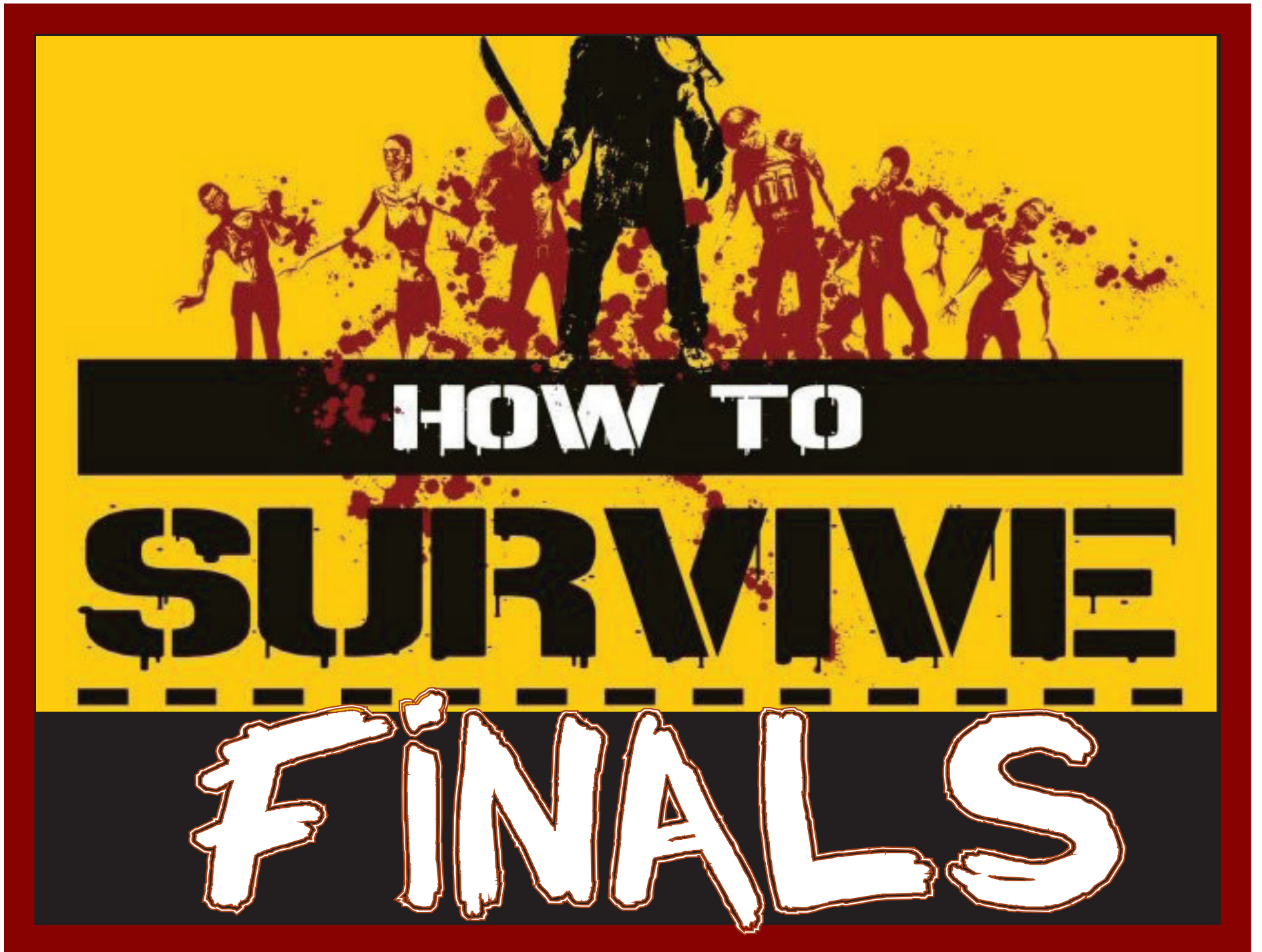


# DATELINE:



Volume 56  
Issue 6

# DOWNTOWN



## WHAT'S INSIDE:

Sleeping on Campus	Studying Tips
Cafes for Studying	Summer Classes
Finals Survival Tips	Managing Stress
Flood Alley	Sexual Harrassment
Center: UHD Study Abroad Destinations	
One Main Event	For Colored Girls
SGA Administration	Bayou Service
Dragon Boat Fest	Animal Rescue
CounterCurrent	Remote Houston
UH and Prisons	Millinnials
Adderall	Prince
Tubman Twenty	Mermaids

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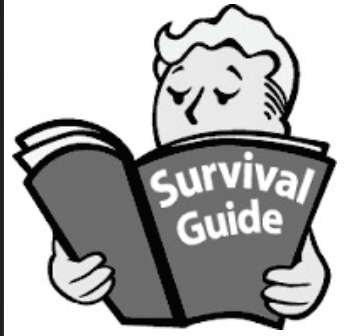
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# EDITORS' CLOSET

## 3 Editor's Desk



### *Mr. Sandman, Bring Me an A*

by Kara Moore

Finals season is upon us Gators! It's a time for lots of caffeine, all-nighters and praying. This year is slightly different though, because UHD has removed reading days from our finals schedule. This means up until finals begin, you will probably be spending even more time cramming on campus before a test than usual. With that being said, you'll probably be pretty exhausted. What's the best way to get some energy? Power naps. Where can you power nap on campus? Well, let me tell you.

For the purposes of napping after finals/studying for finals, I have focused mostly on compiling a list within the main building. Shea and Commerce buildings have a few obvious sitting areas, such as computer labs and by entrances/exits. The Main building on the other hand, has a lot more nooks and crannies to explore when trying to take a nap. Let's explore the obvious places first.

- 1. The Cafeteria:** Rather loud, so bring headphones. It'll be like sleeping on a desk, head resting on the table. Not exactly the most comfortable, but in close proximity to food so that is a plus. Try to also have a jacket to make a comfy pillow for your head. If you're worried about your stuff being taken while you sleep, remember this area is usually heavily populated so chances are nobody will want to take your stuff with so many witnesses around. Just in case though, you can use your bag as a pillow so you will definitely notice if it's gone.
- 2. The Library:** Much quieter. Probably won't require headphones, but always a plus as the hallway outside it on the 4th floor can get some traffic which might make it a bit louder. Many people forget that the library has two floors! The 5th floor-section of the library has the 40,000 Windows Café, and outside of that are the comfy chairs with the swivel desks. While again, there might be some traffic near the café, it's usually otherwise quiet. You are also right by some good coffee for when you wake up. I've noticed a security guard tends to walk around in there, so you don't have too much to worry about in regards to your personal belongings.
- 3. The 4th Floor Reading Area:** If you haven't been by this area yet, you haven't really explored UHD at all. It's situated to the left of the academic building, and it's a big room full of those comfy chairs I described earlier. Most of the time, people maintain some relative silence. Every once in awhile you will get that one rude person though, who talks loudly on the phone or watches Netflix without headphones. So bring your own headphones. A security guard has been seen walking through this area as well, but try to use your stuff as a pillow or put it underneath your feet.

Now that we've covered the three most basic areas that everyone should know about, here's some areas you might never have noticed or considered.

- 4. The Benches on the Walkways between the North and South Parts of the Main Building:** That's a mouthful, but you know what I'm talking about. If you take the main elevators for the Main building up to the 6th, 7th, 8th, and 9th floors there's a walkway that opens up right in front of you that connects to the other side. On these walkways, there are benches. While they aren't exactly soft, they are long and angled inward so that it's harder to fall off of them. You definitely want to have a soft backpack and a good jacket for these, otherwise you're resting your head on some cold metal.
- 5. 7th Floor Academic Building:** You've probably never been up there because it doesn't host a lot of classes, but step off the elevators and take a right. Follow the hallway and you'll reach this open area with the tall café tables and again, those delightfully comfy chairs with the swivel desks. The view of downtown is amazing from there, so it might relax you enough to really catch some good z's. Every time I've been up there it has been relatively quiet, but there are some offices near by so don't bank on that.
- 6. 7th floor outside N723:** Look, I don't know what that awesome green couch is doing there. It looks like an office inside N723, so it's probably for people who are usually waiting before a meeting. You might not want to go when the office is open, but if you're on campus late studying and you really need a comfy spot...it's there. I won't tell you to go sleep on it. But it's there. Waiting, in all it's plushy glory.
- 7. 7th and 9th floor behind North Elevator:** If you go up to these floors on the north side elevator, walk directly behind the elevator and you'll find sitting areas. Some of the areas are by vending machines and one even has a microwave, so there's that food-plus again. While the seating arrangement is akin to the cafeteria, it is a bit quieter. It still gets good foot traffic though, so be mindful of your stuff.
- 8. 10th Floor North/South Elevator Opening:** The 10th floor is mostly offices and a few writing labs, but when the elevators open it's a luxuriously quiet sitting area. It has round tables and the comfy chairs, relatively mild foot traffic, and because people don't want to piss off professors it is usual pretty quiet. If you can get a seat by the window, the view will be beautiful from all the way up there.
- 9. The Welcome Center:** Okay, so the university probably doesn't want you to take a nap in their new state-of-the-art welcome center. If not, why did they add those long sitting areas, then? If you head over to the part of the welcome center that is attached to the cafeteria, there is this bright open area with long wooden benches complete with wonderfully spaced plugs. You could, theoretically, plug in your phone and use your backpack as a pillow, say hello to Mr. Sandman while basking in the sun by those huge windows. Just a theory. I'm not telling you to test it.
- 10. The Elevator Adjacent to the Academic Building:** If you don't know what elevator I'm talking about, let me explain. If you're coming from the cafeteria and you go to the academic building elevators, keeping going past them and you'll see two elevators across from each other by a stairwell. The elevator goes much higher than the academic building, and if you take either elevator up to nearly any floor you will find either a bench or comfy chair nearby when you step out. These are also by some windows, if you really like the sun, but sometimes the view is the roof of another part of the building. Take a ride and see which area you like best.

Those are the 10 best areas that I investigated for students to relax in. Try to find one that suits your sleeping needs, but like I've stated: bring headphones, bring a jacket and watch your stuff. Be as prepared for your finals naps as you should be for finals. Last final pro-tip? Don't ever ride the north elevators up to the 11th floor. It opens to an art studio but it looks rather creepy up there.



# 4 Finals Survival Guide



## Make Studying Easier and More Effective by Changing Your Diet

By Elisa Gonzalez

As finals approach and the stresses of studying take their toll on us all, it's easy to neglect our diets. In between reading marathons and problem solving, we turn to comfort foods — the kind that are cheap, quick, and easy to obtain. The siren songs of the chips in the vending machines, the slice of pizza from the cafeteria or the muffin from Starbucks are all always calling our names. They seek to destroy us, by making us tired, sluggish and our brains foggy. However, instead of going for those comfort foods that are most tempting in times of stress, students should keep in mind that there are certain foods we can opt for instead, that may improve the effectiveness of those marathon study sessions.

### For memory – Chocolate

According to the Atlantic, Beatrice Golomb, a professor at the University of California in San Diego found that “people who eat a lot of chocolate perform better on memory tests.”

Keep in mind, not all chocolate is created equal and sugar should be consumed in moderation, so make sure the chocolate you're eating is real and don't overdo it.

### For Cognitive function – Plant-based Foods

The flavonoids in plant-based foods are powerful antioxidants associated with improved performance on cognitive tests, according to a 2012 study from Columbia University.

Salads obviously count as a plant-based food, which you can get at Salad Garden in the UHD cafeteria. But if salad isn't your thing try green tea, almonds, and fruits (i.e. apples, strawberries, bananas) are also good sources of flavonoids.

### For Energy – Fiber

Fiber is a complex carbohydrate that digests slowly and provides more energy than simple carbs, like the kinds found easily in candies and potato, which digest quickly and cause your blood sugar to spike, resulting in a crash. Convenient sources of fiber include trail mix, whole wheat bread, and green vegetables.

In addition to adding more of the above mentioned foods, students aiming to improve reading retention should eliminate foods with trans fats. A 2014 study from the American Heart Association links diets high in trans fats to poor memory. Trans fats are found mostly in deep fried foods, fast foods, and packaged desserts. Finally, keep in mind that there's no quick fix to improving any part of the human body, especially the brain. The terms “superfood” or “brain food” are assigned to a new vegetable or grain every few years, but they serve only to trick people into thinking one change can solve all their health woes. You can't really eat kale once a week, and undo six days of fast food. But if you improve your eating habits overall, you will see and feel real, lasting change.



## Stress Relief for Finals

## Study and Chill

By Joshua Burgman

With finals just around the corner, it's important that you have a great place to study, especially for students that are graduating this semester, and are experiencing added stress. Studying at home is hardly very productive. The most effective studying usually takes place when you are removed from distractions, like television or PlayStation. Although Houston is besieged by coffee shops, we felt like the following would be best suited for an environment favorable to studying:

- 1. Honeymoon Cafe & Bar:** Honeymoon has been featured in Dateline-Downtown a few times, but that is because it really is one of the best places for UHD students to study. Located at 300 Main St., it's just a short distance from the university. Parallel to the MetroRail, students would only have to ride about two stops to be dropped just outside of the cafe. Owned by the proprietors of Boomtown Coffee roasting company, Honeymoon offers house-brewed beans along with an array of treats on its cafe-styled menu. The food is good (you must try their Beignets) and the service is second to none. When you study, if it's on a beautiful Houston day, you can do so outside on their patio. Either way, you'll be able to get plenty of sunlight, as Honeymoon also features floor-to-ceiling windows that allow you to enjoy the day, even though you're inside studying.
- 2. Campesino:** Situated in the heart of Montrose, Campesino is located at 2602 Waugh Dr., and it is the perfect place to slip-in a study session, in-between work or shopping. Campesino seems like it was built specifically for people to come and study. The building itself sits on a corner and its small. If you aren't paying attention, it's easy to miss. The atmosphere is usually chill, with tunes playing in the background. Like Honeymoon, Campesino boasts a beautiful patio that nurtures a relaxed atmosphere, conducive to effective studying. Outside of the music playing in the background inside and some random chatter, the place is usually pretty quiet. For the students who employ alcoholic beverages as relaxation techniques, Campesino might not be the place for you, but if you're craving caffeine then you'd be in the right place. From coffee to tea, the small shop serves beverages that are sure to keep you awake and focused.
- 3. Inversion Coffee & Art:** Another Montrose jewel, Inversion Coffee & Art is for the students who are able to stand a few distractions while they study. While it is a coffee shop and the majority of customers there are usually studying, Inversion stays pretty busy. Located at 1953 Montrose Blvd., it sits on prime real estate in the Montrose area; not to mention the countless number of art pieces that adorn its walls. Inversion is definitely for the art-friendly student, which is no surprise given its location. Another bonus that is offered through Inversion's location are the food trucks. If you get hungry or “hangry” while you study, and don't want coffee or pastries, there are usually a variety of Houston food trucks that sit just outside the coffee shop.

Well Gators, the time has come. You've worked hard all semester, and now you're on the home stretch. This is when you make it all count. Stock up on your Red Bull and munchies snacks, pick a spot and prepare to do exactly what you did last semester, survive!

## Studious Summer Gators

By Chelsea Chance

Many students look forward to summer break before classes resume in the fall, longing for that last day of finals that stands between them and their sunny freedom. Some students, however, may consider signing-up for summer classes. While many are reluctant to give up their break, there are some incentives summer classes can offer. Summer classes allow students to enroll in a course or two, which can be beneficial if they need to retake a course they failed or one in which they received a poor grade. Students can even consider taking a summer class to improve their GPA.

Summer classes are also beneficial to those who traditionally take only 12 hours a semester. Even though this gives students full-time status, they may not graduate “on time” within four years of their starting date unless they are committed to taking at least 15 hours a semester. Students who want to finish their degree early and graduate in three years, or in December rather than May, can take summer classes instead of burdening themselves with an extra heavy course load during the academic year.

Summer term classes offer many obvious benefits. Summer classes are short, with the usual duration being six to eight weeks long. And even though the syllabus usually contains the same amount of material, the coursework is considered much more intensive. For some students, this shorter time period allows them to maintain a focus they might find difficult for a traditional semester.

Because summer classes are much more intensive, students are generally advised to take only one or two classes at a time. The current policy, according to the UHD catalog states that “the standard load for one summer session is six to eight credit hours.” Also, “Students who wish to enroll in nine hours or more in a single summer session or in two overlapping summer sessions must receive approval from the assistant or associate dean of their college.” This also allows students to be more focused, rather than trying to balance 3-6 classes at a time.

Taking summer classes helps some students stay in “study mode.” Summer sessions help students maintain a routine of learning, planning their assignments, keeping with deadlines, and studying throughout the summer, and it may also help them retain information from the spring semester that will prove crucial to remember for the fall semester.

Summer classes are often smaller than during the traditional semester. Students often receive more individualized attention and have more interaction with other students. In addition, students who need a summer job or simply can't come to class Monday through Thursday have a plethora of online classes to choose from the UHD catalog. UHD offers the following summer sessions: May 16, 2016 – June 3, 2016, Summer I session from June 6, 2016 to July 7, 2016, Summer II June 6, 2016 – July 28, 2016, and Summer III July 11 2016-August 11, 2016.



KEEP  
CALM  
AND  
ACE YOUR  
FINAL EXAMS



## Ten Tips to Get Through Final Exams

by Lacresha Rosenthal

It's that time of year again ... final exams! I'm sure by now everyone is in panic mode (if you're not, I envy you), but hopefully these ten tips can help ease some of the frustration and make the end of the semester a bit easier. As college/university students, we all have to master the concepts of balancing our responsibilities and setting priorities; in order to be successful at each of these, time management is a mandatory skill. While there is no one-size-fits-all approach to studying or time management, there are some fundamental practices that I have found to be beneficial:

1. First and foremost, RELAX. Of course you will have concerns, but try to avoid allowing stress and anxiety to dominate your thinking. Stay positive and know that you have the capacity to learn the material.
2. ORGANIZE & PRIORITIZE your tasks. Allocate a set amount of uninterrupted time each day leading up to your exam for each individual subject; more time and attention should be dedicated to more challenging subjects. This could be a detailed written agenda or simply a mental note. Whatever works for you, just don't deviate from your schedule.
3. Set specific and measurable GOALS for each session. If you sit down with a purpose, you should get up feeling accomplished!
4. If not provided one by your instructor, create a STUDY GUIDE. Sometimes it's beneficial to modify the study guide your professor provides so that it fits your style of studying. Your guide should include all pertinent information, but should be broken down into sections to avoid seeming overwhelming. Each day tackle a new section.
5. I have found the LOCATION of study sessions to be one of the most important parts of the process. Avoid studying in bed or in any location where you might get too comfortable or be tempted to take an impromptu nap. A desk, table or even at a park are all ideal locations.
6. Turn OFF your cell phone. The last thing you need during your designated study time is the distraction of your phone. Tell Bae, "TTYL," and put FaceBook, Instagram, Twitter, Tumblr, and the rest of the gang on hold and handle your business.
7. STUDY GROUPS are effective when all participants are on one accord, concentrated and serious about their goals. Multiple minds working together should be better able to understand or explain concepts.
8. REVIEW and quiz yourself (or one another) to measure your success. Depending on the format of your exam, creating a practice exam can assist you in retaining information.
9. IDENTIFY the areas where you still may be struggling and schedule time to speak with your professor or a tutor to address your concerns.
10. Finally, REWARD yourself! Turn your phone back on and hit Bae with, "WYD," and while you wait for a response, proceed to check-in with your social media following to see just how you're going to celebrate a successful study session. I know firsthand how daunting final exams can be, as each exam will be a reflection of all of the work we have put in over the past three months. Don't let the idea of it consume you. Stay positive and motivated, knowing that you have put forth your best effort and maximized your time. Hopefully these tips will be helpful as the semester winds down and ease a bit of the stress that goes along with it. Here's to a successful end of the semester!

### How to Ace That Test

- 1 **Review the hardest material right before bedtime.** Going to sleep right away consolidates the information in your memory.

$$E = MC^2$$



- 2 **Turn off music, text messages, TV and email.** Distractions make you less likely to remember material you were studying at the time.



- 3 **REPEAT**

**Test yourself repeatedly.** Students remember more when they force themselves to retrieve concepts than when they simply re-read the textbook or their notes.

- 4 **Eat oatmeal for breakfast.** Balanced, slow-digesting diet provides a sustained flow of glucose to the brain.



## Feeling Stress with Finals? Meditation Can Help You Relax

By Karen Reyes

As college students we are known to lack proper sleeping patterns, have high levels of stress and zero time for relaxation. Having eight hours of sleep is simply not an option available to us. With finals knocking on our door, there isn't much time to relax, letting stress take over our well-being and mental health, not realizing how it can seriously affect us. The worst part is that it does not get any better, so why not come to terms with it? What if I tell you about an age-old practice that could significantly lower your stress levels and, in the process, increase your concentration? Why not start meditating?

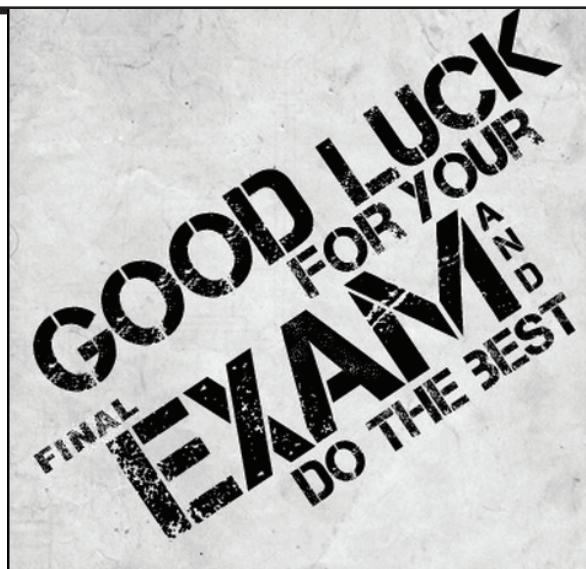
Meditation is one of the best practices college students could incorporate in their daily routine. Studies have suggested that meditation can help students balance high-levels of stress. Harvard Medical School underwent a meditation-training program; after researching for eight weeks and they found that, "The mindful attention group supported the hypothesis that meditation can improve emotional stability and response to stress." Indeed, it is true that occasional stress is normal. However, when students experience high-stress levels on a daily basis, it is not. If meditation is that beneficial to students, why not give it a try during finals? If only to relax for a few minutes and let our minds have a break from all the essays, tests, projects and deadlines.

So what is meditation? In short, "Meditation means to drop everything which is in one's memory and come to a state where only consciousness remains, where only awareness remains" As noted, by the famous spiritual teacher, Osho. Meditation is not an easy task to achieve, but not impossible. Other than being a stress reliever, there are many other benefits that meditation offers. The objective of the practice is to force your mind to focus on nothing but the present, which naturally improves your concentration. This will help you learn how to focus on one thing instead of stressing about everything at once.

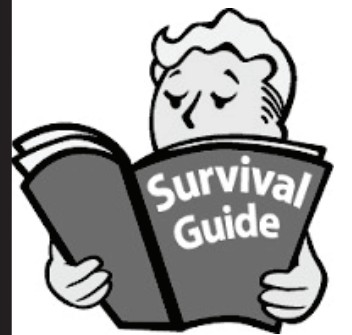
There are many guided meditation audios across the internet that could help you step-by-step. Below are some quick tips to start meditation:

1. Find your desired meditation spot  
It is important for you to find a spot free of any disturbances. The place you choose should make you feel safe, comfortable and, most importantly, in peace.
2. Sit in a comfortable position  
There are different recommendations on how to position your body. Advanced practitioners recommend sitting in a cross-legged position for beginners. Once you are in a comfortable position, make sure you sit upright to facilitate the flow of energy.
3. Clear your mind  
Having a blank state of mind can be the hardest challenge of meditation. Counting your exhales and inhales can help you achieve this present state of mind.
4. Sit back and observe  
Beginners think that meditation is to block out all thoughts, but that is not the case. The key is to sit back and observe your inner thoughts. Go over them one by one till they are all cleared out. Let your mind think, but don't engage. You can continue this process for as long as you want until you feel refreshed and ready to go. It is recommended to start with 30 minutes and proceed from there.
5. Ending Meditation  
When you are done meditating, slowly start being aware of the physical reality around. This step is important, so take as much time as you need; going back to your regular activities can be jarring. Get attuned with your surroundings one at a time.

Following these few steps can be frustrating. It will take some time before you fully feel the benefits of meditation. The university has recently added to our campus a meditating room on the fourth floor where you can start your journey towards a less stressful mentality. Remember to stick to a routine and keep trying! One day your mind will slowly grow quieter, finding a new mental peace.



# 5 Finals Survival Guide



**KEEP CALM AND ACE YOUR FINAL EXAMS**



## Houston: Last Stop Down "Flood Alley" by Darci McFerran

Kayaks, canoes, paddle boats, inflatable rafts, and even refrigerators were a common sight to Houstonians by early Monday afternoon, the aftermath of a major storm cell that dumped an unprecedented amount of water on the city. Sadly, this was eerily reminiscent of the Memorial Day flood that the city is still rebuilding from, and actually surpassed it in terms of totals. Memorial Day floods dropped roughly 164 billion gallons of water, and storms on April 18th dropped 240 billion. The Bayou City is no stranger to tumultuous weather; flash floods and Hurricanes have affected every generation of the city's residents. Perhaps this has some part in creating the climate of togetherness that Houston is known for during times of calamity. The city's propensity for extreme weather allowed many people to just file the event under another angry unleashing of mother nature's indelible power, but others couldn't help but question the reason for the sudden intensity in the recurring weather patterns. Certainly, we could consider this nothing more than a natural disaster, horrific but unavoidable. However, no one can deny the increase in frequency and intensity, so much that the nation has begun referring to Southeast Texas as "Flood Alley."

In the predawn hours of April 18th the slow moving, larger than average, storm began to cover the skies of Texas. Stretching from Austin to the Louisiana border. What seemed like nothing more than an active Spring shower, revealed itself to the region as an unrelenting threat to everything in its path. Most citizens were aware rain was coming, but unaware how bad it would be until it was already upon them. Despite screaming emergency alerts, which were echoed by warning booms of thunder, most people were asleep until it was too late. As the sun began to rise, the city was shutting down, and residents were starting to see just how bad this was going to be. The University of Houston-Downtown sits directly on the banks of the city's central bayou, Buffalo Bayou, yet was the last school to announce its closure. Dateline reporters had already been fielding questions from students and sharing crucial information to help individuals make safe decisions about their day. Finally, at 6:09 a.m., the school announced its closure but the storm had been pummeling the city for hours and was far from finished.

Damages were so widespread and devastating that many people began to question the infrastructure and engineering of Houston's ever-changing landscape, as Houston is a city whose tax revenue comes primarily from new construction and real estate. What does this have to do with the weather, you may ask? Well...nothing, not directly anyway. It's how our environment reacts to the weather and its ability to cope with high volumes of water in a short period, especially in highly populated urban centers. With new construction comes concrete, often lots of concrete that covers the porous ground, which otherwise would absorb water. The unfortunate side effect of this is that the water has nowhere to go unless it can reach a bayou, and the bayou is not full. In fact, this is known information that has inspired policy changes in local government. Engineers and city officials have known for some time that this was of growing concern, and still they continue to build. New construction garners

higher tax dollars than old properties do, and every year Houston's population continues to grow at 6.7% annually, according to the Houston Chronicle.

The newspaper further explains this trend by stating, "The Houston area added more people last year than any metropolitan region in the country, continuing its exceptional growth of the last decade and a half, according to new U.S. Census Bureau data released Thursday. [March 24, 2016]" They further speculate that the totals are nearing 1 million since 2010, which directly correlates to the increased need for housing. The boundaries of Harris County and the Greater Houston Area are always pushing farther from the city's center, Downtown Houston. Fortunately, there has been a decline in how quickly the population is growing and, as we have seen with the flooding in the last year, that is increasingly necessary.

As more and more concrete is poured, the bayous that weave across the geography of Southeast Texas are struggling to do their primary function. With this flooding event, in particular, even the reservoirs threatened to fail, which would have turned horrific into catastrophic. The government has tried to implement policies that would counter this growing problem, such as requiring retention ponds and fountains in the overall construction plan, but they are not always enough, resulting in the widespread devastation of the region.

As Monday turned into Tuesday, the rains continued, and water levels remained high in many areas. Shelters began taking in the displaced, and first responders worked around the clock; the city started towing cars, and the community came together before the flood event had even ended. Surprisingly, there was communication from the university system that classes were being held and the school was open. UHD is a commuter school so many were heading out or on their way when the second communication arrived. Upon further assessment of the conditions within the city, UHD was not going to be open and classes were canceled. The backlash, from students and faculty alike, was immediate. Confusion, frustration and even anger radiated from the comments on social media and many were demanding to know why the university had handled things this way. During a time of turmoil and unpredictability, a community needs strong leadership that it can depend on and this was not what the UHD community got in the wake of great strife for the entire city.

Later, as classes were beginning again, UHD Interim President Michael Olivas sent out a letter to explain his actions on those two crucial mornings. Dr. Olivas was not working at UHD during previous floods and lives on campus at UH Main, where he still keeps an office. In a letter to faculty and staff Olivas states, "Decisions about closings are somewhat contingent on the course of action determined by community partners. For example, if Lone Star College closes its doors, we cannot offer classes at our Cy-Fair, Kingwood or Northwest campuses. In this case, neighboring schools were announcing closures which influenced our decision to remain closed." Emails that local media sent out did show many schools, excluding UH Main Campus, closed following the first communication that

UHD was open for the day. Finally, following the announcement by UH that they would be closed, UHD also announced their closure.

UHD choosing to make decisions about closing based on UH's decision presents a few concerns. First, UHD sits directly on a major Houston water vein, Buffalo Bayou. Having already broken its banks and battling hundreds of millions of gallons of water trying to drain from other areas, UHD was still at high risk, and under weather warnings. More concerning still is that UHD is a commuter campus, and a sizeable portion of the students and faculty would be traveling from, or through, areas still underwater and at risk for more rain to diminish conditions. Were these details factored into the first decision? UHD is a unique campus, with individual needs and those should be the first considered when decisions are made that affect our community.



As if these questionable actions were not concerning enough, administration's focus was already turned to make-up days for those missed due to "inclement weather." Inevitably, the students would end up paying for these days from the meager time given to study for their most comprehensive exam of the entire semester. The students would not be given study days prior to finals and instead, those days would be lost to the natural disaster that had already destroyed many lives.

In true Houston style, the city has come together to help each other and rebuild. Unlike so many other cities, in the wake of such devastation, Houston has not seen widespread looting or rioting. The news has been reporting the best of humanity in the various counties and communities that make-up the massive Greater Houston Area. A fact that many Houstonians are happy to remind you of as they share their individual experience of this historic flood. Hopefully, we will see the city leaders make decisions that benefit everyone regarding flood plans and infrastructure. Likewise, let us hope that the UH System encourages decisions be based on the direct needs of the UHD community.





# Hard Crimes and Hard Bottom Lines

By Terrance Turner

In recognition of April being Sexual Assault Awareness Month, UHD has instituted a number of activities designed to shine a light on rape. It has become not only a problem on campuses but a nationally polarizing issue as of late (perhaps most famously regarding the comedian formerly known as Cliff Huxtable).

On April 11, students received an email linking them to a survey regarding sexual crimes and campus safety. The study, called "Keeping Our Campus Safe: Student Experiences and Attitudes at UHD," sought to measure students' feelings of safety and tendency to report crimes of a sexual nature. Questions required them to indicate level of agreement or disagreement with statements like "If someone reported an incident of sexual violence to a campus authority, the school would take the report seriously." Other statements included "If a friend or I experienced sexual violence, I would know where to go to get help" and "I understand my school's formal procedures to address complaints of sexual violence."

On April 27, UHD held an event called "From Trials to Triumphs: Spreading the Word about Sexual Assault Awareness." One of the slated speakers for the event, psychology student and former Senator of SGA, Heather Strange, spoke about the background for it. According to her, the impetus for the event was Tiffany Henderson, a UHD student who overcame addiction and other issues. Henderson did a sex trafficking information seminar at the Buffalo Soldiers Museum of Houston and wanted to continue the work on campus. The idea is to encourage other women on campus that have stories of sexual assault.

In an email, Henderson said, "I am a survivor of human trafficking and sexual assault. What motivated me to do this event was the feeling I received after doing the event at Buffalo Soldiers...a feeling of spreading the word. I want people to understand the seriousness of how sexual assault can impact someone's life, while also giving testimony on how you can survive and move past it. That's why I called the event 'From Trials...' (meaning the assault and the long road to recovery) '...to Triumphs' (the victory of recovery and the ability to help others with your story). I believe if more people are aware of the issue, more can be done about prevention of this epidemic. This is especially true for women in college, where sexual assault happens but is rarely reported. That's why I chose UHD to hold the event. The only thing people should know before coming to the event is that these stories can be graphic and heartbreaking to hear, but it's victorious because we have survived to inform others."

Strange also shared her own story, which she elaborated on in an interview on April 22. After being raped in June of last year, Strange says that the police were unhelpful when she sat in an ambulance just six hours

after the incident. She claims that the investigators' line of questioning made her feel as if the attack was her fault: "I was in the back of the ambulance, and the police officer asked me what kind of underwear I was wearing — and why I was alone with that man." Worse yet, there was a chance of justice not being served: "The detective came to my house and told me that my assailant might not ever go to jail," she said, "because it was at my house, and I invited him over...to study."

Strange felt isolated when she began to reveal the truth to family and friends a month later. "I had people stop being my friend, stop talking to me. I literally had someone sit me down and question me and say, 'Well, what did you do to make him do that?' I had someone literally sit me down and say, 'Well, you know the majority of rape victims are liars,' which is not the truth." Was this from fellow students? "Yes." Were they male or female? "Both."

When it comes to the idea of rape claims being under-reported or under-prosecuted, she has a direct claim: "women who are sexually assaulted are treated like the enemy by our court systems," and explanation: there is a misrepresentation of criminals. "Rapists aren't always thugs," Strange says. "My rapist had a British accent; he was somewhat educated [...] he was pretty well-spoken. He was not a thug. Most men that rape are influential, are popular, are good-looking. They don't seem like the type that would [commit assault]. In our mind, in the public eye, they're great people, OK? So because of that, there's more of a tendency to blame the victim." She continues, "We need to stop the idea that all rapists are creepy dudes and that all rape victims are sluts, and that you have to be a Jehovah's Witness who's only had sex with zero people for you to be a real victim of rape." Strange also criticized those who harbor the idea that men can't be raped. Such ideologies, she says, make it harder for men to come forward, especially men of color.

On the topic of rape culture, Strange blames a society that she calls both heterosexist and heteronormative, even misogynistic. She feels that such a societal mindset hurts men as well as women: "It's not just not valuing women, it's not valuing anything that is feminine and doesn't fit within the masculine identity. And that's why men have to be afraid whenever they get raped — of being seen as weak or homosexual." This mindset should be eliminated, Strange feels: "And so the heteronormative — the idea that masculinity is great, the idea that femininity is horrible — all that s—t needs to die. That's where we kill it. Until then, we're going to live in a rape culture."

What does she want people to take away from her testimony? "We have silent victims, so what I want them to know is that A) it's not your fault it happened to you, and B) you can and should report every single time it happens. And you should confront the person that assaulted you. And you should never be the victim. And you deserve better," she emphasizes. "And no one on this earth should be raped or molested EVER, and whoever the f—k does that is a f—ked-up person, not the one that it's happening to."

Finally, Heather Strange wants her story to help change the perception of victims. "We probably have higher percentages of rape and molestation than we'll ever know, because we make people feel bad about [reporting] it."





## ***UHD Students in Taiwan*** **by Sonia Sanchez**

The University of Houston—Downtown will be sending students and faculty to Taiwan during Summer 2016, from June 6 to June 19, for the second time this year.

The students will initially be taking one of two hybrid courses offered during the May mini-semester, required before studying abroad. Dr. Joe Sample will be teaching ENG 3340, Cultural Criticism and Jane Creighton will be teaching ENG 3309, Intro to Creative Writing. Non-student travelers are welcomed to join the students and faculty on this trip as well and are not required to enroll in the courses.

During the previous trip, students traveled to Taiwan from December 29, 2012, to January 9, 2013. Which was the first time UHD students were offered the opportunity to travel to Taiwan, and students wrote all about their experiences during their stay, as they explored the new surroundings. Their writings can be found under the previous faculty-led trips on the UHD International and Study Abroad page. They even got to spend one night in Tokyo, Japan!

Dr. Sample is the UHD faculty member who organized the trip, and Dr. Creighton will be joining him again for the summer return. “The students will get to experience the trip in groups of 3 to 4 people,” said Dr. Sample. This method of touring the cities of Taiwan gives the students the freedom to choose where they want to go and avoids a theme park experience which schedules exactly where tourists should be at specific times. His cultural criticism course will require the analysis of the film “Eat Drink Man Woman” which will coincide with their tour of the National Palace Museum in Taipei.

Dr. Creighton’s Intro to Creative Writing course will gravitate more towards poetry, and there will be plenty of travel writing assigned as well. “The writing will not be academic at all,” said Dr. Creighton. In the previous trip to Taiwan, Dr. Creighton and her students had the opportunity to write about Taiwanese art in an art museum they had discovered just by wandering around in a park.

Taiwan is also known as The Republic of China, and has recently elected their first female president, Tsai Ing-wen, during the January 2016 election. Tensions rose between China and Taiwan after Ing-wen was elected president-elect of The Republic of China. Taiwan’s government is a democracy separate from communist China, which is officially known as The People’s Republic of China. The two lands are under a pact that keeps the mainland and island of Taiwan as one China since 1992. Both courses will require readings regarding Taiwan’s politics and history, in relation to China and Japan.



## **UHD Visits Costa Rica, A Study Abroad Trip** **By Jose Navarro**

The students from the University of Houston — Downtown are anxiously preparing for the trip to Costa Rica next month on May 21st for the opportunity to earn credit hours and have fun.

The study abroad program will help students to learn more about the Spanish language, Spanish majors and can earn from four to six credit hours towards their degree. The program is hosted by La Universidad Latina de Costa Rica, located in the city of Heredia. The university will provide directors and staff that will be available for 24/7 to assist students in class. Fortunately for students, the classes will be small containing around only fifteen students. Students who are interested in the trip are required to take either Spanish 1402, 2301, 2302, or 4390.

The city of Heredia is around thirty minutes away from the capital San Jose by car. The previous excursions with Dr. Chiquillo, have been popular and successful with students. The planned activities include visiting the Pacific Beach, the Tropical Rainforest, volcano sites and much more. “The excursions are fun and exciting; I just hope that the students listen to the advice that we give them. Once I told the students to take some sweaters when we were going to visit the volcano site, but naturally some did not believe me and did not listen. By the time we were at the site people were complaining that they were cold due to the high altitude,” recalled Dr. Chiquillo.

Students will not be staying in hotels while visiting. Instead, they will be provided with Homestay accommodations, like all previous trips, meaning they stay with a host family for their month abroad. The host families and students often form long-term bonds.

“Students become close with the host families: some have even maintained communication with the families by live independently or not.”

Also, students will be exposed to the rich culture that Costa Rica has to offer, as well as the extraordinary culinary delights. Costa Rican food is unique and will be a new experience for some travelers. A fun leisure activity that students are sure to appreciate is the nightlife and dance culture. Spend your evenings learning the exotic Cuban dances, which are well-known for passion and intensity.

Many people have no idea how much they will love something until they get out of their comfort zones and experience it. What better way to get out of your comfort zone than by traveling to Costa Rica, while getting your credit hours at the same time?



## ***UHD Students Traveling to Cuba on the Cutting Edge*** **by Scott Buss**

When University of Houston Downtown students depart for Cuba this May they are not only making history they will be stepping back in time. The island has been cut off to most Americans for over 50 years. Sanctions and trade embargoes in place since the 60s have left Cuba in a time warp. When Dr. Paul Mandell approached the Dean in 2014 with Study Abroad Cuba, his goal was to place UHD at the forefront of the Cuban experience before commercialization descended.

Touring Havana, students and faculty may want to see the Floridita where Ernest Hemingway and Fidel Castro spent time. In Old Havana, a UNESCO world heritage site, students can wander the cobblestone streets to the centuries-old social hub, Plaza de Armas, and enjoy a café Cubano. Perhaps enjoy lunch at the legendary La Bodeguita del Medio, founded in 1942, where memorabilia and celebrity signatures such as Nat King Cole’s decorate the walls. Participants will also tour the Bay of Pigs and Santa Clara, where, in 1958, Che Guevara and Camilo Cienfuegos won the decisive last battle in the Cuban Revolution. While touring The Malecón they will see the building which just recently resumed its role as the U.S. Embassy in Cuba, after more than 50 years under Swiss protection.

The diplomatic break with Cuba, which occurred in 1961, was precipitated by Fidel Castro condemning the U.S. for using the Embassy as a base for spies and demanding that staff numbers be radically reduced. On January 3, 1961, The Eisenhower Administration, uneasy with Castro’s relationship with the communist bloc, severed diplomatic ties with Cuba. Castro responded by increasing efforts toward nationalization. Cuba has never declared itself a communist nation, however, Cuba is a very different type of regime. “Our students will witness first-hand those differences,” said Mandell. Travelers may ask, “Why are six people are on their hands and knees cutting the lawn with shears instead of one individual with a lawnmower?” Of course, that would reduce jobs by five persons.

Being on the cutting edge does not necessarily mean being endowed with inside information. The incubating Cuban infrastructure toward travel remains complicated enough that navigating it is a job for a professional. Meet award-winning novelist Randy Wayne Wright Wright has had the fortunate opportunity to traverse Cuba beyond the Cuban-government-sanctioned, educational tour. His company, Doc Ford’s Cuba Expeditions, knows how to put more into the Cuban experience than most. He has studied, first hand, the Cuban infrastructure for his “Doc Ford” Novels, which have won him the prestigious John D. MacDonald Award. “Our expeditions are unique in many respects and offer an inside view of Cuba that is unlike any sanctioned, large-group tour operated by the state-run companies of Cuba.”

For now, the untouched Cuban Experience for UHD Travel Abroad is limited to faculty and students only because identities must be confirmed months in advance. “We are traveling under educational visas,” said Dr. Mandell. As red tape to Cuba travel unwinds and tourism standardizes, Cuba will become, as in the past, a real destination. From the Atlantic to the Caribbean, Cuba boasts more than 240 miles of pristine coastline with an average of 300 days of tropical sunshine a year. And besides being immortalized in James Bond films, Van Halen music videos and National Public Radio, Cuba undeniably is home to a movable feast of awesome classic American cars. Cuba is getting its cool back and UHD is on the cutting edge!





# Department Of Education Leads Study Abroad Program In London

By Dana Robison

The University of Houston - Downtown's Department of Urban Education will be leading a group of students on a study abroad program in London, England, this summer. Dr. Diane Miller, Assistant Professor of Literacy, is pioneering the program at UHD, and has modeled it after one that has been successful for many years at her Alma Mater campus, Texas A&M.

The trip will incorporate tours of significant locations for children's and young adult literature in and around the London area. The itinerary includes a day at Stratford on Avon, The Roald Dahl Storytelling Museum, Christ Church College at Oxford, Charles Dickens' house and The Globe Theatre.

Students enrolled in one of the Education Department's READ classes are eligible for credit and will have access to award money (\$1200) to help pay for the trip. Total cost of the trip is \$2050 plus airfare. This includes all hotels for 8 nights, ground transportation, breakfast every day, 2 dinners, 2 lunches and admission tickets to all sights and areas of interest.

Students will have a chance to spend one day observing at a primary school in London, comparing and contrasting the differences from what they see here at home. They will also have a chance to record their thinking and observations, taking time to be a part of a writing community together while in England. The goals of the trip are to live in London for a week, enhance the education for students to become better educators, themselves.

This trip did not fill up, so there may still be a possibility of going, if interested. You can certainly begin planning and saving for next year. Top capacity for the trip is 24 students, Dr. Miller said. This year they have 10 students plus two members of the educational community here in Houston. If interested in next year's trip, plan to enroll in a READ class in the spring and stay tuned to your Gatormail for information and announcements.

Dr. Miller taught in Houston area public schools for 20 years before earning her doctorate and coming to UHD. Her goal is to teach students here, future educators, how to have open minds and a sensitivity to students with various backgrounds.

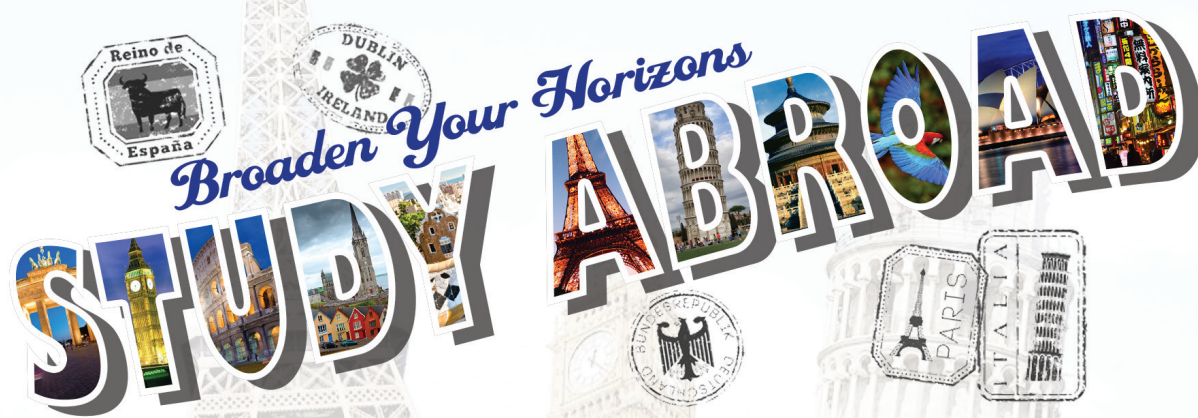
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**For information about  
any of these  
Study abroad Program**

**[https://www.UHD.edu/  
Academics/International](https://www.UHD.edu/Academics/International).**

## **UHD Criminal Justice Students Tackle Human Trafficking in Study Abroad Trip** by Jorge Martinez

University of Houston—Downtown students are gearing up to travel to Amsterdam and Stockholm, in the next month for a study abroad trip that will focus on the different legislative and policing approaches aimed at preventing human trafficking.

Students will get to spend their time meeting police officers, legislative officials, and past victims of prostitution and human trafficking from Amsterdam and Stockholm. Here they will learn to understand that the whole world, not just these two places, have different approaches regarding the subject of prostitution and human trafficking, and see how the perception of these issues changes depending on the approach.

One of the many goals of the ten-day trip is to see how students can take what they learn abroad and connect or implement it in the Houston community. Dr. Rebecca Pfeffer, assistant professor of criminal justice and director of the program, is "hoping that [her] students leave with a global perspective on problem-solving."

After learning of the policing approaches that Amsterdam and Stockholm have, the students will then compare all the policies and views between the three cities: Amsterdam, Stockholm, and Houston.

Since Houston is a major hub for human trafficking, it was interesting to learn that a group of criminal justice students was going to travel outside of the country to learn about different tactics being used to help solve human trafficking.

Dr. Pfeffer wishes that the students consider the fact that different cultures have different views on problems such as this one, so those cultures have different policies to combat those problems. Above all, she wishes that the students enjoy themselves while learning about an important issue.

By understanding how these different policies work, students can hopefully find a way to better manage the problem. Studying various views, not only from Amsterdam and Stockholm but also from around the world, students will start shaping the global perspective that Dr. Pfeffer wants her students to obtain.

Dr. Pfeffer is excited that she "gets to share her love and passion for this topic." Her greatest hope is that the trip will motivate students to sign up for the semester-long class that she teaches on human trafficking.

Students will partake in two class sessions during the May mini-semester before they leave, and each session will be 3 hours in length. After they return, students will then have to cover everything they learned in online assignments.

Apart from all the learning, students will be allowed to see the beauty that is Amsterdam and Stockholm. Walking tours, museums, and palaces are all listed to be stops on the trip. A free day will also allow students to experience these magnificent cities as they were intended to be, with freedom.

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Source: Peace Palace Facebook Page,  
link from Peace Palace Website: [www.vredespaleis.nl/?lang=en](http://www.vredespaleis.nl/?lang=en)



## One Main Event, One Main Purpose

By Kara Moore

Student Activities throws a big to-do every year called “One Main Event,” where all UHD student organizations are invited to get together and celebrate the achievements of the past year. This year’s One Main Event happened on Friday, April 15, at Hotel ZaZa. The hotel is right off of the MetroRail; this made it rather easy for UHD students to get there. Everyone showed up with glitz and glam, in long dresses and suit jackets. It was not your average college event, where you might show up in sweats after studying all night. It was a night to be fancy, and Student Activities definitely invested in making it ritzy.

The lights were low and every table had candles, really setting the mood for the evening. The event started at 6:30 pm, but the doors to the sitting area were not opened until 7 pm. When they opened, it was a beautiful room with a dance floor in the middle and plenty of decorated tables. The theme of the night was “Phantom of the Opera,” so they played music from the motion picture while everyone was taking their seats.

The hosts for the night were Daral Moore-Washington and Chase Otts, who had so many awards to announce that they began as everyone had just begun the first course of dinner. They announced awards within clubs first and then, after a short intermission (where delicious chicken, asparagus, and mashed potatoes were served), they began announcing awards that were picked by the UHD students who voted online.

There were numerous awards given out, but one award that stuck out to me was “Greek Man of the Year,” which was given to a member of the Greek community at UHD who passed away recently, Eric Alvarado. His fraternity brothers gave a speech in his place, talking about his dedication not only to his fraternity but his community. They joked about how he said he was going to win the award, and even though he’s gone, he still did it just like he said he would. It was a heart-wrenching moment for everyone; it brought everyone to their feet clapping in Eric’s honor.

As dessert was being served (a bit of cheesecake and some type of layered chocolate cake), they finally got to the big announcements of the night: SGA election results. In a tense build up, the SGA election official got up there and first read off the newly elected senators. Armita Tajadod became new Chief Justice, Faryal Gul is now the new Senator for University College, Esperanza Martinez is the Senator for the College of Public Service, and Baltazar Pacheco and Kayley Bolden are the newest Senators-At-Large. Finally, the big moment was there. The drum roll reverberated around the room as she announced that Mustapha Nyallay and Hatziri Rancano were the new President-elect and Vice President-elect of SGA. One might call it “The Roar Heard Around Zaza,” because the sound that came from Mustapha upon hearing he won was definitely loud and elated; Hatziri screamed with joy also; they were both unable to contain themselves. They worked hard for it; their flyers were visible all over campus and Mustapha would go around to classes to campaign, talking for several minutes at a time to convince UHD students he was the man for the job.

During their victory speeches, the two thanked everyone for voting, and Mustapha stated, “Everyone who ran really deserved this, but only one person can win,” which elicited a light chuckle from the crowd. Hatziri was beyond elation, it was like she had won the Super Bowl. These were clearly two people very excited to do the job that has been entrusted to them.

After the big announcement, the rest of the night was dedicated to dancing, drinking, and prizes. The raffled items included an exercise smartwatch, Beats brand headphones, and an Apple smartwatch. Overall, it was quite the “Main Event” of the 2015-2016 school year.



images courtesy of Kara Moore

ONE MAIN EVENT  
at  
Hotel ZaZa



In Case You Missed it

## “For Colored Girls”

Lacresha Rosenthal

I went into the Lunchtime Theatre showing of *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow is Enuf* with prior knowledge of its author as well as the individual monologues. Originally written as twenty-three individual poems to be presented by seven actors, *For Colored Girls* (1976), was playwright and poet Ntozake Shange’s first and most well-known piece of work. In fact, it was the breakout hit of the 1976–77 Broadway season. Understandably, Shange is considered a pioneer, for both the subject matter she chose to address as well as the collage-like technique used in her presentation. While early critics felt her generally negative depiction of black males indicated disconnect from “colored boys,” it was eventually understood that *For Colored Girls* was rather an attempt to find solutions to the harsh reality that was the lives of “colored girls.”

Praised for its preservation of black dialect and a message that surpasses stereotypes, *For Colored Girls* ignores standard grammar in an attempt to bring to life the rhythm of classic African American storytelling. For someone not as familiar, upon hearing the title of Shange’s classic choreopoem, one might be inclined to assume it to be a work solely dedicated to the experiences of African American women (or girls). Once the production began, I was pleased at the diversity among the ensemble, as I interpret *For Colored Girls* to be a cast of characters including Asians, blacks, Latinas, Native Americans, and all those in between — unified in feminism. The University of Houston—Downtown cast performed brilliantly as they each brought to life Shange’s candid representation of “Colored Girl” experiences through an artistic combination of poetry, song, dance, music, prose and mime.

A common question associated with this work: “Why do colored girls consider suicide?” As the presentation indicates, colored girls might consider suicide for myriad reasons. Thankfully, *For Colored Girls* also offers commentary on how suicide might be avoided, and with thorough examination of this commentary, the audience can better understand concerns among minority women. There are recurring and overlapping themes throughout the play that shed light on the why. However, while effectively forcing contemplation of suicide into the margin, *For Colored Girls Who Have Considered Suicide/When the Rainbow is Enuf* is a gallant call for an anti-suicide movement. A movement offering methods of survival to assist this group of women in facing the lifelong challenges they are sure to endure. While intertwining depictions of sorrow and vulnerability with equal accounts of jubilation and triumph, the group members are able to encourage themselves and one another to reconstruct their identities, assert their individual voices and express their emotions freely through song and dance. Now bound together by their unfortunate circumstances, the girls are better prepared to do away with any thoughts of suicide and reclaim their sense of self along with their sanity.

With April being National Minority Health Month, attending this production undoubtedly brought to mind the concerns of mental health as it relates to minority communities. As taboo a subject as mental health may be, there is no denying that it is something we will likely all experience, be it personally or otherwise. Hopefully, presentations such as *For Colored Girls* will influence more dialogue and raise awareness around common issues faced by members of our community. This was my second time attending a production in O’Kane Theatre, and while each experience has been unique, both have been equally satisfying. As a lover of all things art, I am sure today will not have been my final time in attendance.



# Changing of the Guard: A New Administration for SGA

By Joshua Burgman

As this semester comes to a close, so does the reign of the current President of SGA, John Locke and his administration. To replace him, the student body has chosen for its next president, a student that is fairly new to university politics, Mustapha Nyallay and his running mate Hatziri Rancano.

The election of Nyallay and Rancano came as a bit of a shock to many who were in attendance when the results were read, even it seemed, to Nyallay himself. Needless to say his reaction was priceless. After hearing the news and being invited to the stage, Nyallay expressed gratitude for the win, and appreciation to his opponents. "Everyone who ran should be able to win," he said "but there can only be one."

Nyallay's ascension to the highest echelons of student power within the university did not come easy. The campaign was rigorous. His competitors included Aaron Burgess, an SGA veteran and current chief-of-staff to President Locke, and Patricia Sepulveda, also a current member of SGA. "It was tough," Nyallay stated, "we had to overcome a lot."

The campaign of Nyallay and Rancano was ran on something he liked to call "old school politics." While both of their opponents had a strong social media presence and money, Nyallay and Rancano hardly had either. "We barely had 40 likes on our Facebook page," they reported — a dismal number, considering the 14,000 students whose support they sought out so desperately. Despite their lack of resources, Nyallay and Rancano hit the ground running. Throughout the campaign, they could often be seen throughout the halls talking with students, or in classes whose professors were generous enough to allow them to speak. Clearly, their plan was effective; they won by a landslide, but now that they will be occupying the office, what's next?

"We have to change our strategy," Vice President-elect Rancano said, "and that all starts with marketing." A single mother of two, and the outgoing SGA Senator of the College of Business, Rancano seems to possess just the right skills to help Nyallay accomplish great things. One of the many issues they plan to tackle first is SGA's presence on-campus. "Do you know that as I was talking to students, about 80 percent didn't even know who or what SGA is, and that's sad," Nyallay stated. Although the accuracy of his numbers can be called into question, it would be safe to assume that the President-elect is right on the money.

As a commuter school, UHD students often come to campus, go to class and then back home, which makes student participation a little hard to come by. That's something both Nyallay and Rancano intend to change. For instance, currently SGA General Assembly meetings are held on Fridays, the day that the least amount of students are on-campus. This is something Nyallay says must be changed. "We want to be inclusive," he said "and we can't do that if we aren't accessible to students. Right now," he went on "I believe SGA and the students have different ideas and are going in different directions, but we hope to change that."

There is a long road ahead for the next president and vice president, but it's clear that they seem to be trying to start on a good note. Either way, they have no choice but to be ready. The students have spoken, and they chose, very loudly, Nyallay and Rancano to be their voice — a huge responsibility. Hopefully, they are up to the challenge, but only time will tell.

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## Service on the Bayou

By Philip Feldwisch

On Friday, April 15, students gathered for a day of fun and learning about wetland ecosystems. The day started off for my group with a presentation on recycling. I learned that earthworms and many types of beetles are responsible for breaking down tree and yard waste. Many types of fungi, including mushrooms, also help to break down tree and yard waste. This all turns into very rich compost, which is excellent for growing plants.

Many people do not realize that some types of fungi are edible. If you encounter a fungi and do not know if it is edible, the best thing to do is to leave it alone. Leave the decisions to trained experts and biologists.

The next stop was the sustainable garden. With the world's population growing, one of the main problems is growing enough food to feed everyone. One solution is home gardening. Growing your own fruits and vegetables saves both greenhouse gases and valuable land. While some members of my group spread compost in new garden beds, I helped shovel the compost into the wheelbarrows and dumped it into the new garden beds.

Another thing I learned is that the sprinkler system is solar-powered. This means that a solar panel converts sunlight into electricity which, in turn, runs the sprinklers.

The best part of the day was a tour of White Oak and Buffalo Bayous. I learned that many of the plant species are not native to Southeast Texas. This includes Chinese Tallow, as well as many of the cattails, reeds and rushes found in the bayous. I was appalled at how much trash accumulates over the course of one week. The main reason for this is that many Houston creeks and bayous drain into Buffalo and White Oak, which then flow into the Gulf of Mexico.

Many people do not realize that all of their litter and pet waste eventually ends up in Houston's waterways. If this is not collected before reaching the Gulf, the trash poses a threat to wildlife. Every five days, people from Buffalo Bayou Service Project come out to clean up the trash. They do this on boats with nets dragging behind. The nets capture the trash and make it easier for workers to put it into bags.

One of the neat things the groups got to see is the original Houston Ship Channel. When the Allen brothers first settled in Houston, the Ship Channel was the biggest driver to the city's economy. As the container ships became bigger, the original Ship Channel was closed and was moved to the east side of town where it remains today. Another thing that was interesting is that an old, historic building was being restored. Once complete, the Buffalo Bayou Service Project will move-in and the rooftop will house a garden.

The next thing my group did was a recycling poster. Using only the materials provided, the group had to promote the benefits of recycling products. UHD professors who specialize in the areas discussed were available to answer questions and give lectures on the topics presented. The day was full of valuable information that can be taken into consideration when you think something is not recyclable or won't end up in Houston's waterways.

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## UHD & The Houston Annual Dragon Boat Festival!

By Karen Reyes

With finals just a few days away, students will spend hours studying to ace their exams, but why not take a break from all school-related activities? Instead, enjoy a day out in the sun while attending the Houston Dragon Boat Festival, in which UHD has been invited to participate.

The Annual Houston Dragon Boat Festival celebrates Asian and Asian-American culture, while combining the tradition of the dragon boat competition with various performances, games, activities, and food. The event will also include educational workshops and concerts honoring Asian musical heritage. The purpose of such an event is to celebrate the tradition of this water sport and a healthy lifestyle, while enjoying the beautiful outdoors.

The festival's Dragon Boat-Racing event is the world's fastest water activity. The boats are designed in traditional Hong Kong style, and they carry 20 paddlers, one drummer, and one steer-person; measuring 40 feet in length, and 4 feet in width, they weigh 500 pounds on average!

The starting point of the festivities will be at North York Street across from the Tony Marron Park. The Dragon Boats will then proceed along the Buffalo Bayou, where people will have the opportunity to see all the new renovations happening along the way, while also enjoying the festive event. As the date arrives, UHD has been practicing since Spring Break to be well prepared for the competition. The university will be paddling their boats on Saturday, May 7, from 8:30 A.M to 4.P.M. Other teams will compete on Sunday, May 8, at the same times.

For additional details about the event, or if you are interested in volunteer opportunities, go to [texasdragonboat.com](http://texasdragonboat.com), and take a look at all the "Event-Day Roles" that they have listed on the page. Conveniently, registration is available there as well. Make sure to attend the event and cheer on our Gator team!

# 11

## Campus News

## Animal Rescue Club

Saturday, May 7, the University of Houston-Downtown (UHD) Animal Rescue Club and Houston Pets Alive will co-host the first Houston Animal Welfare Conference at the UHD Willow Street Pump Station, from 8 a.m. to 7 p.m.

Houston Astros pitcher Lance McCullers Jr., will serve as keynote speaker. Other nationally-known experts from California and Texas will lead discussions on the most successful means to improve animal rescue efforts, and promote a "no kill" philosophy in Houston.

Additionally, attendees will hear notable speakers discuss Houston's animal welfare movement, get advice on emergency animal first aid and participate in networking sessions.

Aaron Gillette, adviser of the UHD Animal Welfare Club said, "We hope that this conference can become a landmark event in the history of animal rescue in Houston."

For more information and to register for the conference, visit Houston Pets Alive, or contact Aaron Gillette at 713-222-5381. Registration is free for UHD students, faculty and staff

# 12 Campus & Local News

## HELP WANTED:

**SALES MANAGER AND ASSISTANT BUSINESS MANAGER FOR UHD'S DATELINE: DOWNTOWN STUDENT NEWSPAPER & WEBSITE 2016-17 ACADEMIC YEAR**

The Student Publications Advisory Committee at the University of Houston-Downtown is seeking applicants for the position of business and sales manager for Dateline: Downtown, the student-run bi-weekly newspaper. Flexible beginning date in late August 2016, and the selected candidate is expected to commit for the entire 2016-17 academic year. The primary focus of this job is advertising sales. Additional duties include bookkeeping and handling support functions not part of the editorial operation. The successful candidate will have a strong orientation toward personal selling and developing advertising revenue to permit the growth of the paper as well as effective budgeting and management skills. Duties include managing business and financial matters for the paper, in cooperation with the student editor and adviser, and expanding the sales of advertising space in the paper, including to businesses in the campus neighborhoods of NoDo and Washington St. Successful candidate will train on PeopleSoft accounting system for payroll and accounts. Qualifications include at least sophomore standing, at least one semester at UHD, successful completion of basic business courses, and the maintenance of at least a 2.5 GPA. Applications are sought immediately and will be accepted until the position is filled; interviews start in May 2016. To apply, download an application at <http://www.uhd.edu/dateline/> and forward with letter detailing qualifications and resume via email to Dateline adviser, Dr. Anthony Chiaviello, at [Chiavielloa@uhd.edu](mailto:Chiavielloa@uhd.edu).

## CounterCurrent Festival 2016 Second Year by Miguel Nuñez

The University of Houston Cynthia Woods Mitchell Center for the Arts presented its second annual "CounterCurrent" Festival this year. The festival, a celebration of "bold and experimental" art, took place between April 12 through April 16. The festival showcased artworks by Rimini Protokoll, a group of author/directors from Berlin, whose art piece consisted of having audiences put on headphones and have them walk all around Houston. The guide book for the festival described the art piece as, "You move about places normally unseen, places where humans encounter their limits, places where crowds gather, Houston's underground tunnel system, back alleyways, dark hallways, unseen areas of Houston, common areas seen through new lens. With recordings and soundscapes taking over your ears, the cityscape of Houston turns into your personal film."

The festival also had dances by "Ten Tiny Dances," a group of ten choreographers who dance on a small stage, 4 x 4 to be exact. The dances from the choreographers are meant to be intimate and filled with innovation and energy. There was also an art piece presented in partnership with the Menil Collection and the Aurora Picture Show, called "Fault Diagnosis" by Anthony Hawley, an artist and writer who produces large-scale multimedia projects, paintings and drawings. His art piece was a five-night multimedia event that followed the story of a stranded passenger and his car. In order for the audience to truly immerse themselves in the meaning of the artwork, they had to download an app and then listen to it as they watched the performance that stretched over five nights. The performance started with a 1985 Nissan Pulsar NX, and as the story unfolds, strange things begin to happen. The art piece is an exploration of how we react when the things we expect to work a certain way, do not work at all. It even featured a sonata by violinist Rebecca Fisher of the Chiara String Quartet.

The art events took place all around Houston. Some were outside, some were inside, some were at museums, and others were at the University of Houston. There were talks about art and its many components; how they relate to the human body, its themes, how people can be a part of it and the future of art. They were called "CurrentConversations" and they were hosted by Carrie Schneider, a local Houston artist.

The entire event closed-out with Jason Moran, a Houston jazz composer, hosting a musical event called "Meet Me at MacGregor." The event took place at the Shrine of the Black Madonna. It was an all-day event which featured music and musicians from varying genres, such as rap, jazz, and rhythm and blues.

There was also an after party at the official bar of the CounterCurrent Festival, Mongoose Versus Cobra. At the bar, both the audiences and the artists themselves could have conversations about what they witnessed earlier in the day, their thoughts, feelings, and everything in between. The bar even had a specialty cocktail list that was based on all the artworks presented by the artists of the festival.

The event itself was filled with mystery, awe, and strange ideas. They were all presented through different mediums. Some had dances, some had pictures, some had audios, and others involved deep conversations. All these artists who hailed from many parts of the world found a platform at the CounterCurrent Festival, in Houston. They found a place where their ideas had no limit, and a place where creativity was truly king. Did I mention that all the events that took place at the festival were free? Lucky for us, it seems likely that next year's festival will be just as interesting and amazing as this year's.

## Remote Houston By Elisa Gonzalez

I'm standing in a cemetery. The grass is overgrown in some parts and too short in others. Some of the gravestones lean at angles, as if the earth has shifted since they were placed. My first instinct is that this is an abandoned cemetery. A voice in the headphones I'm wearing tells me to choose the grave site I find most interesting and stand by it. I choose one with a tall standing display case. Inside the case, which is protected by a numeric bolt lock, I find a shrine to the Virgin Mary. Outside the case, standing on a flat headstone, there's an unopened bottle of Corona. In the inscription on the stone, the year of death is 2005. I look around and realize that a lot of the other grave sites are just as elaborately decorated. This cemetery isn't abandoned at all. The fresh color in a lot of the plastic flowers and the labels on the commemorative beers even suggests it's well-attended. In my headphones, the tour guide, a self-aware, formless narrator, meditates on the irony of the man-made landscape that we accept as nature and on the fragility of life. "We will all return to nature," it reminds me and the other guests who stand dispersed at other grave sites. To lighten the mood, our guide then cracks wise about wanting to have a body. We were five minutes into the Alley Theatre's "Remote Houston," a pedestrian-based live art theatrical experience, and the tone of the piece was set at philosophical dark comedy. The tour takes us down the street, acknowledges barking dogs in real time, contemplates the meaning of an abandoned building as we pass it, and then speeds up our walking pace with some groovy dance music. It keeps everyone on the tour aware of each other, asking questions of our position relative to the group, and then asking what that position says about each of us. In a walk past a busy park, a ride on the train, and a stroll through downtown, we are asked to interact with people around us, outsiders, and each other in ways that inspire confidence in the tour and in ourselves. I feel like I've observed everyone in the group laugh at some point. Everyone seems to have been cooperative, never shying away from the narrator's tasks, which included applauding for skateboarders in a skate park and observing a group of train riders on a platform as if they were actors in a play. At one point, I was in a downtown building underneath an intricately carved golden ceiling, waltzing with a woman whose name I don't even know. This is the charm of Remote Houston. It inspires you to be both deep-thinking and whimsical all at once. At the end of the two-hour tour, we are engulfed in a mystifying steam. We have ascended to a higher plane. We emerge with new eyes and fresh optimism. Stefan Kaegi, who is responsible for the concept, script and direction of Remote Houston, works with a similar collective in Berlin called Rimini Protokoll. He says they specialize in "trying to expand the notion of what theater can be, to bring it out in public space, to bring public space into the theater and create installations that are highly interactive." And this is exactly what it accomplishes. Remote Houston will run through May 13. Tickets are \$39 each. Visit [Alleytheatre.org](http://Alleytheatre.org) for more information.

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# University of Houston: 21st Century Plantation Owner

By Joshua Burgman

The University of Houston System is apparently in the business of locking people up! While freeing minds through education and the promotion of uninhibited free-thinking, the “top notch” school is simultaneously helping to pay for the detention of thousands of the nation’s citizens.

According to an article that appeared in the Houston Press in early April, “Two social work students, Julia Kramp and Nakia Winfield, learned that UH had several million dollars invested in four major financial corporations that, in turn, each had millions of shares in private prisons.” When the information about UH supporting such institutions was released, a petition was put together by Kramp and Winfield calling for UH to forgo association with companies that support “legalized slavery.” The petition has since gained over 300 signatures.

“Banking on Bondage” is the name of the petition created by Kramp and Winfield through the website Change.org. With the hopes of persuading students to sign and pressure the school to divest from funding for-profit prisons, UH’s reputation was called into play. “The University of Houston is recognized as a Carnegie Tier One university, and boasts an enrollment of 40,000 students,” the petition states. It goes on to say that “[UH] is the second most ethnically diverse major research university in the most diverse city in the US,” an important fact to mention, considering the ethnic makeup of the majority of our countries incarcerated individuals.

For some time now, it’s been no secret that the state of America’s criminal justice system is in disrepair. This is a fact that should be especially clear to an institution of higher learning, such as UH. According to the American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) “One in three black men can expect to be incarcerated in his lifetime. Compare that to one in six Latino males and one in 17 white males.” Numbers don’t lie, and at the present moment, every scientific model points to mass incarceration disproportionately affecting black and brown communities.

Notwithstanding the staggering number of minorities currently imprisoned, the privatization of prisons has also hugely impacted members of the community who suffer from mental illness. In 2012, according to the ACLU, “356,368 severely mentally ill people were imprisoned;” an unconscionable number. For the most part, many people who suffer from mental illness are jailed because of law enforcement who are ignorant in the ways of treating mentally disturbed people. They simply lack the training.

The history of prison privatization is a long one. In eighteenth century England, the Crown experimented with outsourcing state imprisonment to contractors called “keepers.” The results that were yielded from that fiasco are similar to what we see today—private jailers that are more concerned with profiting from human misery than encouraging rehabilitation. The practice became so inhumane, that by the end of the eighteenth century, it was outlawed in England. Even the US has experimented with such practices following the civil war. By 1900, all nations pretty much assumed responsibility for jailing its criminally negligent citizens, but in the early 1990’s all of that would change. Since then, the number of people incarcerated in private prisons in the United States has risen by 1600%. Between 1970 and 2005 alone, according to ACLU, “the US prison population rose by 700%.”

Evidence supporting the myriad reasons why UH should have absolutely nothing to do with for-profit prisons is abundant. It has not been made clear yet as to how the UH System intends to rectify this negligence or whether they mean to pay it no mind at all, and just continue to be in the business of legalized slavery as they have been. There has been no word from school administration on the matter, but with the help of Kramp and Winfield, that may change.

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## A Millennial is a Wealth of Contradictions by Jason J. Rivas

Allow me to introduce myself. I was born in 1987, thus, I am considered a Millennial (or a part of Gen M or Gen Me or whatever). Please don’t call me a Millennial though, I find it a gross misinterpretation of who I am (and I prefer to be classified as Gen Y, in all honesty).

I do not relate with the term, partly because of the negative connotations attributed to it. The same goes for millions of other like-minded Millennials who do not carry the characteristics attributed by older generations. Millennials typically are—according to an endless array of studies—indolent and egotistical, as well as despondent. They are addicted to technology, lack social skills, and deemed less-loyal to their jobs than previous generations.

To be a millennial is to be a wealth of contradictions. As previously stated, millennials are stereotyped as lazy, self-centered, and immersed in misery. The media and powers-that-be would have you accept it as so. However, Dr. Jean Twenge, of San Diego State University, recently analyzed data that revolved around this assumption and proposed reasons as to why these suppositions exist. A great number of Millennials have been raised under the notion they are “special,” and under the pretense of having the opportunity to be and do anything they want (let’s call it, “the era of the participation trophy”). Reality though, has treated Millennials differently: One-third live with their parents well into their twenties and unemployment is high among the generation (approximately 12%). Many are also upset by “real world politics” circumventing the “coddling” nature of their elders.

Hey, it’s important to believe one’s kid is special, but it’s just as important to be realistic with one’s child. Expenses to make-ends-meet have risen to historical levels, while Millennial earnings remain lower than the medians of older generations; college tuition debts average nearly \$30,000, higher than any generation beforehand, just to name a few. Public education and after-school programs have also caused issues by rewarding students for accomplishing sub-par efforts, in order to nurture their self-esteem. Additionally, there is the undeniable reality of being a Millennial minority or female in an older-white-male-dominated society and the “invisible, glass ceiling” they administer. Millennials facing these challenges today may find themselves ill-prepared to combat these issues because of the previous generation’s style of rearing, as well as the development of the post-industrial world.

Technology has impacted the Millennial generation more profoundly than any other previous generation. Cell phones and social media have led to an intricate tapestry of intercultural communications. Technology has led to the perception of Millennials as an unproductive, unreliable workforce unable to handle arduous challenges. Again, these assumptions are professed by older generations.

However, panelists at the Arthur W. Page Society’s Spring Seminar in New York argued that Millennials are not lazy, but stressed out from the evolving workforce. As cell phones, wifi, hotspots, and laptops have developed, so too have the demands of employers. Instant accessibility has led to the development of the 24/7 work schedule. No longer do companies run on a “9 to 5” schedule, as emails and smart phones now allow employers to expect more from their workers. And as expectations for “after-hours” work grows, pensions and work benefits are slashed, increasing bottom-lines and influencing many Millennials to seek employment elsewhere. This has led to the notion of Millennials lacking loyalty to their jobs. However, it is the employers (ironically represented by older generations) whose business practices have allowed for retention rates to plummet. Millennials are more than capable of being reliable contributors to society, so long as society reciprocates.

Another contributing factor is the Millennials’ concept towards life. The United States is typically seen as a “live to work” society, while European counterparts follow the lifestyle of “work to live.” This change in attitude has led to theological clashes with older generations, who deem Millennials as lazy for expecting more leisure time. This, though, is a misconception, as Millennials are capable workers who expect more from their employers than previous generations. There is a general appreciation for leisure time, as the demanding workforce and technology has caused stress levels to rise among Millennials. This may also, indirectly, contribute to the notion that Millennials are unable to focus, long-term or short-term, on endeavors.

Millennials are no different than Generation X, who were seen as lazy by their peers, and the Baby Boomers of yonder, who passed negative assumptions onto their Gen X offspring after once receiving similar judgement from the previous generation. In all fairness, Millennials are a strong, reliable generation, as much as—if not more than—previous generations. They are more adaptable to evolving technologies, more inclined to work as a collective than individually, and are driven to prove themselves as capable contributors to society. I should know, in my two years with Dateline-Downtown, I have seen a deluge of Millennial talent flow from this university. Together, we roamed China and New York, advocated in Austin, around Texas, the US, and within the walls of UH for cross-generational causes. We attended insightful seminars, lobbied strenuously in student government, represented ourselves at student conferences, performed on various stages and venues, and achieved various academic accolades, including college degrees. And as my final days at this illustrious university come near, I see a generation willing and able to carry the torch of success our fore-generations ignited and nurtured. Call them whatever you wish, but you will respect them as they build on the successes of the past, towards greater heights.

# 13 Campus & Local News

## HELP WANTED:

**PRINT & WEB  
MANAGING  
EDITOR FOR UH’S  
DATELINE:DOWNTOWN  
STUDENT NEWSPAPER  
FOR 2016-17  
ACADEMIC YEAR**

The Student Publications Advisory Committee at the University of Houston-

Downtown is seeking applicants for the position of managing editor for Dateline: Downtown, the student-run, bi-weekly newspaper, under the direction of the editorial director. This position begins after the spring 2016, semester, to prepare an edition at the beginning of the Fall 2016 semester.

Eligible candidates are expected to commit to the job for the entire 2016-17 academic year.

Duties include working cooperatively with other student staffers and faculty adviser, developing and managing a stable of

day and evening student writers to cover news and events on campus and in the campus neighborhood. Successful candidate will be well-versed in the use of Adobe InDesign page-making software and

have the skills to post the newspaper and articles online and to maintain the Dateline:Downtown web site. The paper needs

stories written both in advance of -- and as follow-up to -- events of interest to students, including student activities and organizations, academics,

athletics and lifestyle, university administration, and student government, as well as cultural coverage

of activities in the theatre, film, music, sports and arts communities, particularly as they are of interest to UH

students. Qualifications include at least sophomore standing, at least one semester in residence at UH, successful

completion of basic writing and communications courses, and a current 3.0 cumulative GPA.

Applications are sought immediately and will be accepted until the position is filled; interviews start in May 2016. To apply, download an application at <http://www.uhd.edu/datetime/> and forward with writing samples via email to Dateline adviser, Dr. Anthony Chiaviello, at [Chiaviello@uhd.edu](mailto:Chiaviello@uhd.edu).



# 14 Campus & Local News

## Downtown "Addy"

By Terrance Turner

As finals season approaches, students' lives — already besieged by commitments at work, school, and home — become even more stressful than usual. Many are trying to cope by turning to drugs, but not just cocktails and chronic. A study done by the Center on Young Adult Health and Development found that 31% of college students (including 41% of juniors) report using stimulants like Adderall or Ritalin in a "non-medical" way. "Non-medical use is defined as taking a prescription stimulant without a prescription or in a way other than prescribed such as in high doses, or via crushing and snorting it," Newsweek's Douglas Main wrote in February. A source for Main's article was Dr. Ramin Mojtabai, a physician and researcher at Johns Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore. According to Dr. Mojtabai, 70% of those who used the drug in such a way got it without a prescription from friends or family. That figure was confirmed by Dr. Kenneth Hale, a clinical professor of pharmacy at Ohio State University (He was a source for an April 20th article in the student newspaper The Daily Iowan).

Main uncovered some sobering statistics in a study that Dr. Mojtabai co-authored. In the study, published in The Journal of Clinical Psychiatry, "researchers found that non-medical use of Adderall rose 67% from 2005 to 2011 among people from ages 18 to 25, and emergency room visits related to the medication went up by 156 percent." The College Prescription Drug Study reported that 83% of students nationwide who misused prescription stimulants claimed that they used them to improve their academic performance. But that may not be a viable option. According to Dr. Hale, studies have shown that prescription stimulant abusers have, on average, a lower GPA than non-users. Worse yet, the FDA warned in 2006 that misuse of Adderall and Dexedrine "may cause sudden death and serious cardiovascular events."

But that doesn't stop people from selling it. Adderall can be a source of major profit (especially for student-workers who experience months-long delays in payment). The Iowan interviewed a University of Iowa student who once sold Adderall on the campus. "The student made about \$150 after selling all-of-one prescription at \$5 a pill," the paper reported. He noticed an increase in business at certain times during the semester, particularly during midterms and finals. Although psychotropic drugs are not prescribed at UHD, student counselor Dr. Darron Garner notices a similar pattern on campus with alcohol and street drug use as well as suicidal tendencies during these times. "In November, there's a spike. In April, there's a spike," he says. He urges students to manage their workloads more productively by prioritizing, writing things down, and avoiding procrastination. It is these habits, not drug use, that will ultimately ensure student success.



Horse Head Theatre Co.  
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Frances Ya-Chu Cowhig

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**LIDLESS** boldly asks,  
what happens after war  
is over?

What do we remember?

What do we forget?

What do we fabricate?

Set in 2019,

**LIDLESS** follows Alice,  
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Bay interrogator who  
remembers nothing,  
Bashir, her former de-  
tainee who remembers  
everything, and Rhian-  
non, Alice's  
boldly imaginative  
daughter who is deter-  
mined to understand.

Full Press Release  
available at  
[datelinedowntown.com](http://datelinedowntown.com)

## When Doves Cry: Prince, 1958-2016

Jason J. Rivas

"Dearly beloved, we are gathered here today to get through this thing called life. Electric word life, it means forever and that's a mighty long time. But I'm here 2 tell u there's something else, the afterworld. A world of never ending happiness... U can always see the sun, day or night." — "Let's Go Crazy"

On April 21st, Prince Rogers Nelson (better known simply as Prince) rode off on his "Little Red Corvette" for the after-world. He was a musician with a "Dirty Mind" of "Controversy" who provided "Emancipation" for millions of followers yearning for his "Crystal Ball" to reveal the issues plaguing "Planet Earth," through his insightful "Musicology." In remembrance of let us take a trip down memory lane, beyond the "Purple Rain," to celebrate the legend like it's 1999.

I could take the tried and true path taken by various media outlets reporting on Prince's passing: a brief announcement of his death and recognition of his career highlights, all while noting the undeniable shock caused by his sudden passing. However, Prince was anything but "tried and true," and surmising his passing in that manner would go against the essence flowing within the rock God. He was a reclusive, virtuoso genius whose mastery of strings seemed as perfect as the ripples of flowing water.

His sound was novel and ambitious: a cornucopia of funk, jazz, rock, rhythm, blues, soul, pop, and dance. He skillfully crafted his spirituality and sexuality into a concept of free-thinking and open-mindedness. His high-pitched melodies complimented his eclectic sound to form one of the most original and influential arts of his generation. He was always ahead of the curve because he was the curve. Musicians, particularly in the 1980's, flocked towards his style and sound, trying to mimic him, which was the ultimate form of flattery. He transcended the status of world-renowned musician by continuing to be who he was: a quirky, cult-artist.

But perhaps what should be most celebrated of the icon is his desire and advocacy for social change and his personal spirituality. Prince was discreet in his political beliefs, but when he spoke, it resonated. His conservative upbringing influenced some of his political ideology, but he also advocated for liberal movements, most recently the Black Lives Matter movement. He famously took a stand at the 2015 Grammys: "Like books and black lives, albums still matter," he said. His own musical style, a blend of funk, rhythm, and soul with rock, transcended invisible racial barriers to inspire generations of artists to develop their own, unique styles. Prince was unabashed about sexuality in his lyrics, which seemed to contrast his deep-seated religious views. He was a Jehovah's Witness who was seen going door-to-door preaching the sermon. In an interview, Prince stated, "We are sensual beings, the way God created us, when you take the shame and taboo away from it." He then described his religion's influence on his music as, "like a force, an electromagnetic one or like gravity, which puts things in motion."

A rainbow rose above Prince's manor in Paisley Park moments after his passing. Perhaps it is a sign from who/whom/whatever is above, of the return of a Prince to his rightful home. He was not a woman. He was not a man. He was something we will never understand. And his legacy will forever stand. All he asked for, in return, was our extra time and our... kiss.





# Women and Hamilton join Forces to Remove a Slaveholder from your Wallet

Jason Jonathan Rivas

Poetic justice is in the air: Andrew Jackson, famed US General, president and prominent slaveholder, will be removed from the \$20 bill and replaced with Harriet Tubman, a former slave and celebrated leader of the Underground Railroad. All it took was a charismatic, singing founding father and a prominent women's movement to stimulate a necessary change. Last year, Treasury Secretary Jacob Lew announced an initiative to recognize visionary women on the nation's paper currency. The plan, though, was met with mixed reactions because of which bill would be revised to pay tribute to heroines: the ten dollar bill. Alexander Hamilton currently graces the aforementioned federal bank note, and deservedly so. He was a founding father, the first Treasury Secretary of the United States, and was responsible for the creation of the U.S. financial banking system.

As well, Hamilton's life is now a celebrated Broadway smash and pop culture sensation titled, Hamilton. Written and composed by Lin-Manuel Miranda, the stage phenomenon has brought renewed appreciation for the \$10 founding father — with numerous patrons, scholars, and enthusiasts, including Miranda himself, calling for Hamilton to remain on the \$10 note, and a different bill to be chosen to honor heroic women figures. Leading the charge is an organization committed to honoring women with a more symbolic, genuine notation. "Women on 20s" is an organization dedicated to memorializing historical heroines on the twenty dollar bill. Acknowledgment for Secretary Lew's decision to incorporate women onto paper currency was applauded, but the initial choice of the ten dollar bill was not. Lew stated the intentions of Hamilton sharing the bill with a leading lady, which was quickly denounced by the nonprofit group. Women have held their own in a plethora of social, economic, political, and historical avenues, so too could they hold their own on a bank note, they argued. If any Federal Reserve note is deserving of the honor to showcase a woman, it should be the note synonymous with the year women received the right to vote, 1920.

Andrew Jackson, the nation's seventh president, currently resides on the twenty-dollar bill. Jackson is one of history's most colorful and polarizing characters. On the one hand, he ushered in the Age of Jackson, during which, he extended democratic rights to the common man; He founded the Democratic Party, which continues to champion social, economic, and political equality for various groups today, and was the only president to pay off all U.S. debts, leaving office with no deficit.

On the other hand, though, Jackson: only extended democratic opportunities to white males; was a slaveholder, owning up to 300 slaves through marriage; was a blatant racist who believed whites were superior to blacks and Native Americans; and orchestrated the forced removal of Cherokees from their native lands, leading to the Trail of Tears and approximately 4,000 deaths. But perhaps most noteworthy, in reference to the central thesis: Jackson killed the First Bank of the United States, the very system created by Alexander Hamilton to save the nation's economy. The irony of the bank-killer resting on a banknote was inescapable for Women on 20s and their push for a changing of the guard.

The Treasury Department may have acknowledged this when they changed-course with their radical new proposal. Hamilton would be left on the ten-dollar bill, albeit with a modification to the reverse side, to be determined later. The five-dollar bill would feature civil rights activists' and former first lady Eleanor Roosevelt, opera singer Marian Anderson, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., with President Abraham Lincoln remaining on the front. Finally, Jackson will be removed from the twenty-dollar bill and replaced with Harriet Tubman, one of history's bravest figures. Her mark in history was being a "conductor" on the Underground Railroad, in which she escorted 300 slaves from bondage over a ten year period. She showed resilience and courage in providing freedom for her fellow beings, a true mark of a heroine. In doing so, Tubman has been a model for various other leading figures, women and men, in their efforts to achieve equality for all.

2020 will mark the 100th anniversary of the 19th Amendment, which granted suffrage to women. It seems only fitting this was the year set for a woman to grace the front of the twenty-dollar bill. The revolution for gender equality will continue on, so long as there are open-minded and persistent individuals and entities who follow the trails blazed forth by past figures.



## Fins for All

By Chelsea Chance

With summer break fast approaching, students are already planning for their long awaited vacations. Dreams of sand and the sea, water parks, trips to the lake and even a dip in the pool are on everyone's mind, but don't be surprised if you see a mermaid swim past. In recent years, people have been trading their legs for tails in pursuit of jobs as professional mermaids, which is not as ridiculous as it sounds.

Professional mermaids have been known to book gigs as models, party entertainment, and even swimmers in some aquariums and theme parks. But before you pursue a life under the sea, you need to know exactly what it takes to be a mermaid. Strong swimming skills are essential, but don't forget the iconic tail. Unfortunately for those of us born without scales, tails come at a hefty price and if you are planning to trade the land for the sea, be ready to shell out some major clams. Purchasing a mermaid tail can cost anywhere from \$10 for a lightweight fabric tail to upwards of \$3,500 for heavier silicone ones. Many of the mermaids make their own tails and often begin selling them to others.

While inexpensive tails are available, the most convincing mermaids have custom made 100% Dragon Skin Silicone tails. Such realistic tails can cost \$1700 at minimum, and typically weigh between 20-25 pounds on land. The silicone is naturally buoyant, making the tail almost weightless in the water.

However, it is stressed by many mermaids, only experienced swimmers should try out a tail. Swimming with a tail requires a modified dolphin kick, the tail itself will restrict legs, and the monofins that fit inside the tail will bind the swimmer's feet together. Looking to buy a tail, or even hire a mermaid? No need to search the seas, Texas has its very own mermaid company, located in Austin, Texas. Sirenalina not only makes silicone mermaid tails, but their services also include performing for films, resorts, private parties, aquariums, and they even made a tail that was featured on the CW television show "Supernatural."

And if you don't spot any mermaids over the summer, you'll get another chance in the fall. Mermaids are expected to make a big splash this year in the San Marcos River, during Mermaid Week on Sept. 16-17, hosted by The Mermaid Society of San Marcos.





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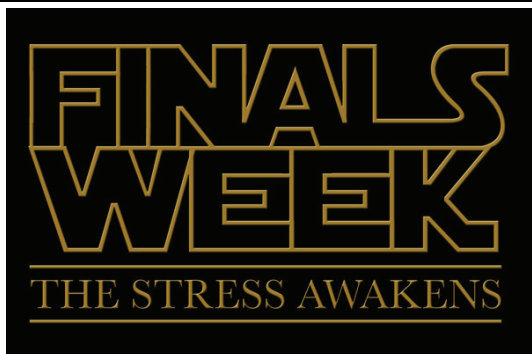
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Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Santo De Mayo 5k Run 8:30-11am	2 <b>Make-Up Days From Flooding</b>	3	4 Student Awards Ceremony, 5pm	5 <b>FINALS START</b>	6 European Union Crisis C100 10-11am	7 Animal Welfare Conference Willow Pump Station, 8am-7pm
8 Mothers Day!	9	10	11 <b>FINALS END</b>	12	13	14 Official End of Semester!
15 Commencement Minute Maid 10:15am	16	17 Final Grades Become Available	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28 Guest Speaker SSG Ty Carter 11-1pm GSB 307, Travis Room
29	30 Memorial Day	31				