



AUMNIBUS

Chronicling the Campus Community and Beyond Since 1971

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Warhawk Issue - 26

Letter from the Editor:

In light of both the goals and struggles of the students at AUM, we have chosen to dedicate this issue to education. Inside, readers will find tips and information to better improve and understand the college experience. So pick up a copy, it's free!

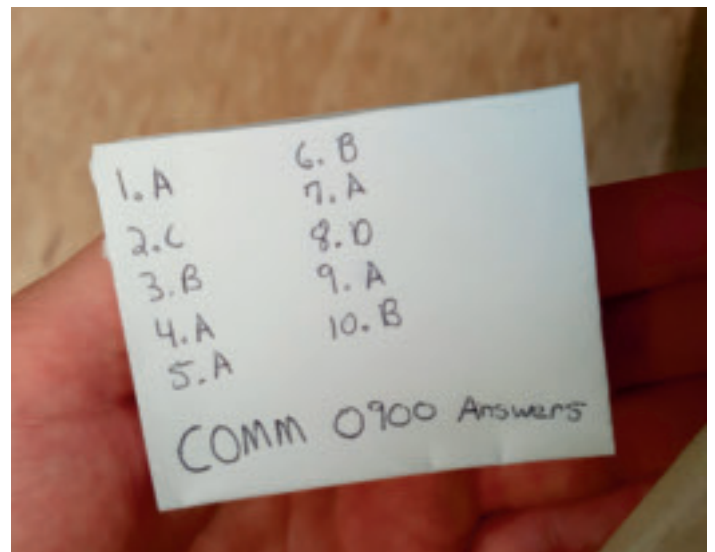
Classroom Reform

Robert Lemons

Eighty-two percent. That is the number of alumni that a *Time* magazine survey revealed to have cheated at some point during their undergraduate career. This staggering figure shows just how flawed the education system is. But what is the underlying problem? From the time students begin school, they form the idea that testing determines whether they will either pass or fail.

Students know that they don't necessarily have to learn the material—just memorize it or “find a way to pass the test,” and they will be fine. Students tend to deem smaller, ungraded assignment meaningless because so much emphasis is put into test taking. Countless times I have heard students ask: “Is this going to be on the test?” If not, students tend to find the information useless and choose not to learn it.

These high stakes tests even determine whether students can get into college – fitting examples are the SAT and the ACT. These exams are a nightmare for the 38 percent of students that The American Test Anxieties



Association claims to suffer from testing anxiety. Why should two exams play such an important role in whether a student gets accepted to college or not?

Once in college, testing can take on an even more important role in the student's grades. Many classes are composed of a midterm and a final exam. These two tests alone can make up more than half of the final grade. Students are supposed to recall everything they learned throughout the semester for every class they are taking. This is an overload, and many students would rather cheat than spend their time vigorously cramming for multiple exams. There are also students that work full time jobs, have children or other responsibilities that require their attention. It is nearly impossible for these students to find the time to prepare for so many exams.

The curriculum is in dire need of change. This means taking the emphasis off of testing so that students are more inclined to learn the material rather than cheat to get by.

Higher Education Partnership, Advocates for AUM

Brett Johnson

Most students and employees at AUM might not know what the Alabama Higher Education Partnership is, or what it does. However, all students and employees are affected by its daily efforts and activities.

The Higher Education Partnership is a nonprofit advocacy association based in downtown Montgomery that represents Alabama's fourteen public universities. The organization's mission is to advocate the importance of higher education in bettering the lives of people in Alabama.

Among other things, the association is known for its annual Higher Education Day rally at the Alabama Statehouse which takes place each spring. However, the organization does much more to advocate on behalf of the state's universities, including Auburn University at Montgomery.

The Partnership collaborates with university administrators, students, faculty, staff and alumni leadership to engage these groups in legislative and grassroots advocacy. This year, the Partnership's staff has been working with AUM SGA leaders to organize advocacy programs.

"We've written letters to our legislative delegation asking them to support AUM and higher education throughout the state," said SGA President Victoria Byrne. "We also have plans to make phone calls and to set up meetings so our lawmakers can put a face on the numbers associated with AUM and higher education across the state. And of course, we hope to take as many students to Higher Ed Day as possible this year."

Additionally, the Partnership's executive director Gordon Stone serves as the lobbyist representing the collective voice of the state's universities. He says each university has its own needs and its own agenda to advocate, but his organization's goal is to find those areas of interest that are common to all institutions and to communicate them to the state's leaders.

The Partnership also is assisted by the advocacy efforts of its regular members, which consist mostly of faculty and staff at each of the state's universities. Regular members receive Partnership Updates to educate



The Higher Education Partnership advocates on behalf of Alabama's public universities.

them on the issues. Employees at AUM are eligible to contribute as members of the Partnership by visiting them online at www.higheredpartners.org and joining as members.

Since its inception in 1997, the Partnership has worked to develop a mentality of support across the state for higher education. Whether we see them or not, the Higher Education Partnership's members, supporters and advocates are working every day to promote the interests of AUM and the state's other public universities.

Brett Johnson serves as the Director of Campus Membership and Student Activities for the Higher Education Partnership. He is currently enrolled in the Master of Public Administration program at Auburn University at Montgomery and can be reached at brettjohnson@higheredpartners.org for more information on joining the Partnership.

Senioritis: The Struggle is Real

Bobby Poitevint

Senioritis is real, and the struggle to stay awake is far too real. For those who are unfamiliar with the word, “Senioritis” is a term used to describe the lack of interest and enthusiasm for academic success as a student approaches the daunting final chapter of a prolonged schooling period. Senioritis is catching the ‘flu like’ bug of not caring and the “I’m ready to be done” attitude that comes with long sleeves and hoodies.

For me, senioritis is not really about indifference, but rather managing time in the final weeks of my academic career. The clock is ticking and so is my patience. For seniors, it’s all about internships and locating that perfect job as the fall semester is slimming. This is too real for me at the moment. I’m currently in my third internship, which consumes any free time I use to have, and let’s not forget about the 40 hour-a-week job that inhabits my evenings every day until almost midnight. Which is also a struggle for other college seniors who do have the unfortunate task of paying bills or “luxury” purchases such as gas and food. Let’s not forget about our nutritious diets though ... oh, wait we did. Because life makes it far too easy to grab a burger and fries.

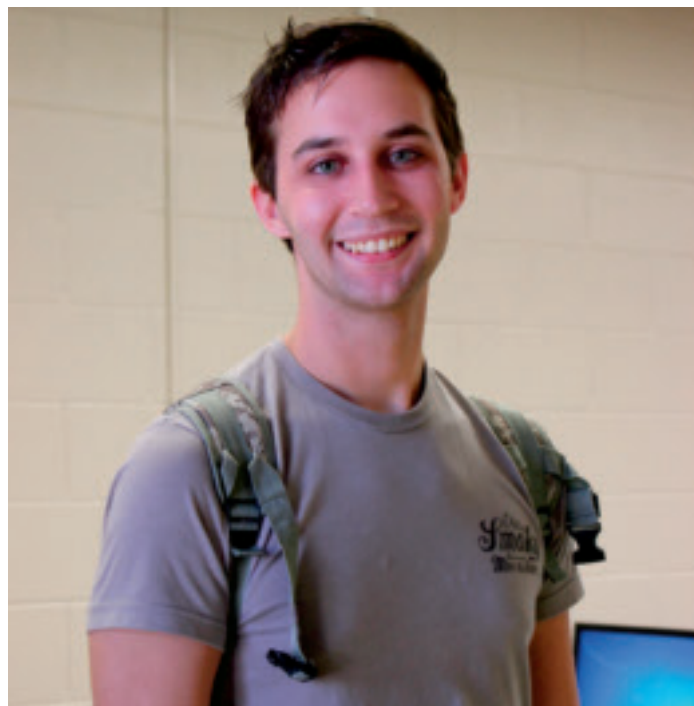
Senioritis is about the struggle of taking that 8 a.m. class because you have avoided it for too long, and you now have to face the “rise and shine” to receive that diploma. Senioritis is when you’re typing a paper Sunday night before it is due, as I’m doing right now with this article. Senioritis is a fashion statement. You are no longer dressed to impress in what you think is couture clothing but instead oversized, unflattering sweats or yoga pants.

Senioritis is about staying afloat with your grades and hoping for a B, but settling for a C. And jetting out of class because you have a thousand things to accomplish before the day is over. As my dad would tell me, “you can handle it.” Senioritis is when you pick and choose which assignments are more important because you didn’t have a chance to do them all. Such as washing your clothes that you have to wear that day came first because we as a society are not accepting of public nudity or foul-smelling people.

I had a conversation with an old acquaintance the other day. We were discussing his time in college, and how he was married and building a life while a senior. He said while he was in college, the idea of having a normal 40-hour-a-week job and being able to forget about the office when he returned home was like heaven to him. I felt close to him at that very moment and realized the struggle was mutual.

The struggle is real ... Yes, but the long-term investment you have made over the past four or five years is not. After graduation, I will be taking a long-awaited trip out of the country, and the idea that homework will no longer exist as a term in my vocabulary thrills me to no end. As I overlook the salty aqua seas of the North Atlantic Ocean, sipping away my troubles with an overpriced tropical something, Martin Luther King Jr.’s quote, “Free at last, free at last, thank God almighty we are free at last,” will ring vibrantly through my spine and drizzle out my ears in a soothing melody.

The vacation will forever continue as there are no more classes in sight, no more running late to classes and speeding through Montgomery just to make sure I arrive on time. The light at the end of the tunnel is sunshine and not florescent lighting. The struggle was real.



Bobby Poitevint is a senior, preparing to graduate with a degree in Communication at AUM.

Quiz Bowl: Challenge Yourself

Erin Mills

Are you a knowledge-collector who is looking to put your smarts to the test? If so, it's time to check out the AUM Quiz Bowl Team.

AUM English department head and Professor Dr. Darren Harris-Fain played in quiz bowl in high school and college. Now, he is the AUM Quiz Bowl Team Coach. "I loved quiz bowl the moment I got into it," Harris-Fain said. According to Harris-Fain, who recently scored a two-day streak on Jeopardy, many people on the trivia game show previously participated in competitions like quiz bowl.

Last spring, the AUM Quiz Bowl Team travelled to Enterprise to play 11 other teams in the Cerebral Weevil Tournament. There, AUM graduate Kev Johnson was among the top ten individual players for answering the most questions correctly. Each team consists of up to four people, but if more students get involved, schools are allowed to have two teams. The competition has multiple rounds with both toss-up and bonus questions. The individual players to hit the buzzer first answer the question, and if they get it right, their entire team is given a bonus question. However, if the player

answers the question wrong, it is forwarded to the other team, which then has the opportunity to score the points. The questions cover every academic area, including history, literature, math, science, arts, current events and more.

On Oct. 27, the AUM Quiz Bowl Team competed against around 30 other teams in Brain Brawl, a trivia contest hosted by the Montgomery Education Foundation. The contest was held as a way to raise money for Montgomery Public Schools. "We took first place out of a field of around thirty teams, winning \$1,500 for Martin Luther King Elementary School," Harris-Fain said.

Right now, the AUM team meets at 5 p.m. every Thursday in the Liberal Arts conference room. Anyone interested in joining should contact Dr. Harris-Fain at dharrisf@aum.edu.



Beat Test Anxiety

Alexis Rabsatt

If you have ever been deeply stressed about taking a test, concerned with forgetting everything you had previously studied or lacked self-confidence while taking a test, you have experienced test anxiety. Test anxiety is defined by About Education as “a psychological condition in which people experience extreme distress and anxiety in testing situations.”

Although students may have different levels of test anxiety from slight nervousness to a nervous breakdown, the stress can be combated. Below are a few tips to help you beat test anxiety.

Tip #1

Have good study habits. This may mean taking a trip over to the Student Learning Center and getting a refresher course on studying tools, but it will definitely be worth it. Poor studying habits will not help you ace an exam. It is also likely that students will be less anxious about taking a test if they have prepared themselves. If a professor provides a study guide, review it!

Tip #2

No late night, last minute cramming. A major part of kicking test anxiety is having the perfect balance of relaxation and focus. There is very little relaxation in struggling to remember what was crammed into your brain just three hours before taking a big test. Studying and being rested prior to taking a test will be helpful in lowering anxiety.

Tip #3

Be confident. If you have done all you can to prepare for a test, then relax. A little nervousness will help with being alert, About Education suggests, but being too nervous while taking a test can be a huge distraction and may make it difficult to deliver. Remember, test anxiety is a psychological condition, which means all the stress and worry is in your head. Staying positive and taking notice that you have prepared yourself properly will go a long way when getting rid of test anxiety.

Surviving Finals

Samantha Rose

No matter whether you're a senior or a freshman, finals are always the most stressful time of the semester. Sleepless nights, caffeine overdoses and anxiety outbreaks are a few of the many unwanted side effects caused by finals.

Auburn University at Montgomery offers many activities to help prepare its Warhawks for success. Professors n' Pajamas is a perfect time to get the one-on-one attention you need to prepare for your exams. Faculty and staff members meet with students for three hours to help them with any subject.

Last semester, Shanisty White participated in the event. "All I had to do was bring my study guide and notes, and there were plenty of professors there to help," White said. "We went through my study guide, and they pointed out what to focus on and gave me plenty of studying tips."

AUM also has a complimentary breakfast for students the morning of exams. They do not require student ID. Eating breakfast stimulates the mind and body and helps decrease anxiety, so even if you do not have class in the morning, come out and enjoy breakfast on the house.

Here are some tips AUM students have given on how to get through finals:

"Create a study guide if the professor did not hand one out," Whitley Robinson said. This will give you a guideline to follow when preparing for the test. After you create your own study guide, meet with your professors during their office hours, have them read it over, and ask for advice. They will be willing to work with you because of your extra effort.

"Don't wait until the last minute to cram," Tyler Banks said. "Everyone says this, but the longer you give yourself to study, the more information you retain." It is better to start studying two weeks ahead of time. The more time you give yourself, the less last-minute stress you'll have.

"Take time to properly study each subject," Michael

Trigg said. "Take breaks between subjects to give your mind a break." If you are taking multiple classes, try studying just one or two subjects a day.

The week of finals can be incredibly stressful, but with the support of AUM and tips from fellow classmates, finals should come much easier than before.

Warhawk Squawk

Takeisha Jeffers

At the end of November, families across America celebrate Thanksgiving. It is a time for giving thanks for all that we have. Students were asked: Do you find irony in Black Friday being the day after Thanksgiving?



Timothy Williams

Freshman
Computer Science

I find irony in the fact that Black Friday is the day after Thanksgiving because on Thanksgiving, we are supposed to be reminded of the attitude we should have all year long--one of thankfulness. But the next day is about greed and getting what we want. I think Black Friday takes away from the importance of thankfulness every day, and not just on Thanksgiving.



Chris Brown

Junior
Information Systems

Yes, there is irony because nobody wants to move and get stuff on Thanksgiving.



Maeghan DePace

Freshman
Exercise Science

There is a good bit of irony in it. Thanksgiving to me is where family and friends get together and gives thanks for everything they have. We have a prayer in my family where we go around in a circle and pray for what we are thankful for. Then the next day comes, and you've slept on a full stomach to wake and possibly be trampled for things that are on sale.

CORRECTION: Brittany Havenner photo by Marvin Gentry, not Jacob Horton.



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Meet The Staff

Bobby Poitevint
wpoitevi@aum.edu

Darya Farsinejad
dfarsine@aum.edu

Alexis Rabsatt
arabsatt@aum.edu

Robert Lemons
rlemons@aum.edu

Editor-In-Chief
Erin Mills
emills1@aum.edu

Photographer
Takeisha Jeffers
tjeffer7@aum.edu

Webmaster
Nikki Headley
sheadle1@aum.edu

Graphic Designer
Shaquille Harris
sharri46@aum.edu

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Contact our editor-in-chief, Erin Mills, at emills1@aum.edu for more information.

Interested in Contributing to the AUMnibus?

Stop by our office, located in Room 401-402 of the Ida Belle Young Library Tower. You can also email the editor, Erin Mills, at emills1@aum.edu, or call us at 334-244-3662. Also, be sure to check us out online at www.theaumnibus.com!