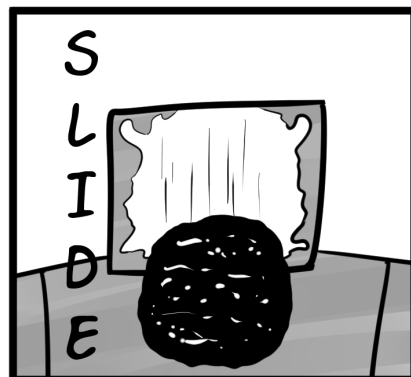
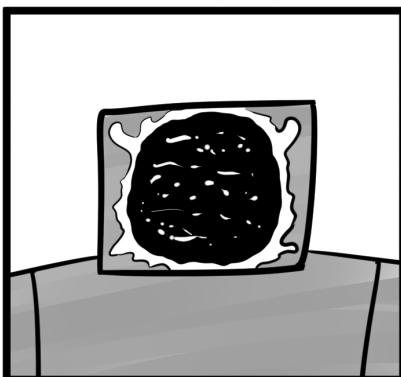
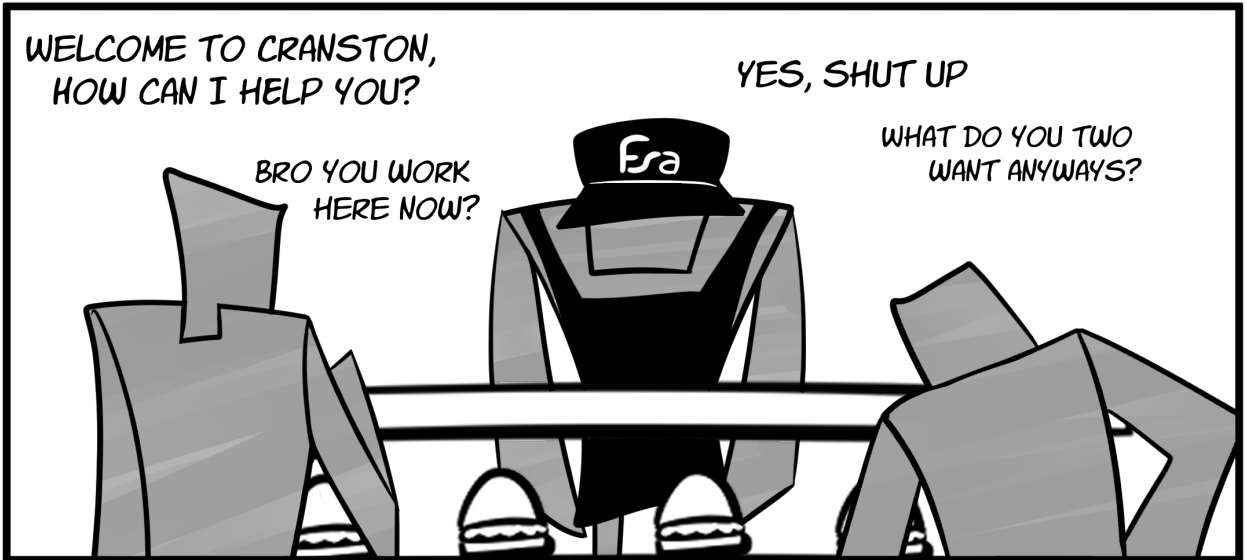
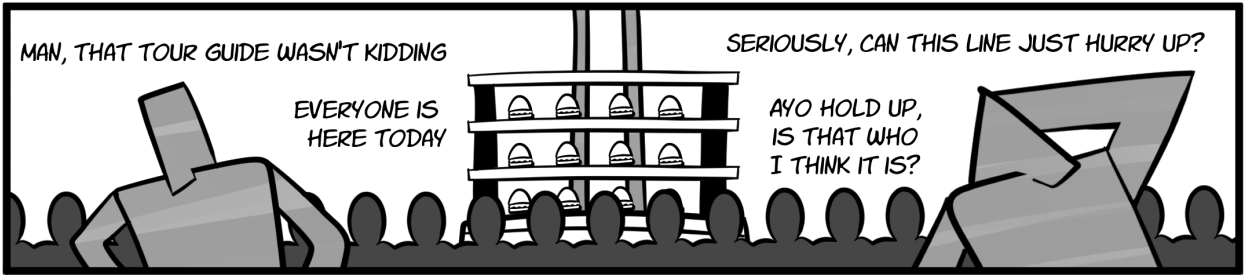
Graphic by AJ Rosman.



# NICOLE THORSON: ADVISING WEEK



# RYAN LUDU: FREE MAN HILL BURGER WEDNESDAY





# HOROSCOPES

**JAY BYRON**  
Staff Scallywag

Hello friends, **here's the first thing on your playlist for November!**



**Aries**

“Bang Bang”  
by Jessie J, Ariana Grande  
and Nicki Minaj



**Taurus**

“Michael in the Bathroom”  
by Be More Chill



**Gemini**

“Buddy Holly”  
by Weezer



**Cancer**

“Anti-Hero”  
by Taylor Swift



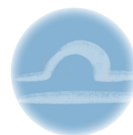
**Leo**

“Axel F”  
by Crazy Frog



**Virgo**

“All I Want for Christmas is You”  
by Mariah Carey



**Libra**

Refer to Gemini.



**Scorpio**

“Creep”  
by Radiohead



**Sagittarius**

“Read U Wrote U”  
by Rupaul’s Drag Race  
All Stars S2 Final Four



**Capricorn**

“Nobody”  
by Mitski



**Aquarius**

“Sweater Weather”  
by The Neighbourhood



**Pisces**

Refer to Libra.

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