

# Writing initiative on backburner

More discussion is needed for Writing Across the Curriculum, originally set to begin this fall

LARISSA HO  
NEWS EDITOR

Plans to implement a suite of campus-wide writing approaches at UTM this fall, called “Writing Across the Curriculum”, have been put on hold.

Tyler Evans-Tokaryk, a writing specialist at the Robert Gillespie Academic Skills Centre, and Amy Mullin, UTM’s VP academic and dean, reported last year that WAC was expected to be deployed in the fall of 2013, but a series of consultations with the departments found that at least some of the faculty did not support the program and established that more discussion was needed.

“We’re still engaged in a campus-wide discussion,” said Evans-Tokaryk. “There are still a lot of questions that need to be addressed. All departments are now equally involved.”

WAC, which is based on the “Writing Instruction for TAs” program implemented at St. George’s Faculty of Arts and Science, involves training a lead writing TA who will train disciplinary TAs in all academic depart-



JASMEEN VIRK/THE MEDIUM

The Robert Gillespie Academic Skills Centre trained 20 TAs and lecturers over the summer.

ments to incorporate writing instruction into certain courses chosen at the departments’ discretion.

This instruction would deal with the same course content but would replace some of the time currently

occupied by other learning methods, such as discussion, during tutorials.

Evans-Tokaryk, who was commissioned by the Office of the Dean to design an initiative for writing instruction, describes the program’s

foundations as “learn to write” and “write to learn”. The former presumes that writing varies according to the expectations of specific disciplines and focuses on equipping students to write for their field of study; the latter

presumes that learning in any discipline is improved by the incorporation of writing exercises.

According to Evans-Tokaryk, such an approach, which integrates writing instruction throughout many courses, is superior to the dedicated first-year composition course advocated by some UTM faculty.

The other strategies in the writing reform initiative included enhancing the first-year transitional program utmONE, offering more workshops and appointments at the RGASC, hiring dedicated faculty to provide ESL instruction, and developing an early warning system to identify students whose writing skills put them at risk.

All of these strategies except WAC have been implemented. However, some of its principles are “being tested”, said Evans-Tokaryk in an interview, and revealed that the RGASC provided 14 hours of training on writing pedagogy and resources this summer to 20 lecturers and TAs from various departments.

WAC continued on page 2

# Students speak with grad school reps

The Career Centre’s Professional and Graduate Schools Fair attracts 1,003

LILY BOWMAN

Last Wednesday’s Professional and Graduate Schools Fair attracted exactly 1,003 students to the RAWC, a slight increase over last year’s 960. Between 10 a.m. and 2 p.m., the students cautiously weaved through the 99 exhibition booths to find their preferred recruiters.

Michelle Atkinson, the Career Centre’s events coordinator, who acts as the event’s spokesperson each year, said she considered the fair a success and added that the exhibitors “know great students when they see them, and I feel that there were some great conversations and impressive potential student candidates representing UTM today.”

Exhibitors from Scotland, New Zealand, and Toronto made the



AATHIRA KOTTAPURATH/THE MEDIUM

Students navigate between the approximately 100 booths at the fair.

stop at UTM in a busy circuit of fairs with high expectations. The University of British Columbia representative, stopping at the Uni-

versity of Toronto in a tour that also involves Russia, Tunisia, and Ghana, described our university as “a great bed of talent” when asked

what he anticipated from the UTM crowd.

Grad continued on page 3



## “Changes” to flat fees

Ontario’s Minister of TCU promises changes after meeting with student representatives.  
Medium News, page 3

## Teaching writing is hard

There’s no easy fix, not even one with a lot of discussion behind it, that will bring about the ideal.  
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## Pluto or Spain?

UTM ENG389Y students launch a creative writing anthology.  
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## When in Rome

How do you adjust to Canadian life after coming from halfway across the world?  
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## Eagles prey on Ravens

U of T improves a 1–4 season record with a decisive win over Carleton.  
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## New writing methods being tested

WAC continued from *Cover*

Before WAC could be implemented, the Office of the Dean sought feedback from faculty, including through the Dean's Open Writing Forum on October 22, 2012, at which faculty complained about what was perceived as the consultation coming after the fact of the program's approval.

Shortly after the forum, Dean Amy Mullin struck a committee to oversee the pros and cons of various writing initiatives because of the complaints about the consultation process. The writing committee is co-chaired by Andrew Petersen, the director of the RGASC, and Kelly Hannah-Moffat, the vice-dean undergraduate at UTM.

The committee asked academic departments to send faculty representatives to a three-part series of consultations to solicit input.

Shyon Baumann, the chair of the sociology department, who was one of these representatives, expressed his preference "not to do [writing instruction] this way".

"My critique is that TAs and instructors would be forced to do double duty, whereas they would in the past have spent all their time teaching course material," said Baumann in an interview. "I also think it's not efficient to have each department spend a lot of time and money training TAs to become writing instructors when the TAs potentially change every year."

He also disagrees that writing

must be taught differently according to discipline instead of through a mandatory campus-wide first-year writing course. "We know better than [the students] do what skills they need in order to learn," he said. "If we know they need it, we should provide it. I don't know why it can be done at other universities but not ours. There are programs out there that are not discipline-specific."

"It's not efficient to have each department spend a lot of time and money training TAs to be writing instructors when the TAs potentially change every year."  
—Shyon Baumann, sociology department

Alan Walks, an associate professor in the Department of Geography who was also invited to the committee, voiced a similar opinion in an interview last week. "I don't see the first-year course as a panacea, and realize that continuous engagement and learning will be required to develop writing skills over the entire degree," said Walks.

Without such a foundation, he added, "Other initiatives will not have sufficient scope and cover enough students to have a significant

impact on overall writing quality and skills." He also expressed agreement with the principle that basic writing skills are necessary to any kind of learning.

Evans-Tokaryk said that among the testing and ongoing discussion, he "wouldn't even call it a program right now".

Last year, the RGASC made funding available for specific courses to pay for more TA hours in order to support a trial of intensive writing integration. The sociology department applied, and two courses were approved: "Theories in Criminology" and "The Logic of Social Inquiry". The latter is a mandatory course in the major and specialist sociology programs.

Walks said that the geography department applied for multiple courses but only one was approved.

"Unfortunately, this course only covered a portion of our students [and] was not mandatory, and the instructor told me that some of the students purposefully dropped it as soon as they found out it was a writing-intensive course," said Walks.

WAC "is one way to explore writing", Petersen said in an interview last week. "Writing initiatives are based on what faculty say they need and want. We're trying to figure out what UTM needs. The writing initiative will never be 'done'. As we see needs met and others not met, initiatives will evolve. We see incremental changes. The underlying goal is to make the learning experience better."

## CAMPUS POLICE WEEKLY REPORT

September 19, 11:50 p.m.

### Trespass to Property Act

Campus Police investigated a call in regards to an unruly patron at the Blind Duck Pub. The person was identified and trespassed from the Blind Duck Pub.

September 20, 2:20 a.m.

### Assault

A male student reported being assaulted by an unknown male outside the Blind Duck Pub, patio area. The suspect(s) had fled the area prior to the arrival of Campus Police.

September 20, 11:56 a.m.

### Theft under \$5,000

A student reported the theft of her personal property that had been left unattended while she was exercising inside the Recreational Athletics and Wellness Centre.

September 20, 12:45 p.m.

### Fraud

A female student was investigated for attempting to sell her U-pass to another student. She posted an ad online which was later removed. The student was cautioned.

September 23, 12:10 a.m.

### Domestic Incident

Campus Police responded to a call in

regards to a student that had an argument with her boyfriend. Peel Regional Police also attended. A male involved in the incident was banned from all residence areas.

September 23, 10:20 a.m.

### Fraud

A female student was investigated for attempting to sell her U-pass to another student. She posted an ad online which was later removed. The student was cautioned on her actions.

September 23, 7:30 p.m.

### Theft under \$5,000

A student reported the theft of his personal property from a classroom located in the CCT Building.

September 24, 3:10 p.m.

### Domestic Incident

Campus Police observed a male and female arguing in a parking lot. Peel Regional Police also attended. Police cautioned the couple.

September 24, 3:20 p.m.

### Medical Call

A male student was transported to hospital by ambulance after being injured while playing cricket inside the Recreational Athletics and Wellness Centre.

Watch the Medium's weekly video online at [mediumutm.ca](http://mediumutm.ca).

This week:  
watch people fly on brooms!  
(yes, UTM has a quidditch team)



# Flat fees policy to be changed

Minister of Training, Colleges and Universities makes promises

MARIA IQBAL  
AND LARISSA HO  
NEWS EDITOR

Brad Duguid, Ontario's Minister of Training, Colleges, and Universities, has recently said that he will implement changes to the current policy of flat fees at the Faculty of Arts and Science at the St. George campus. Duguid, who assumed the post in February 2013, was vague on specifics but said that the changes would occur later this academic year.

In 2009, U of T approved a plan for students taking anywhere from three to six courses to pay a single fee, with implementation starting in 2011. Under this policy, a student taking 3.0 credits pays the same fee as a student taking 6.0 credits in the same program. This allows departments to plan their budget better because they can rely on a certain amount of income on a regular basis, much like a charity benefits from pledge-based donations.

Alastair Woods, the chairperson of the Canadian Federation of Students- Ontario, a representational group to which we pay dues through our student unions, said that CFS-O has been working to bring attention to the "inherent unfairness of flat fees".

"In meetings, Federation representatives spoke strongly about how flat fees exacerbate the problems created by high tuition fees in Ontario and unfairly penalize students who cannot take a full course load for various academic and personal reasons," said Woods in an interview.

The main argument against flat fees presented by the CFS-O is that the fees force students just barely over the threshold to pay fixed fees. Agnes So, the VP university affairs of the U of T Students' Union, said that these tend to be the more vulnerable students, who could be taking fewer courses because of "stressful personal circumstances".

"While we've always argued against the structure from a fairness perspective, when we met with

Minister Duguid at the CFS-O General Meeting and in our letters to him since, we presented a case that also discussed the potential mental health effects of a flat tuition fee structure," said So in an interview. So says she proposes that the university switch back to a per-course fee system collected on a per-semester basis. "Students would pay according to the courses they take, and OSAP students would not be charged interest while they wait for their second instalment of fees," said So.

So also revealed that the UTSU will be launching a press campaign in which students can tell Duguid how a change to the policy will benefit them.

UTSU VP university affairs Agnes So said she believes the responsibility to make up for the financial loss incurred by the policy change belongs to the provincial government.

As for next steps, she said, "We will also be addressing some issues that students in faculties who have been paying flat fees for some time experience. Right now, if you are an engineer and take an arts and science elective, you will pay the engineering flat fee for that arts and science course, even though the arts and science flat fee amounts to less. Essentially, there are students sitting in the same classrooms who are paying different rates for the same instruction."

At UTM, the following programs charge flat fees to full-time students: bioinformatics, commerce and finance, CCIT, computer science, and management. The threshold for full-time status is 3.0 credits during the fall/winter year or 1.5 during the summer.

Raymond Noronha, president of the UTM Students' Union, said that

UTMSU and many other student unions in Ontario are "cautiously optimistic".

"We hope Minister Duguid's promise for change leads to the actual elimination of the unfair flat fees system that has made post-secondary education more unaffordable and inaccessible," he said in an interview. "The flat fees system has also forced students to take more courses while they balance a full course load, their part-time jobs and other obligations."

Noronha revealed that UTMSU is currently preparing for a month of outreach activities to educate students on the flat fees system through class speaks and tabling. They also plan to write to the minister by forwarding correspondence from UTM students throughout the month of October. "Our actions will also be directed to the president of the University of Toronto, Professor David Naylor, who has been lobbying the minister and other cabinet ministers to reject the call by students and faculty to eliminate the flat fees system," said Noronha. "Our goal is to remind the minister of how unpopular the flat system regime is and also that President Naylor's assumption that students are comfortable with the system is not accurate."

The nature of the changes Duguid mentioned and the timeline for their implementation remains unclear. In the meantime, student unions are looking to hold follow-up discussions with the ministry.

"We see negative effects to the quality of education when students are pressured to take a higher course load than they can manage or afford," said So. "We are negatively affected by the province underfunding post-secondary education. A solution that ensures equity in access and quality is more funding from the government, which has slowly been eroded since the mid-1990s."

So said she believes the responsibility to make up for the financial loss incurred by the policy change belongs to the provincial government.

## »WHAT ARE YOU HOPING TO GET OUT OF THE GRAD FAIR?



Jalysza Kestner  
4th year, sociology

I'm looking out for schools that have a joint criminology and JD program.



Jenna Beierling  
4th year, psychology

Info about education. Hopefully I will be a teacher.



Steven King  
5th year, political science

Just guidance on the law admissions process.



Thu Le  
4th year, chemistry

Pharmacy—or something related to healthcare.

## Students search for grad guidance

*Grad continued from Cover*

The exhibitors were not disappointed, said Atkinson.

"The representatives I spoke with during and after the fair were all very impressed with not only the number of students that came out, but also the level of conversation that they had with students," said Atkinson.

The importance of this event, as judged by answers from advisors,

exhibitors, and students alike, was to get an opportunity to speak face to face with representatives and receive answers that a computer screen simply can't provide.

Other students, like Amanpreet Randhawa, a fifth-year psychology major, came to the fair "still trying to figure out what to do with life".

After the fair, a panel of law school representatives gave a talk and answered questions from students at the law school info session.

## NEWS BRIEFS »

### Minority Report-style technology tackles future crime

Police officers at one of Britain's biggest police forces are to use predictive technology which allows them to react to crime before it happens. In the Steven Spielberg blockbuster *Minority Report*, police departments contain a "pre-crime" department that apprehends criminals before the crime is committed. Computer algorithms at the Metropolitan police are less sophisticated, but seem to be heading towards the same path. They provide detailed maps of the areas most likely to be targeted by muggers and burglars.

Source: *The Daily Mail*

### Climate change will be felt strongly in countries like Canada

As world temperatures and sea levels rise, the effects of global warming will be felt most acutely in Canada and other countries far from the equator, says a Canadian researcher and coordinating author of the latest report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change. U.S. Secretary of State John Kerry called it an "alarm bell" and pledged to work to reduce emissions. Canada is among the top emitters per capita in the G20.

Source: *The Globe and Mail*

### Bridget Jones' fans' horror at death of Mark Darcy

Bridget Jones fans have taken to social networking to voice their horror at the news that author Helen Fielding has killed off Mark Darcy. In extracts from *Mad About the Boy* published in the *Sunday Times* magazine, Bridget reveals that Darcy, her husband and father to her two children, died five years earlier. Darcy was played by Colin Firth in the Bridget Jones movies. In the published extracts, Bridget is revealed to have two children, Mabel and Billy, and a 30-year-old boytoy named Roxster.

Source: *BBC News*

### U.S. shutdown looms amid political rifts over health law

The U.S. government has less than 48 hours to avert a shutdown of government services amid political divisions over President Obama's healthcare law. On Sunday, the Republican-run House of Representatives voted to pull the law's funding, raising chances of a shutdown. The government needs to agree on a new policy-wide spending bill before the U.S. fiscal year ends at midnight on Monday. If it fails, non-essential federal services face closure, with employees sidelined or left working without pay.

Source: *BBC News*

### Nigerian students shot dead while sleeping in a college

Suspected Islamist gunmen have attacked a college in north-eastern Nigeria, killing up to 50 students. The students were shot dead as they slept in their dormitory at the College of Agriculture in Yobe state. North-eastern Nigeria is in a state of emergency amid an Islamist insurgency by the Boko Haram group. Boko Haram is fighting to overthrow Nigeria's government to create an Islamic state, and has launched a number of attacks on schools.

Source: *BBC News*

# MEDIUM OPINION

Editor-in-Chief | Luke Sawczak

## Keeping our feet on the ground about writing

Writing instruction is the administration's pet project lately, but a good solution is hard to find

I'm writing about writing initiatives. I know, I know. "Aren't you going to talk about David Gilmour?" But it feels kind of like taking the bait, and besides, there's already so much written about it, from students having second thoughts about his course to the chairs of our and St. George's English departments throwing him under the bus to commentators stepping back in astonishment at how quickly it exploded. If you want my opinion, Rachel Bulatovich's September 27 article for the *Globe and Mail* isn't a bad approximation. Anyway, I'd rather write about something more local.

Writing Across the Curriculum was conceived as part of a wider plan to improve student writing at UTM, instruction for which is very scarce at present. There are some writing assignments in every discipline, and some disciplines are considered "writing-intensive", which means that there are a lot of writing assignments, but not necessarily that there's any instruction for them beyond the reinforcement that comes from grades. Currently, students in particular need of remedial help can go to academic skills centre in the library.

There are two obvious routes to go to remedy this. One is making this remedial, or rather introductory, writing instruction mandatory so as to make it available to more students. WAC, on the other hand, is based on the integration of writing instruction into the curriculum. It involves replacing certain exercises and study tools with writing exercises on the assumption that we learn more effectively through writing. The exercises are usually carried out in tutorial by a TA who has been trained by a lead writing TA who has been trained in turn by the academic skills centre.

At the moment, Tyler Evans-Tokaryk, who originally proposed WAC after he was commissioned to come up with a strategy for writing instruction, says it's not even a program yet. This is because its implementation, originally scheduled for this fall, has faced opposition, especially by faculty. The writing instruction also differs from department to department on the assumption that those who write for one field will write differently from those who write for another, which sounds pretty reasonable (although less so than Evans-Tokaryk's

blanket quote for an article last year that "generic writing doesn't work"). This has been the source of some of the dissent, some of which came from Guy Allen, the director of UTM's professional writing and communication program, which operates on the idea that certain good writing habits are universally applicable. Besides, not all the anthropology students, as Allen points out, will go into anthropology, so will the ones who don't be left with non-transferable skills?

The consultation, described by Dean Amy Mullin last year (prophetically) as "just really long", is still going on.

The other areas of dissent mostly involve questions of resources. In any case, the consultation, described by some faculty as uninclusive and by Dean Amy Mullin (prophetically) as "just really long", is still going on.

As for me, I'm sceptical about the whole question of writing instruction.

The first question that makes me furrow my brow is the effectiveness one, the "write to learn" side of WAC. As an FSG leader in linguistics last year with the academic skills centre, I was often assured that if we elicited discussion from the students, learning could take place. By contrast, Tokaryk told Ms. Ho, our news editor, and me in an interview that some discussion would be replaced with writing exercises. Is everyone on the same page?

But "learn to write", for me, is the more dubious goal. That the average student's writing could be improved is, for me as an editor, not in question. But that the university is capable of effecting it (or even has such a mandate) is. At the Dean's Open Writing Forum last year, associate geography professor Alan Walks suggested that passing a third-year writing course be a prerequisite for going into third year. I can't imagine such a course being much better than the fairly useless literacy tests in high school, at least not on the scale it would involve.

There are certainly gaps to be filled. As a student of linguistics, which is more science than humanities—whatever the course timetable says—

I've had only one professor who's really tried to fill the gaping void that is research essays in the program. Outside of her courses I haven't had to write much for linguistics, and the assignments threw us off balance (one involved a handout that warned against the oh-so-tempting opening line "Since the dawn of time, people have wondered where language came from"). The experience was valuable, but unless many more profs reallocate their time and curriculum space, it'll remain a curiosity. And even if half of those classes had tutorials, I'm not sure I'd entrust my writing instruction to a chunk of time repurposed as an exercise given by a TA with a few hours of training.

Writing instruction seems to have only recently become the Office of the Dean's pet project, and between the resistance WAC has met and a sneaking suspicion that the whole ideal of a fully writing-competent student body is impracticable, I think the delays are more signs of a quiet death.

YOURS,

LUKE SAWCZAK



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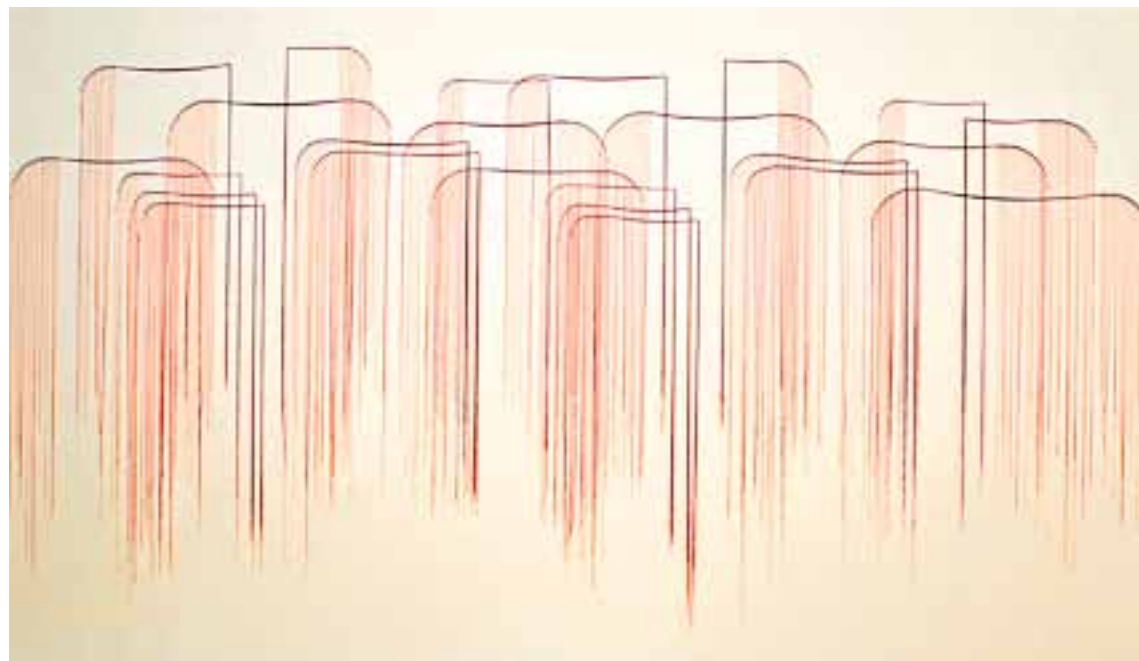
Editor | Colleen Munro

## Fibre art finds a home at AGM

*F'd Up!* explores the artistic possibilities and social implications of fibre art**KATE CATTELL-DANIELS**  
STAFF WRITER

I admit that fibre art is not something I'm well-versed in. Perhaps because of my ignorance of the medium—which actually seems pretty widespread among the general population—I found the Art Gallery of Mississauga's exhibit *F'd Up!* even more engaging and weirdly magical than I would have otherwise. Until this show, I'd never thought about fibre (more commonly known as the stuff clothing is made of) as art. I knew that art can be anything, but I didn't know that "anything" included fabric.

The theme of *F'd Up!* is social injustice, which is intriguing right from the start. "The artist who works with string, yarn, or fabric is often equated with the backroom politics of the moniker 'women's work,' a gender-based derogatory term that precludes the possibility of male artists working with fibre," explains the program placed in my hand as I enter the show's opening reception. Even so, I find myself drawn to the large number of female artists listed. While it's true that men working in fibre art can break gender barriers, the fact that women are working with string and fabric out of their traditional context



Kai Chan's "Mirage" uses silk thread and nails as part of *F'd Up!* at the AGM.

is perhaps the most powerful statement *F'd Up!* can make.

Visually, the gallery is chaotic. Colour and shape burst everywhere, and take no time to get in the viewer's face. The first piece to grab my attention is just inside the door, a centrepiece almost like a fountain or statue. In this case, though, the sculpture lives, which takes a surprisingly long time to detect. A young woman stands

completely still, wearing only a misshapen fatsuit that is skin-coloured from shoulder to waist and fades to light blue at the feet. She breathes and blinks and that's all. As a piece of performance art, she's remarkable. All I can think of is the discipline and patience it must take to stand there for so long, and how difficult it must be to listen to people talk about you and not be able to react. She's effective; I'm

pulled right in and I want to know what else the show has to offer, once I've gotten over the shivers the piece induces.

The sculptures in *F'd Up!* are especially engaging because they're not confined to pedestals with nameplates beneath them. My favourite piece is a wall-like installation of string, rope, and knots that invites the viewer to experiment and explore.

Partly because of its size—it towers over a person and stretches wall-to-wall twice—this piece at first seems restrictive, but quickly becomes an occasion of discovery. The details within the larger web structure are almost mesmerizing, and the artist obviously has an extensive knowledge of knots. The shadow cast on the back wall is also incredibly beautiful, despite being cast by something made of only a few knots in a huge spider web.

*F'd Up!* is aptly named. Every time I turned a corner I thought, "What the f\*\*\*?", which was a positive reaction in that I was immediately and consistently curious. However, since the pieces themselves seemed to have no apparent connection to the provocative mandate, I was a little confused as to the precise point. The art itself was visually compelling, but evoked little intellectual response beyond the initial "What?" factor. I was also disappointed to see so few people at the opening; like numerous events both on campus and off, the attendance was, to put it frankly, puny.

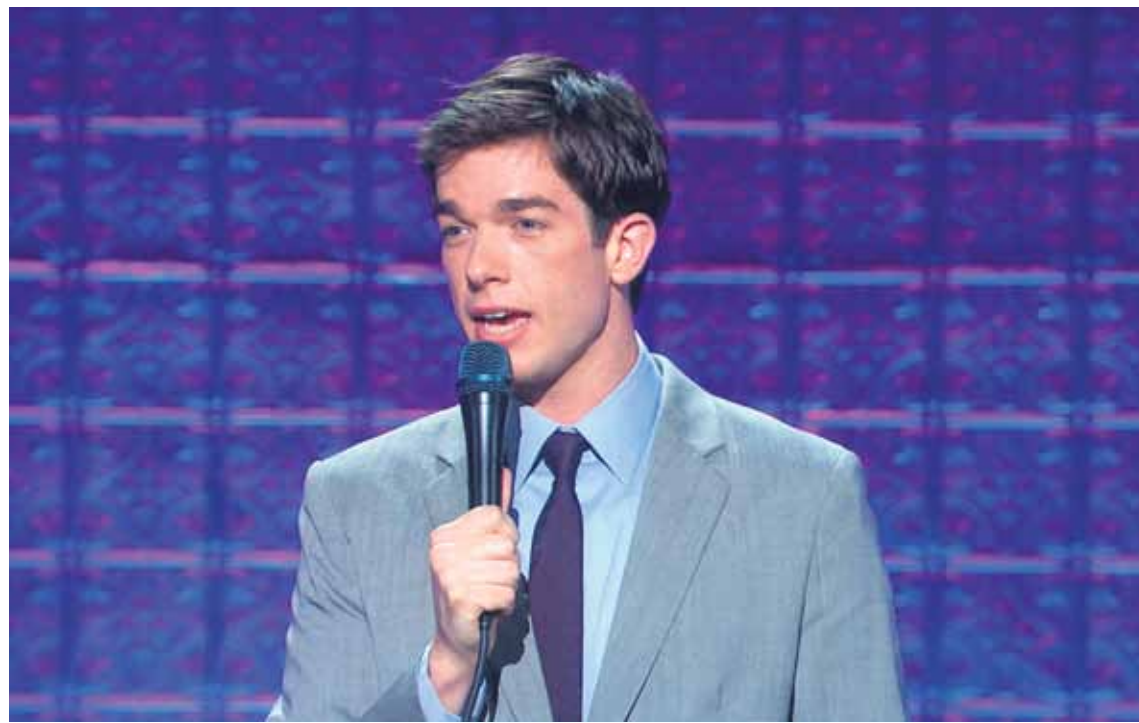
*F'd Up!* is an intriguing experiment that is definitely worth viewing, if only as an introduction to the world of fibre art. *F'd Up!* runs at the Art Gallery of Mississauga until November 9.

## JFL42 offers festivalgoers a variety of laughs

The festival's smartphone-based pass system allows comedy fans unlimited access to 42 different acts

**COLLEEN MUNRO**  
A&E EDITOR

I think we've all experienced firsthand how subjective comedy can be. For example, maybe you once whipped out your phone to show someone a viral video, sure that your friend would find a giggling baby or Andy Samberg's musical stylings just as hilarious as you do. But then came that uncomfortable moment when you looked over at your friend mid-chortle and were met with only a tight smile in return. At this point, it was too late to go back. You were a solid 90 seconds in, and yet to hear so much as an appreciative scoff from this person you thought you knew so well. (If your friend is less polite, they might have already told you the video was dumb or simply wandered off in boredom.) The video ended, your laughter faded, and you were left with only silence. Maybe you decided your friend just didn't get it, and tried to explain why the video was funny. Or maybe you wisely just tucked your phone away, eager to forget the slightly



John Mulaney was among the standout acts at the 2013 Toronto incarnation of Just for Laughs.

painful, joyless three minutes you just experienced.

Your reaction wasn't wrong, and neither was your friend's. While media like film and music are often judged as somewhat objectively

"bad" or "good", comedy is one of the few forms of entertainment that is, for the most part, simply allowed to exist, leaving it to the viewer to decide whether or not they enjoy it. Any semi-polished

stand-up comic can divide a crowd and inspire lively debate about their funniness.

This democratic approach to comedy is a major element of Toronto's JFL42 festival. As an off-

shoot of the larger Montreal Just for Laughs festival, JFL42 brings together 42 "things", as they call them, for its passholders to experience over 10 days. From free coffee to headlining comedy galas at the Sony Centre, these things vary in ambition and comedic payoff, and it's unlikely that anyone would enjoy all of them. But using the flat-rate pass system allows festivalgoers to experience as much or as little as they want, and it encourages them to try things outside of their comfort zone.

That said, the execution of JFL42's pass system is flawed. The pass runs entirely from your smartphone (unless you print out the necessary barcode to get into each event), and the convoluted system of virtual credits and required online check-ins is more of a headache than a convenience. But the clunky system does allow potentially unlimited access to events, which is an impressive bargain if you make good use of it.

# Student authors make their voices heard

Book launch for the anthology *Pluto or Spain* celebrates creative writing at UTM

MATT LONG

Forget any preconceived notions about the state of writing today. An exciting group of writers emerged from the literary shadows last Thursday evening with the launch of the poetry and prose anthology *Pluto or Spain*, featuring the work of 11 UTM students.

Friends, family, and supporters filled the seats of the MiST Theatre and waited for the readings to begin. The organizers coaxed the audience with pizza, cookies, and coffee. **Matthew Del Mei**, one of the evening's hosts and credited as the anthology's editor, stepped onstage at 7:30 p.m. and asked the audience to take their seats.

**Alexander Tkachuk** took the stage as the first reader. Tkachuk, now an alumnus, was a regular reader at campus literary events and known in particular for his risqué poetry. He delivered a rare PG-rated poem and an excerpt from a comic short story about burnt toast on Jupiter.

**Valeria Ryrak** followed Tkachuk with an excerpt from a wonderfully detailed short story about a student distracted from her schoolwork by her intricate inner life. She finished with two very eloquent poems.

The contrast between her and the next reader, **Chris Laliberte** (the other host of the evening), was striking. His towering figure and deep voice lent force to his excerpt from a chilling post-apocalyptic story.

The pace changed again when Del



CHRISTY TAM/THE MEDIUM

Authors read from their contributions in *Pluto or Spain* at the book's launch.

Mei read two selections both hilarious and intense: an excerpt from an absurdist short story called "Life in the Impossible Room after the Documented Disaster", and an experimental poem about waiting at the doctor's office consisting mainly of the words "tick tock", which came alive in his reading.

**Ankita Nayar**, who is currently completing a master's program in creative writing in New York, flew in for the evening. She read an excerpt of the excerpt of her fantasy novel that is her contribution to the anthology. The imagination showed

in the story surely requires an exceptional personality.

Next was **Larissa Fleurette Ho**, who captivated the audience with an excerpt from "Manu", a non-fiction story set in a summer camp. The tone flowed from tense to funny to sad and poetic with ease. The short selection ended on a cliffhanger—I only wish it had gone on longer.

**Luke Sawczak** read his reserved but lovely poem "St. Lawrence", divided into six parts with, as he put it, "fancy Roman numerals".

The four remaining writers couldn't make it to the book launch

for various reasons. **Valerie Charun's** urban poetry was read by Tkachuk; an excerpt of **Kevin O'Leary's** gripping murder story was read by Laliberte; a short, comic story by **Leah Edwards**, now in the creative writing master's program at St. George, was read by Del Mei; and **Kelly Semkiw's** direct and stunning poems were read by Sawczak. The night closed most appropriately on her final poem, which runs, "Be so subtle and you won't notice that it's poetry."

The writers who collaborated on *Pluto or Spain* met in **Professor Richard Greene's** third-year cre-

ative writing course, ENG389Y, in the 2011/12 year. Near the end of the course, Greene revealed that the university was offering the \$1,200 "Launch Pad" grant to support emerging artists and suggested that the group put together a book. He volunteered to submit the proposal with a preliminary outline, marketing plan, and budget.

The proposal was approved in the summer, and the classmates met in August and then throughout the year to plan the project, which included selecting, editing, and copy-editing the pieces, designing the cover, interviewing the authors for biographies, and choosing a publisher. Eventually Life Rattle Press, which is strongly associated with the campus's typically non-fiction professional writing program, agreed to publish the anthology.

All but three of the ENG389Y students participated in the project. The only task not volunteered by members of the group was the typesetting provided by Life Rattle. Del Mei acted as the main editor and coordinator, necessitated not least by the fact that most of the amateur anthologists were still enrolled in full-time studies during the publication process.

*Pluto or Spain* is an exciting, diverse collection of strong local voices who have definite potential. For the time being, physical copies can be purchased at the *Medium's* office, and an e-book version is available on Amazon.

## Seeking out the best of Just for Laughs

JFL42 continued from page 5

Perhaps the biggest draw of JFL42 is the variety of its events. This year's festival included heavyweight headliners **Sarah Silverman** and **Aziz Ansari**, buzzed-about up-and-comers like **Anthony Jeselnik** and **Maria Bamford**, established names like **Bill Burr** and **Janeane Garofalo**, and relatively new faces like **Ivan Decker** and **Jerrod Carmichael**. The venues are scattered around Toronto and include a mixture of proper theatres and comedy clubs—sometimes makeshift ones. (On a side note, there is also axe-throwing. Whence the variety.)

As subjective as comedy may

be, I have a hard time imagining anyone having too unpleasant of a time at **John Mulaney's** unwaveringly likeable hour-long set, which was the highlight of the festival for me. On the first of his two nights at the spacious Queen Elizabeth Theatre, the venue was less than two-thirds full. Yet Mulaney's unassuming charm seemed to win the crowd over almost immediately. Following high-energy opener **Sean Patton**, Mulaney launched into a jam-packed hour of meditations on *Back to the Future*, his strict Catholic upbringing, New York's bizarre residents (a familiar theme from Mulaney's 2011 comedy special "New in Town"), and much more.

Mulaney cut his teeth writing for *Saturday Night Live*, and perhaps his biggest claim to fame on the show is creating the popular "Weekend Update" character Stefan with actor **Bill Hader**.

Mulaney launched into a jam-packed hour of meditations on *Back to the Future*, his strict Catholic upbringing, New York's bizarre residents, and much more.

However, his standup routine feels far more focused than most

of SNL's recent material. Although he has a conversational delivery style, Mulaney's actual jokes are very precise. This was perhaps best demonstrated in his lengthy personal connection to Bill Clinton, which closed his set. Mulaney paced himself, throwing in little details about his mother's growing and barely concealed infatuation and his father's unwarranted vendetta against Clinton perfectly, resulting in an understated and hilarious payoff.

Everything about Mulaney's set felt purposeful. His callbacks to previous jokes were slipped in so casually that you might miss them, and his devotion largely to "clean"

humour gave his few F-bombs and crude diversions all the more comedic impact. Even his shorter anecdotes about an ill-fated childhood trip to McDonald's and the recent hacking of his email account drew big laughs from the appreciative crowd.

Mulaney's good-natured set is just one side of JFL42. And while it feels like a comedy festival that is still finding its footing, JFL42's innovative take on the festival experience has its benefits. The sheer volume of performers can entice a variety of visitors with differing opinions on what is and isn't funny and will no doubt spark plenty of discussion and debate during the ride home.

## What's on your mind?

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# Southern rock meets radio pop

Kings of Leon continue their reign as crowd-pleasing arena rockers with *Mechanical Bull*

COLLEEN MUNRO  
A&E EDITOR

In 2009, it was almost impossible to turn on the radio without encountering either “Sex on Fire” or “Use Somebody” by **Kings of Leon**. They’d experienced success in the UK for years, but the Tennessee quartet finally had their domestic breakthrough with their glossiest and most mainstream work yet. However, the band (comprising brothers **Caleb Followill**, **Nathan Followill**, and **Jared Followill** and their cousin **Matthew Followill**) ended up cancelling their 2011 tour and took some time to unwind. Now, they claim to be in a much better headspace as a band, and the renewed sense of energy certainly comes across on their latest album, *Mechanical Bull*.

The album kicks off with the revved-up guitars of the lead single, “Supersoaker”, suggesting a return to form for the Followills. On their last album, 2011’s *Come Around Sundown*, Kings of Leon delivered a number of laid-back, mid-tempo offerings that unfortunately cemented some people’s perception of the band as middle-of-the-road rockers. And



WHENTHEGRAMOPHONERINGS.COM/PHOTO

Jared, Caleb, Matthew, and Nathan Followill return with their sixth studio album.

while a track like “Supersoaker” might not be innovative enough to win over many new fans, it’s got the kind of catchy guitar hook and infectious rock beat that Kings of Leon built a career on, and that may be enough to rank it as one of their best songs in years.

One of the real strengths of this new album is the refreshingly ragged

vocals from frontman Caleb Followill. In the wake of the Kings’ heavily produced past two albums, tracks like “Don’t Matter” feel like a return to the band’s early days as scruffy retro rockers. Their sound is certainly more polished and there are more guitar solos now, but there’s a looseness to a number of tracks on *Mechanical Bull* that has been absent since the band’s

sophomore effort, 2004’s *Aha Shake Heartbreak*.

Even some of the album’s slower songs seem energized. The propulsive drum beat and sweeping background vocals on “Beautiful War” complement the catch in Caleb Followill’s voice perfectly, making for a slow-burning track that sneaks up on the listener with surprising impact.

*Mechanical Bull* offers plenty of highlights, but there are a few filler tracks. Towards the end of the album, a few of the songs start to blend together, recalling the innocuously glossy pop sheen of the band’s 2008 breakthrough album, *Only by the Night*. And while offering a funky bassline, “Family Tree” has a pretty generic melody and enough clunky lyrics to make for an all-around cheesy listening experience.

Lyrics generally aren’t the band’s strong suit. Take the main hook that Caleb Followill earnestly croons in the shimmering track “Comeback Story”: “I walked a mile in your shoes/ Now I’m a mile away/ And I’ve got your shoes.” Elsewhere on the album, their nostalgia-soaked odes to southern life, beautiful women, and good times with friends feel more like mathematical formulas for album sales than artistic expression.

However, there’s still something kind of irresistible about Kings of Leon’s blatantly crowd-pleasing aesthetic. They do borderline indulgent guitar solos and singalong choruses well, and with *Mechanical Bull*, they’ve boosted their songwriting game too.

MMM½

## REJECTED REDISCOVERED

We get sent so many CDs to review that we just don’t have room for them all. Here—sometimes years later—they get a second chance.



MINDEQUALSBLOWN.NET/PHOTO

JASON COELHO  
SPORTS EDITOR

Jay Malinowski  
*Bright Lights & Bruises*

You may not know the name of **Jay Malinowski**, but you’ll know the raspy voice when you hear it. He’s the lead singer of the reggae-ska hybrid **Bedouin Soundclash**, whose 2004 hit “When the Night Feels My Song” took the band’s fame to new heights: frequent radio play, Canadian awards ceremonies, and even a Zellers commercial.

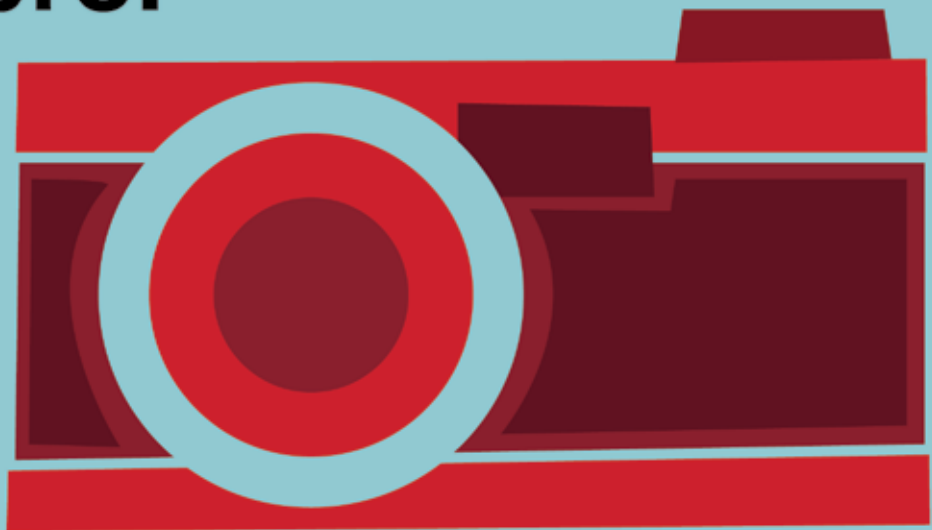
In his first and only solo outing, *Bright Lights & Bruises* (2010), Malinowski steps out of that fun Bedouin vibe and into the world

of indie acoustic guitar ditties that would have a place on any bearded, sockless Urban Outfitters employee’s playlist. It’s soothing, simple, and pleasant to behold—a treat for any Soundclash fan. The slow pace of the album is established with the tone-setting opener “There’s a Light”, which is pleasantly piano-heavy in comparison to the subsequent acoustic guitar-based tracks. The album really finds its legs in “Santa Monica” and doesn’t let up until its close.

*Bright Lights & Bruises* is overall an enjoyable experience, a joyful and contemplative arrangement of music that establishes Malinowski on the list of Canada’s true artists.

Like the sound of the album? The first person to come by our office this week can pick it up for free.

## Better watch where you point that thing, bro.



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# MEDIUM FEATURES

Editor | Maria Cruz

## You thought it was over

Though infrequent, bullying among university students is still an issue that needs to be addressed

**MARIA CRUZ**  
FEATURES EDITOR

University is a place where students of diverse backgrounds, having reached a slightly higher threshold of maturity than they had in high school, come to broaden their minds and are mixed together and can make friends with peers who share their interests.

It's only natural to assume that most of our childish habits have been left behind by the time we enrol.

But hidden in a bathroom stall or the office of an equity counselor, there are those who are still being teased for who they are or what they look like. Passing under the radar of many students, bullying is still present at university.

It's common knowledge that bullying is devastating to those struggling to cope with the insults hurled at them while growing up, but it's surprising that it persists at this level, in a community whose image is one of respect and acceptance.

There are people trying to shed light on the problem—spoken word artist Shane Koyczan recently remastered his poem “To This Day” for a viral anti-bullying



SALON.COM/PHOTO

**Bullying is not absent from the university community.**

campaign on YouTube. But despite widespread empathy for victims of bullying, the awareness of them is low.

When the incidents do become public, the community is shocked and makes strongly worded comments, as was seen with the *Medium's* coverage of a homophobic and racist hate speech incident three years ago in which some-

body wrote “FAGGOT” and “EGYPTIAN SLAVE BOY” on a residence door in black marker. The question such incidents raise in everyone's minds is: If this is still going on even now, can anything ever be done about it?

One third-year student I talked to, Alanna Shadrake, was aware of university bullying and feels that it comes down to the same old

reasons. “It's the kids who don't do the things everyone else is doing, the kids who are still trying to figure out who they are [who get bullied],” she says. “I think no matter the age level, people will always harass other people for not thinking the same way.”

Rachel Marie Rose Derby agrees that bullying is present in university, even when it comes to

superficial things like a person's weight. “If you're a heavier person—for example, me being plus-sized, and decide you want to go to the gym at your school, as soon as you walk in the door you get dirty looks and you know they're just thinking, ‘Why is she here? It doesn't look like she's been to a gym a day in her life,’” she says. “You hear and see the whispers. It's ridiculous.”

“I'm not naive enough to believe that college students are somehow smart enough or kind enough in comparison to their younger counterparts to not bully their peers,” says Ashley Flores, a second-year student.

Nythalah Baker joined UTM's Equity and Diversity Office as an officer in early February.

She confirmed that student bullying is nothing new, although she added that, having only held the position for a few months, she hasn't dealt with many reported cases.

She believes that bullying exists across all age groups, and because university students are constantly around one another, there are more opportunities for occasional bullying.

*Bullying continued on page 9*

## Rethinking safety on campus after dark

Frequent attacks at York University have UTM students questioning the safety of their own campus

**ALEXANDRA BALAJ**  
WITH NOTES FROM  
**MARIA CRUZ**  
FEATURES EDITOR

Recent well-publicized reports of at least two sexual assaults on female students at York University raise questions about the security of UTM's students—a concern that the UTM Campus Police take seriously.

“It's a long-standing theory that if you make a place safer for women, then it's safer for everyone else,” said Special Constable Len Paris, the manager of the UTM Campus Police.

Campus Police's latest initiative to protect women on campus and in the community is Camp-US, a two-year program run in collaboration with Interim Place, a Mississauga women's shelter, to “look at all aspects of safety on campus, particularly the safety of young women,” according to Paris.

Camp-US is the result of a \$200,000 grant from the Status of Women Canada, a federal organization, given to Interim Place in May 2012 as part of SWC's efforts to prevent violence



NAOMI SENWASANE/THE MEDIUM

**The offices of UTM's Campus Police in the Davis Building.**

against women. “We're going to be working with Women's Centre and other female students to review and improve the UTM process for receiving and responding to reports from female students who disclose violence

against women on or off campus,” said Paris.

Based on the statistics in the 2012 annual police report, the program seems to be effective. There were only three non-sexual assaults last year—

an improvement over the seven cases reported in 2011 and the six cases reported in 2010. Sexual assaults are even rarer, never having exceeded two per year in the last four years.

Camp-US is not the only program

of its kind; Campus Police also provides a number of year-round campus safety services such as WalkSafer and Work Alone. Both programs offer community members the option of walking around campus with a trained student employee or Campus Police escort at night or on days with few students on campus (such as weekends or holidays). These programs, as well as personal safety and property security tips, can be requested over phone or the Internet.

Second-year theatre students Rachele Goebel, Kyra Weichet, Marryl Smith, Conner Dutchak, Spencer Bennet, and Roxhanna Norman agree that on the whole, they feel safe on campus.

When asked if they knew about the safety programs offered by Campus Police, they said they knew about WalkSafer, the emergency buttons, and the Campus Police phone number, but none of them had ever used any of the services.

*Safety continued on page 10*



# Travel the world or start a career?

Students who take a year off to travel may have a hard time finding work when they get back home

## ALEXANDRA GEDDES

Many students dream of travelling after graduation. Free of any serious responsibilities, they make plans to explore the world before entering the workforce. But some alumni, such as 27-year-old Edward McCain, are urging young students to rethink their options.

After graduating in 2006 with a degree in political science, McCain landed a job as an English teacher in Seoul, South Korea, packed his bags, and moved to his new home. He experienced the culture, partied with the locals, and saved money.

After spending two years in Seoul, McCain decided to continue travelling and spent the next three years trekking through China, Southeast Asia, and Western Europe. "It was everything I dreamed of," said McCain.

In 2011, McCain returned home and began searching for a job in his field. "I couldn't find work," he said. "I'm not going to teacher's college. I'm not going to be a teacher. I have no experience, and no savings." In September 2012, after a year of unemployment, he enrolled in a mas-

ter's program in international relations.

"I want to warn undergrads, but I don't know how," he said. "I loved travelling, but it delayed my career. I don't know if it was worth it."

McCain isn't the only graduate in this situation. Student resources such as the Guide to Life After University produced by studentbeans.com and morebeans.com promote travel, but warn students against doing too much of it for budget reasons.

*Macleans* suggests students take only a single gap year. In an article they published in February of this year, they offered the pros and cons of taking that time to travel. According to *Macleans*, those who spent a year off travelling had the opportunity to gain work experience overseas and had potential jobs waiting for them when they returned.

Despite the chance of facing the same struggles McCain went through, studies have found that taking a gap year can actually increase students' chances of finding employment when they resume their search. *Macleans* reported that the Canadian Council on Learning discovered that students



BROWNBUNNYFLOWERS.BLOGSPOT.CA/PHOTO

### Packing our bags and travelling the world.

who took gap years were eight percent more likely to find a job when they came home than their counterparts who did not, because they accumulate life experience in travelling (and sometimes even working while abroad) that they can mention on their résumés.

But the article also warns that, as in McCain's case, a bad gap year can

hurt students' chances. Working a terrible job during your gap year is just as bad as working a terrible job at home. The only difference is you're in another country.

Of course, many current students remain committed to their future travel dreams despite these risks.

"I want to see Europe," says Kaitlyn Margison, a first-year student.

She points out that she will find it harder to get away once she embarks on a long-term career: "I can't leave for months once [I'm] working. It's impossible."

Falynn Whyn, a third-year student, is willing to make sacrifices to recover lost time after a gap year. "I'll do an internship or go to college if I have to," she says.

## Bullying has not disappeared yet

### Bullying continued from page 8

Meanwhile, Derby says that, far from disappearing, bullying "definitely gets worse" as we get older and better at it.

"If we're trying to hurt someone, we know exactly what to say to get under the other person's skin because we've seen how it affects people," she says. "We know how to think for ourselves and we're using that privilege [of knowledge] to hurt other people."

"It's the kids who don't do the things everyone else is doing [who get bullied]. No matter the age level, people will always harass other people for not thinking the same way."  
—Alanna Shandrake

Shandrake agrees that bullying changes form in university: "You'll hear people laughing during presentations, or people will roll their eyes and laugh and not-so-quietly insult someone," she says. "Bullying stops being quite so physical and becomes psychological warfare."

Flores, on the other hand, believes that the raised awareness of the topic in recent years has prompted people to consider their words before saying them.

And Baker's take on the subject

is not far off. "I don't know that [the bullying] is greater, but I think it may change," she says. "One perspective is that when we're younger, we're still discovering what boundaries are. And when we're in college, we become more socially responsible for our words and actions."

Although her office offers events, workshops, and a place to confide, Baker feels not enough is being done to bring bullying issues to light. They are brought up in handbooks and during orientation, she says, but are rarely mentioned again and are mostly ignored by students.

Baker is currently working with the UTM Students' Union and other offices to launch an anti-bullying campaign whose planning is in its early stages.

One major hurdle to overcome is the shyness students feel about seeking help from a counsellor. Not many can present an air of being easy to relate to, say students. "If a student were hesitant to speak to anyone about their problems, I would tell them my story," says Derby. "It's hard for someone to open up to someone they're not sure about, especially if they don't know if you've been through the same thing or not."

In the end, at least the consensus is that the small differences between people matter little.

"People are just people," says Shandrake. "In the big picture, those differences between us don't really matter all that much. Treat others how you want to be treated, no matter how hard it is."

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# Preparing for the workforce

Do you need a backup plan in case your dream falls through, or is it only a distraction?

**MARIA CRUZ**  
FEATURES EDITOR

After you're finally handed your diploma, do you know which career path you plan on taking? What exactly you're planning to do with your philosophy degree? Relax—you're not alone.

A recent article published by *Troy Media* reported that 46% of students have a backup plan in case they can't get into their chosen field. Upon graduating, many of us scramble to find work so we have something to offer the OSAP loan sharks when they come to call.

The article explains that students need to attend school for the skills they'll need at a well-paying job one day and not just to learn the square root of pi. It goes on to say that it pays to do your research: "A degree today has to be understood to be an investment. Students need to do their homework and ask some searching questions well before they register. In what fields am I likely to find work? Who will hire me? Where are my prospective employers located and how much do they pay? Maybe students should even go and talk to some potential employers and see what they look for before enrolling."

Surprisingly, of the few students I spoke to, not many of them had a distinct backup plan.

"I don't personally have a plan B because I was fortunate enough



Only 46% of students have a backup career plan.

to be accepted in a program that I have a passion for and want to pursue career in," said Marianne Dae Mariano, a nursing student in her last year. "Nursing is such a diverse career and there are so many avenues open to me so I feel that I have the privilege of dipping my toes into each area until I find what fits me."

Of those more on the cautious side, third-year student Shain Lambert has a plan B, but it isn't a second career path. Lambert wants to become a social worker but says that if it doesn't happen, he'll travel the world. "Volunteering, taking

photos, and becoming more proficient in my piano skills," he says. "Perhaps finding a job or activity [involving] that as well."

First-year Kajal Vaghela says she plans to go into creative media production, particularly post-production. "Either that or take over the world," she jokes. Her backup plan is to follow her original dream and make YouTube videos.

Interestingly, some students believe even having a backup plan betrays a lack of confidence we need to break into our preferred careers. Mariano feels that having a backup plan shows a realistic outlook and

an awareness of society, but according to Lambert, it gets in the way of "achieving something wholeheartedly".

The UTM campus does have a Career Centre that works with students for two years after graduation and offers education in networking, resume-writing, interviewing, mentor-shadowing, and other guidance, which may not alleviate the worry that comes from a poor job market but can at least equip a student to miss fewer opportunities.

Felicity Morgan, the centre's director, says the correct actions to take depend on the individual stu-

dent. Gaining the knowledge, skills, and experience to begin a career may not be a viable option for some students right after graduating, between a lack of opportunities and needing to pay the bills. Morgan hopes the Career Centre will be a more accessible resource for those skills.

But the direction the student wants to go in is left up to them, says Morgan, including where they want to put their time and energy. "Some students want to have other ideas and some students don't want to lose their focus," she adds.

But the key is to be working on your long-term career in one form or another, she adds. "If I think of the students that I know that have been really successful in their careers, they didn't always know exactly what they wanted to do or they didn't always get their first choice," she says. "But what they did was they spent a lot of time looking at themselves and what they wanted, figuring out how they were going to get it and going after those opportunities."

Morgan also stresses the necessity of building experience and contacts through part-time jobs and extracurricular activities. Now that the university has adopted a co-curricular record, the impact of such experience will hopefully be stronger. The CCR was scheduled to come into effect on September 10 but was delayed for about a week.

## Defying culture shock

International students face the challenge of attending school in Canada

**SIMONE DE SOUZA**

At some point in our lives, we'll all be wanderers, nomads, or new people. For some of us, it happens to be when we're fresh out of high school and embarking on a journey to a new place for higher education. And sometimes, in our intricate plan for attacking university, we forget that adaptation isn't easy. That's where UTM's homely atmosphere comes into play, by allowing people with all kinds of lifestyles, aspirations, fears, dreams, and goals to feel welcome.

One would think that moving to a beautiful country like Canada, where the grass is green and birds are chirping, would be smooth sailing. However, the culture shock, the change in lifestyle, not to mention the amount of work facing a new university student, and the country itself can be quite overwhelming. It's quite likely to be a vortex of change and fear for a student coming from a small country with a different culture and probably a different lifestyle. Sometimes, it can be difficult for a student to accept this change and adapt to its boundaries.

UTM is home to people of so many different backgrounds from all around the globe that, ironically, among all the diversity, you're

likely to eventually find people with similar interests who can understand your story.

It's quite likely to be a vortex of change and fear for a student coming from a small country with a different culture and probably a different lifestyle. Sometimes, it can be difficult for a student to accept this change and adapt to its boundaries.

But being part of a varied community isn't always enough to erase the fears that international students sometimes have. One resource is UTM's International Centre, which offers cultural transition support, language training, and information to ease the process of settling in on campus. From personal experience (I'm Indian but spent all my life in Qatar), I can say that their support is key.

Understandably, this transition can take time because, let's be hon-

est, maybe five out of 100 people will find a really good friend who they instantly click with on their first day of university. Although this route isn't for everyone, joining clubs and attending events can certainly facilitate finding and forming ties that bind, and UTM is quite strong on that count. UTM might be notorious for being in the middle of nowhere, but how many places in the world have a quidditch team?

The campus also offers introductory programs like rezOne and utmOne, which not every university does. The frequent (but under-attended) events and the work opportunities in the form of Work-Study, volunteering, and part-time jobs are much more than what I found was offered in Qatar.

In addition to all of these things, UTM has the activity and constant "on the move" feel, which is an important part of a healthy university experience. I felt so much more energized and active after I started living on this campus, because back home I would barely walk out to do anything—there wasn't much to do.

This is why as an international student, I think that though the transition from a different place is hard, the effort to push through that barrier will definitely bear sweet results.

## UTM police work to improve safety

*Safety continued from page 8*

"We're on the same crew, so when we have to walk back home late at night, we're going to be able to walk back together. I feel way more comfortable walking with them than walking by myself," admitted Norman.

"I live in Homestead. If I'm walking alone I'll talk on my phone, so if someone's following me I can just give a description of them," added one of the students.

While the students consider UTM's buildings safe, the area outside of them, especially at night, is a different matter. "The passage between OPH and the Academic Annex is completely dark," said Goebel. "There's no light. It's terrifying."

A lack of lighting in some areas is a frequently mentioned issue among the students. "There needs to be more lighting; there are dark patches where, even if you have a small bit of light coming from the residences, you still can't see anything," said Dutchak.

"In terms of the physical environment, we're always trying to enhance the lighting on campus," Paris responded. "There is a program to change the street lights

from the old-style lighting to the new LED [lights], which give off better lighting."

Among the safety measures that students mentioned, comments about making the emergency Campus Police number more accessible and creating safer paths between buildings, especially the ones where student traffic is hampered by construction, were emphasized and seconded by the rest of the group.

While Campus Police are actively setting up student safety education and awareness programs, Paris remarked that students may not be sufficiently interested in reading the materials distributed by officers. In the end, though, he said, the greatest importance should be placed on personal responsibility.

"While being aware of what resources are available is important, being aware of what you can do for your own safety is number one," Paris concluded. "Think about what you can do as a student or as a citizen to enhance your safety, whether you're walking, driving, whether you're in your own neighbourhood or a strange location. Don't leave your safety up to someone else."

# MEDIUMSPORTS

Editor | Jason Coelho

## Varsity Blues defeat Carleton Ravens

U of T's football squad achieves their second victory of the season and inch their way closer to a playoff spot

**JASON COELHO**  
SPORTS EDITOR

Sporting an embarrassing 1-4 record more than halfway through the season, the Varsity Blues took to the field on the evening of Friday, September 27 to salvage what was left of their season. The Blues faced the Carleton Ravens at Varsity Stadium in front of a crowd of 1,932 fans. The Varsity Blues, in partnership with NFL Canada, presented pre-game festivities, including obstacle courses and giveaways, to whet the fans' appetite for a wild night of football. The Ravens had also been in a rut since the start of the season, having won no games but suffering monumental losses against teams from Western, Waterloo, and Windsor, resulting in a 0-4 record.

The opening kickoff saw Toronto gain 40 yards for the first down and proceed on the succeeding possession to make a pass to the 10-yard line. Dominating out of the gate, the Blues exposed Carleton's weak defence as running back Aaron Milton scored a touchdown less than 30 seconds after the opening whistle. The Blues matched their determined offensive performance with equally skilled defensive play, holding the Ravens back at each attempt to advance. The Blues continued to keep the Ravens at a



The Blues have two games remaining in the season.

MAHMOUD SAROUJI/THE MEDIUM

standstill as the first quarter wound down, with UTM student and Blues kicker Eric Hewitson booting a 42-yard field goal to put the Blues up 10-0.

As the second quarter began, the Blues didn't let up but deployed two outstanding offensive plays, including a diving snag by Trevor Harvey that pushed U of T to the 20-yard line. Capitalizing on their hard work once again, the Blues' quarterback

Simon Nassar connected with return specialist Alex Pierzchalski to score the team's second touchdown of the match and bring the team up 19-0. The Blues didn't seem to be fazed by anything the Ravens threw at them, shutting them down on defence time and again. And when an opportunity arose to make an offensive push, the Blues took advantage at the halfway mark by exploiting the Ravens' clustering defensive play, as Pierzchalski

made himself open to catch another pass from Nassar and dashed unhindered to the end zone, completing his second touchdown of the game and bringing the score to 26-0 in the Blues' favour.

The Ravens were persistent near the end of the second quarter, taking possession on a couple of fumbles by the Blues. Yet what looked like promise after a weak start ended in disappointment for the Ravens' fans when

the Blues used a stonewall defence to prevent the Ravens from inching any closer to victory. In a last-ditch effort, Ravens kicker Andrew Banerjee made 17-yard field goal to finally put his team on the board, making the score 26-3.

As the second half began, the Blues' comfortable lead was extended when they piggybacked off a 30-yard rush by Milton, which put the team in scoring position. Pierzchalski scored his third touchdown of the game to put his team up 33-3 at the start of the third quarter. Again the Ravens tried, and again their efforts went unrewarded. The Blues intercepted and took over near the midway mark of the third, which was the briefest possession they'd had so far in the game—a fumble allowed the Ravens to capitalize and they pushed to the 5-yard line, resulting in their first touchdown of the game from wide receiver Nathaniel Behar in an 8-yard reception that brought the score to 33-10.

But the Blues surged up again in the subsequent offensive possession to score yet another touchdown after Milton charged down the field, allowing placekicker Marcus Hobbs to carry the ball to the end zone.

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## Tri-campus tryouts begin

**KYLE KUCZYNSKI**

On September 22, the UTM men's tri-campus and Division Two hockey teams each completed their second round of tryouts. The teams hope to bounce back from last year's disappointing seasons—each team had to forfeit numerous games because of poor attendance.

"This year will be different," says Rory Bourgeois, a UTM forward and fourth-year political science student. "We're going to have a strict policy when it comes to attendance so we don't have a repeat of last year."

The new policy will require players to attend both practices and games and penalize players who don't. It was implemented to encourage players to commit to their respective teams.

Another change to the tri-campus hockey team is the introduction of non-contact play. The difference between contact and non-contact hockey is drastic; however, it will make the league a lot safer and open to prospective players who have never played contact hockey before.

Geoffrey Kosmala, a tri-campus prospect and third-year interactive and digital media major, says, "I am not a big or physical player, so non-contact [hockey] allows me to move around more freely on the ice." Kosmala adds that it's an easier transition

to the hockey league.

Mark Runciman, a defenceman and fourth-year criminology major, believes the incorporation of non-contact hockey will benefit not only the players, but also the team as a whole. "These new guys could definitely strengthen the tri-campus team," he says.

The tryouts ran smoothly, according to assistant coach Michael Keaveney, who says the team is looking strong so far, with a lot of young and talented recruits Keaveney adds that it's important that players abide by the new rules and commit to playing on the team. "We understand that guys have school stuff to do, but this year we're making more of an effort to make the guys more accountable and increase attendance, and we are hoping that some of these new players understand this new policy," he says.

Head coach Chet Long stresses that even prospective tri-campus hockey players who don't make the squad will have a spot on the ice, with free ice time every Sunday from 9:45 p.m. to 11:45 p.m. at Iceland Arena. The league holds two tournaments a year, says Long one in Orillia and one in London.

Those with inquiries about tryouts can contact Kyle Kuczynski, the captain of the tri-campus men's team, at [kyle.kuczynski@mail.utoronto.ca](mailto:kyle.kuczynski@mail.utoronto.ca).

# The fantastical game of quidditch comes to UTM

Students can now mount broomsticks and replicate a version of the game invented in the Harry Potter series

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Quidditch, a sport made famous by the wizarding world of Harry Potter, is now officially played in a number of countries across the world. Now, UTM students will have the opportunity to play the sport themselves—adapted to be physically possible, of course.

Quidditch is played competitively at universities across Canada, with rules that try to approximate those invented for the films and books. There are three referees, who follow a very specific handbook: the head referee, the snitching referee, and the beater referee. The “golden snitch” is now a tennis ball in a sock attached to the waist of the snitch runner, who runs through a certain area. To get the snitch, you rip the ball from the snitch runner’s belt and hold it for at least two seconds. The game begins when the snitch runner is out of sight, and ends only after



ANMOL KAUR/THE MEDIUM

Players ride on brooms as they try to stop a point being scored off the quaffle.

the snitch is caught, with 30 points awarded to the team that catches the snitch. Allison Gomes, co-president of the UTM Quidditch Team, reports that a typical game can last anywhere from 20 minutes to an hour, with no timeouts or half-time.

The quidditch field is about half the

size of a soccer field and in the same shape, and boundaries that apply to all players except the snitch runner are set around the field. There are three hoops, one on each end and a slightly higher one in the middle of the field.

There are seven players on each team, in four positions: chasers, beat-

ers, keepers, and seekers. A quaffle (a slightly deflated volleyball) is used by the chasers to score points by throwing it through the hoops; 10 points are awarded each time the quaffle goes through the hoops, no matter the manner of its passage. Finally, there is also a bludger, a ball used by the

beaters to stop opposing beaters and chasers from advancing to score. Every time a player is hit by the bludger, they have to go behind the hoop on their end and touch it before they can return to the game.

Quidditch is played without any pads and involves a lot of running. As in the Harry Potter films, players are required to play with brooms between their legs—although they aren’t required to fly—and removing them constitutes a violation.

“Once you start playing it, you really start to enjoy it. Part of it is the disbelief that it’s actually there and it’s a sport,” says Alexander Pederson, the team’s head coach. “If you’re not really into sports, you can just come out and have fun playing.”

The UTM Quidditch Team was formed this year and takes part in tournaments against other universities across Canada.

## Blues get in a win against Ravens by a margin of 50–10

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At the start of the fourth quarter, the Blues eyed their second victory of the year while they attempted to hold Carleton off for the final 15 minutes. In a quarter marked by constant back-and-forth play, Hewitson scored a 26-yard field goal that seemed to rejuvenate the Blues—minutes later Nassar, who was named player of the

game, connected with return specialist Lievi Noel for another touchdown to secure a commanding 50–10 victory.

“We played more as a unit,” said Hewitson, a second-year UTM English major. “All our teams were clicking, and everyone executed their jobs, and we ultimately came through and put points on the board while defence kept points off the board.”

Hewitson was integral to the team’s success, and believes the team’s confidence and smart play gave them their edge. “But we didn’t take [Carleton] too lightly,” he added.

The Blues have only a 13-day rest period until their next game and only two games remaining in the season. Coach Greg Gary believes the team’s chances of success in the coming games are good. “I think now we’re

playing against teams that are better opponents for where we’re at,” Gary says. “I think we’re becoming a good football team. I think York is really a serious opponent, so it feels like now we’re starting to have some meaningful games.”

Hewitson too is optimistic about the team’s chances. “Waterloo is very [winnable] and York is quite an equal opponent to us,” he says. “That’s just

going to challenge us.”

Gary and Hewitson both praised the play of Nassar, Milton, Harvey, and Pierzchalski, as well as Kevin Bradfield, who all had a part in giving the team its second victory.

The Varsity Blues will face York University on October 10, and will play the final game of the season at Varsity Stadium against the University of Waterloo on October 19.

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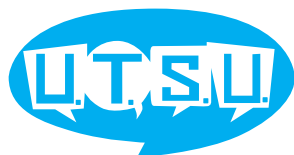


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